

DANIEL M. ASHE



Professional Experience

President and CEO, Association of Zoos and Aquariums (January 2017 to present): Broad leadership responsibilities for the world's preeminent zoological accreditation and professional services organization, representing more than 8000 members, including 233 institutional members. Under my leadership, AZA continues to define the modern aquarium and zoo as a purposeful, mission-driven conservation and education organization. Annually, AZA members host over 200 million visitors, and provide more than \$250 million in direct support for field conservation.

16th Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (June 2011 to January 2017): Presidentially appointed and confirmed by the U.S. Senate, responsible for executive direction and oversight for the entire \$2.9 billion agency and 10,000 employees. I led the agency during one of the most challenging fiscal and political periods in its history, while achieving landmark successes. We established the world's largest fully-protected marine reserves -- the Remote Pacific Islands National Marine Monument and the Papahānaumokuākea National Marine Monument -- making the National Wildlife Refuge System the world's largest system of protected lands at more than 800 million acres. We set a new standard for species recovery, recovering and delisting more species than all previous Administrations combined. We envisioned and led the most complex and comprehensive land planning and management effort ever undertaken, covering nearly 200 million acres, across 11 states, to conserve greater sage grouse and the sagebrush ecosystem. We led the world response to a global wildlife trafficking epidemic. We embarked on an innovative urban initiative engaging a new generation, and have sparked tri-national efforts to conserve the iconic Monarch butterfly.

Deputy Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Sept. 2009 to June 2011): Responsible for agency-wide program and policy direction. During this period, I led the Service to be the first federal natural resource agency to develop a Climate Change Strategic Plan.

Science Advisor to the Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (March 2003 to Sept. 2009): Broad leadership responsibility for science policy and applications. I led agency-wide organizational change, providing inspirational vision, creating a spirit of scientific Renaissance, and strengthening agency morale, effectiveness and credibility. I reinvigorated the agency's relationship with its key scientific partner, the U.S. Geological Survey; significantly broadened employee opportunities for technical training and professional development; envisioned and secured funding for state-of-the-art technologies allowing employees to electronically access and share scientific literature; built enduring partnerships with scientific professional societies and expanded employee engagement in those organizations; developed acclaimed policies in scientific and professional conduct and ethics; reinstituted internal scientific publications; and developed prestigious agency awards to recognize scientific

excellence among employees. I successfully directed agency efforts on highly complex and politically controversial initiatives, including national scale monitoring for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, which included developing and rapidly acquiring annual budgets of nearly \$10 million. I led development of an agency strategic and action plan for response to global climate change, positioning the agency as a pioneering leader in climate adaptation.

Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (April 2000 - March 2003): Responsible for national oversight and direction of all aspects of operations, maintenance, construction and land acquisition for the 150 million acres, National Wildlife Refuge System. Directed a program with total capital assets valued at more than \$8 billion, an annual budget of nearly \$500 million, and encompassing more than 500 geographically dispersed units and 3500 employees. Under my tenure the Refuge System experienced an unprecedented period of progress. For example, budgets for operation and maintenance doubled; appropriations for land acquisition reached an all-time high of \$121 million in FY 2001; community-based “friends” organizations expanded by four-fold; the volunteer workforce increased more than two-fold; visitation to refuges increased from under 30 million to over 40 million annually; customer satisfaction was the highest of any Department of the Interior land system; positioned the refuge system as a world leader in marine protected area designation and management by expanding remote Pacific and Caribbean refuges; developed innovative policy to strengthen refuge stewardship, including policy on public use “compatibility” and “biological integrity.”

Assistant Director, Refuges and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (April 1998 – April 2000): Responsible for national oversight and direction of all aspects of operations, maintenance, construction and land acquisition for the then-100 million acre, National Wildlife Refuge System, as well as the Migratory Bird Conservation, and the North American Wetlands Conservation Act programs of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I led the effort to develop a highly successful vision and strategy for the National Wildlife Refuge System (*Fulfilling the Promise*). I developed the first budget proposal for direct funding for the “joint ventures” that have become the foundation for international, habitat-based bird conservation. That effort has blossomed into appropriations exceeding \$15 million annually for operational support for these national and international conservation partnerships. Under my leadership, the Service Migratory Bird Conservation Program helped envision and launch the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, bringing together international, federal, state, local and non-governmental partners to support cooperative, habitat-based bird conservation.

Assistant Director, External Affairs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (February 1995 – April 1998): Responsible for national oversight and direction of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service legislative, public and native American affairs programs, as well as over \$500 million in external grant programs. I led a highly successful effort to build a vision and implement a national strategy and structure for managing communications within the agency. I led the agency’s effort in winning passage of the landmark National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, and envisioned and led a successful campaign to secure funding for refuge road maintenance as part of the Transportation Efficiency Act. The latter has yielded more than \$500 million supporting transportation improvements in the Refuge System.

Staff Director, U.S. House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Environment and Natural Resources (1993-1995): This subcommittee was responsible for a broad range of conservation legislation, including the Endangered Species Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Marine Sanctuaries Act, Fisheries Conservation and Management Act, Coastal Zone Management Act, Clean Water Act, and the Oil Pollution Act. I supervised a staff of 14 and developed the subcommittee's legislative and oversight agenda.

Senior Staff Member for Wildlife, Oceans and Fisheries, U.S. House of Representatives (1989-1993): I supervised a team of 10 staff, organizing the legislative and oversight work of the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries dealing with a wide range of natural resources and environmental policy issues.

Senior Staff Member for Oceans Policy, U.S. House of Representatives (1987-1989): I supervised a staff of 5, advising the Chairman and Members of the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries on a broad array of issues dealing with ocean and coastal policy, research and management.

Professional Staff Member, U.S. House of Representatives (1982-1987): I advised the Chairman and Members of the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries on a broad array of issues dealing with ocean and coastal policy, research and management.

Professional Service

I am frequently sought to serve on advisory groups or committees dealing with program or professional development. Since 2011, I have served on the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Board, as chair of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Executive Leadership Team, and as a member of the Federal Interagency Fire Management Policy Leadership Team. From 2011-2015, I represented the Department of the Interior on the Interagency Federal-State Sage Grouse Taskforce. In previous capacities, I chaired the Service's Executive Working Group on Climate Change and the Service Science Committee. I served as executive sponsor and mentor to many organizational teams (e.g., Climate Change Strategic Plan Team) and communities-of-practice (e.g., Structured Decision Making and Conservation Genetics). I served on advisory boards for numerous organizations, including The Wildlife Society (Editorial Review Board) and San Diego Zoo (Conservation Innovators Council). I served for nearly three years as Chair of the Interagency Wilderness Policy Council. I have served as a board member and advisor to professional organizations like The Coastal Society and the Society for Conservation Biology.

Education

Master of Marine Affairs, University of Washington, Seattle, WA (1982).

Bachelor of Science, Biology, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL (1978).

Writing and Speaking

I am an accomplished writer and public speaker. I have published and presented dozens of papers and articles, delivered numerous keynote addresses (including at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Management Conference, April 2016), and countless individual and panel presentations before professional gatherings. I have testified before Congress on dozens of topics, including appropriations, endangered species, refuge operations and maintenance, land acquisition, and climate change. I have represented the U.S. Government in international meetings and negotiations, including serving as U.S. Head of Delegation to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) Conference of the Parties, and the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Trilateral Commission. I have been featured on national television and radio. I have dealt extensively and successfully with the media on highly sensitive and controversial issues. I have established a reputation for excellence in communicating with both individuals and organizations, ranging from Presidents to preschoolers, Committee Chairmen to Cabinet Secretaries, and everywhere between.

Awards

Throughout my career, I have consistently received exceptional ratings for annual performance. I have received numerous awards and recognition, including the Service Diversity Achievement Award, and Commendations for Superior and Distinguished Service. I received the highest performance award offered by the Department of the Interior (the Executive Leadership Gold Award), and the highest performance recognition available to Federal Government Senior Executives (the President's Meritorious Service Award). I was honored to receive the 2015 St. Louis Zoo Conservation Award, and a 2016 Conservation Hero Award from the National Audubon Society.

Personal Information

I am married with two children and four grandchildren. I love tennis, hunting, angling, and hiking.