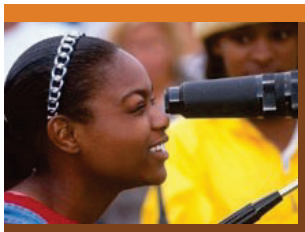
NATIONAL *fish, wildlife & plants*
CLIMATE ADAPTATION STRATEGY

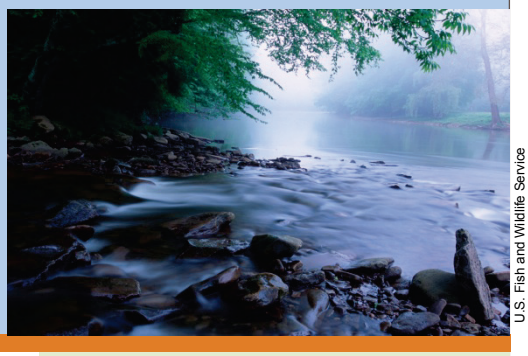
Shared solutions to protect shared values

Economic Facts


Ohio Division of Wildlife

America is blessed with an abundance of fish, wildlife and plants, as well as a diversity of habitats that sustain them. They are an integral feature of our natural landscapes and have played a major role in shaping America's history, identity and character. Changes in the climate are already affecting these valuable resources and systems, and impacts are expected to grow.

Our nation's natural resources provide many important products and services—including jobs, recreation, food, clean air and water, building materials and storm protection—which are essential in supporting the well-being of people, communities and economies across the country every day. The growth of these types of economic activities is directly related to the health of our nation's ecosystems and the services they provide. Following are select examples about the economic importance of fish, wildlife and plants, and the services they provide.


U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Hunting, Fishing and Wildlife Watching

Wildlife-related recreation includes fishing and hunting as well as wildlife-watching, such as observing, photographing, and feeding fish or wildlife. Many people participate in more than one activity.

Selected statistics

- In 2011, 90.1 million U.S. residents participated in wildlife-related activities.
  - 33.1 million people fished
  - 13.7 million people hunted
  - 71.8 million enjoyed wildlife-watching activities
- Hunters, anglers, and wildlife watchers spent $145 billion in 2010 on gear, trips, and other purchases such as licenses and land leasing.
  - $41.8 billion on fishing
  - $33.7 billion on hunting
  - $14.3 billion on both
  - $54.9 billion on wildlife watching activities

The domestic and international trade in coastal and marine fisheries contributes billions annually to our nation's economy. Managing the considerable pressures - both human and natural - on these valuable resources will ensure that the country's long-standing tradition of commercial fishing is sustained.

Selected statistics

- In 2011, the U.S. seafood industry supported:
  - 1.2 million jobs
  - $129 billion in sales
  - $37 billion in income
- In 2011, the U.S. coastal recreational fishing annually supported:
  - 455,000 jobs
  - 70 million saltwater fishing trips
  - $70 billion in sales
  - $20 billion in income

Ecosystem Services include:

1. *Provisioning Services, including food, medicines, and wood.*
2. *Regulating Services, such as climate regulation, pest control, flood suppression, and water filtration.*
3. *Cultural Services, such as aesthetic, spiritual, educational, and recreational services.*
4. *Supporting Services, such as nutrient cycling, soil formation, and pollination.*

NOAA

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Coastal Wetlands

Wetlands are among the most productive ecosystems in the world, and provide numerous tangible benefits to our nation's coastal communities. Wetlands provide critical habitat for fish and wildlife, protection from hurricanes and flooding, and recreational opportunities, as well as removing pollutants from our waters and recharging groundwater supplies. Unfortunately, our nation's coastal wetlands are in decline, and are further threatened by increasing coastal development and rising sea levels.

Selected statistics

- $23 billion – the amount of annual storm surge protection services provided to areas most vulnerable to hurricane and tropical storm surges in the U.S.
- More than 50% of commercially harvested fish in the U.S. depend on estuaries and nearby coastal waters at some stage in their life cycle.
- 75% of waterfowl and migratory birds use coastal areas for resting, feeding and breeding habitat.
- 65% of the coastal marshlands and swamps in the contiguous United States that would be inundated with 3 feet of sea level rise.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Coral Reefs

Coral reef ecosystems support a vast diversity of species and provide our Nation with a variety of ecological, economic, and cultural benefits. Approximately half of the coral reef ecosystem resources under U.S. or Freely Associated State jurisdiction are in "poor" or "fair" condition and have declined over time due to several natural and anthropogenic threats.

Selected statistics

- $483 million - Approximate annual net benefit to the U.S. economy from tourism and recreation activities related to US coral reefs.
- $1 billion - Approximate annual net benefits to the U.S. economy from overall goods and services provided by US coral reefs.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Coastal Populations

The shoreline is a highly dynamic area where land meets ocean, shaped by both natural physical processes and human activities. Infrastructure concentrated at the shoreline can be vulnerable to storms and sea level rise. Managing our shoreline requires balancing the need to protect the built environment and associated economic activities from coastal hazards, the costs of engineered protections, the safety of shoreline residents, and the need to maintain the integrity of natural systems.

Selected statistics

- 95,000 - Approximate number of miles of U.S. coastline.
- 52% - Percent of the nation's total population that lived in coastal watershed counties in 2010
- 50.9 Million - Increase in U.S. coastal watershed county population from 1970 to 2010 (45% increase).
- 14.9 Million - Expected increase in U.S. coastal watershed county population by 2020 (9% increase).
- 350,000 - Approximate number of structures located within 500 feet of the U.S. shoreline.

Coastal Economy

Fifty-eight percent of our nation's gross domestic product is generated in the coastal watershed counties along the oceans and Great Lakes. Given the concentration of economic production, population, and infrastructure along the coast, we must work to maintain the integrity of those natural resources that make these areas highly-desirable to visit, live, and work.

- $8.3 trillion - Contribution to GDP of the coastal watershed counties, over half of U.S. GDP in 2010.
- 66 million – Total jobs in coastal watershed counties of the U.S. in 2010.