

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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Secretary Norton Praises President's Intention to Nominate H. Dale Hall as Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service

Contacts: Hugh Vickery, (202) 501-4633

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Secretary of the Interior Gale A. Norton today praised President Bush's intention to nominate H. Dale Hall to serve as Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The announcement is subject to confirmation by the U.S. Senate, once the official nomination is made by the President.

A 27-year career employee, Hall has served in Albuquerque, N.M. as the Southwest Regional Director of the Service since 2001.

"Dale brings to the job a wealth of experience and a record of being part of the answer to complex problems," said Norton. "As a qualified scientist, he has worked on everything from the Northwest Forest Plan to the California Bay/Delta water settlement, to the plan for restoring the Everglades. He has dealt with wetlands across the nation and water issues on the Middle Rio Grande and the Missouri Rivers. In every instance he has sought consensus and solutions. I am confident he will continue that record."

Hall said he was humbled and honored to be nominated by the President and to have the confidence of Secretary Norton. "I'm looking forward to this position and to using my experience to lead our outstanding employees in finding science-based, cooperative solutions to the tough issues before the Fish and Wildlife Service."

He also helped in bringing consensus to the Multi-Species Conservation Plan for the Lower Colorado River. That plan is a 50-year conservation initiative that provides more than \$620 million in federal and local funding to protect fish and wildlife along 400 miles of the lower Colorado River, while meeting the needs of farmers, tribes, industries and urban residents who rely on the river for water and power supplies.

Hall's experience includes a term as Deputy Regional Director in Atlanta, Ga. and one as Assistant Regional Director for Ecological Services in Portland, Ore. He started his career with the Service in 1978 when he did field work in wetlands ecology in Vicksburg, Miss. He continued in ecological services in Galveston and Houston where he worked as Outer Continental Shelf Coordinator with responsibility to work with Minerals Management Service to protect sensitive areas in the Western Gulf of Mexico. He was also the office supervisor in Texas for four years. Along the career path he worked as Deputy Assistant Director for Fisheries in Washington, D.C.

"I've worked in Washington before, but one of the things I will miss about New Mexico is all the great hunting and fishing in the state," said Hall, who is an avid sportsman.

A native of Harlan, Ky., Hall served in the Philippines and Italy during his stint with the U.S. Air Force. Hall also has private sector experience having managed catfish farms in the Mississippi Delta after returning to civilian life. His education includes a bachelor's degree in biology and chemistry from Cumberland College in Kentucky and a master's in fisheries science from Louisiana State University.

Hall has been honored with the Department of the Interior's Meritorious Service Award. He and his wife, Sarah, have three children.