

Developing Your NatureWatch Program

An Introduction to Success.

What is a Program?

- A “Social Entity” involving a group of individuals with a common mission.

NatureWatch Vision

- A highly visible Program that sets the Forest Service apart as a leader in providing wildlife, fish, and plant viewing opportunities, featuring a state-of-the-art (i.e. where viewing activities are not harmful to wildlife and other resources) and nationally recognized network of viewing areas and educational/interpretive programs.

NatureWatch Vision Continued

- “Internally”, people are aware and conversant about the NatureWatch Program and proud of its achievements – they market the Program as part of everyday business, and are formally recognized when they perform exemplary work that fulfills the mission of the Program.

NatureWatch Mission

- “To provide children and adults the opportunity to safely view, and participate in, activities and programs that raise their level of awareness and understanding of, wildlife, fish, and plants and their interactions and connection to ecosystems, landscapes, and people.”

Use the National NatureWatch Program's Vision, Mission and Strategy as a template for your NatureWatch Program development.

Indicators of High Performance

- **Indicators of High Performance and Accountability**
- **Program Definition/Integration:** Naturewatch Program has clearly stated visions, missions, goals and objectives that are articulated in the Forest Plan or other National-level documents. The program is effectively integrated with other resource programs and consists of a “network” of strategically and geographically located viewing areas that work together with existing and planned educational/interpretive programs – common program priorities are identified and pursued jointly. There is continuity and integration between District and/or Forest programs. There is line officer and Regional Program Manager ownership as reflected by involvement in priority setting, program execution and performance assessment.
- **Work Force Capability:** Naturewatch “employees” demonstrate a high level of technical proficiency and operational capability. Region/Forest/Districts have access to Naturewatch technical expertise and other supporting skills (e.g. understanding of wildlife/fish/plant life history, conservation education, interpretation, understand needs for viewing site design to ensure animal safety, partnership development, marketing, engineering, recreation visitor “behavior,” architectural design, etc.) are available to complement Naturewatch program implementation. Vacant Naturewatch positions or assignments are quickly advertised and filled. Awards for exemplary achievement are available and given frequently.
- **Accomplishments/Expenditures and Opportunities:** Accomplishments reflect a balanced program (a selection of “Eyes on Wildlife,” “Fishwatch,” “Celebrating Wildflowers,” “National Fishing Week,” and “Migratory Bird Day” efforts), including emphasis on new site construction, existing site restoration, production of Naturewatch products (e.g. brochures, posters, curricula, and signage), and Naturewatch presentations. The Region/Forest/District accurately enters all accomplishments/expenditures into the WFRP-MS and adequately describes projects and programs through well written narratives and quality photographs. Accomplishments relative to funding level are above average in quantity, quality, and balance/diversity. Opportunities are entered into WFRP-MS and accurately describe potential projects and programs through well written narratives and photographs or conceptual drawings.
- **Fiscal Accountability:** Financial support of the Naturewatch Program from Wildlife, Fisheries, TES/Botany, and Recreation is commensurate to that of other programs. Overhead assessments against Naturewatch funds are “fair” (i.e., made on the basis of benefiting function or proportional to allocations.) Benefiting function principles are adhered to. The Forest does not regularly carry-over Naturewatch funds, and when carry-over does occur, Naturewatch funds are not reprogrammed but used for Naturewatch Program activities.
- **Partnerships:** The Region/Forest/District demonstrates close working relationships with other Federal, state, and tribal management agencies. Development and maintenance of strong, effective partnerships is fostered and Naturewatch Program funds are effectively leveraged through partnerships to accomplish Naturewatch Program objectives. Partnerships are characterized by frequent interactions, routine cooperative efforts for a variety of Naturewatch activities; and demonstrated productive involvement of these groups in the decision making process. Communications are timely and appropriate on the Forest/District and with the Regional Office.

Indicators of Low Performance

- **Indicator of Low Performance and Accountability**
- **Program Definition/Integration:** Naturewatch Program lacks clearly stated goals and objectives, or they have not been incorporated in the Forest Plan or stated in other National-level program documents. The program has not been effectively integrated with other resource programs and does not consist of a “network” of strategically and geographically located viewing areas that work together with existing and planned educational/interpretive programs – common program priorities are identified and pursued independently. Program activities are pursued independently and viewed as a “nice to do” option. There is little or no continuity between Forest/District programs. Line officers and Regional Program Managers are not involved in priority setting, program execution, or performance assessment.
- **Work Force Capability:** Naturewatch “employees” lack technical proficiency and/or operational capability. Forests/Districts often do not have access to needed Naturewatch technical expertise or other supporting skills (understanding of wildlife/fish/plant life history, conservation education, interpretation, understand needs for viewing site design to ensure animal safety, partnership development, marketing, engineering, recreation visitor “behavior,” architectural design, etc.) to complement Naturewatch program implementation. Vacant Naturewatch positions or assignments are non-existent or slow to be advertised and filled, or are surplus.
- **Accomplishments/Expenditures and Opportunities:** Accomplishments and expenditures do not reflect a balanced program (a selection of “Eyes on Wildlife,” “Fishwatch,” “Celebrating Wildflowers,” “National Fishing Week,” and “Migratory Bird Day” efforts), including emphasis on new site construction, existing site restoration, production of Naturewatch products (e.g. brochures, posters, curricula, and signage) or Naturewatch presentations. The Region/Forest/District does not accurately enter all accomplishments and expenditures into the WFRP-MS or adequately describes projects and programs through well written narratives and quality photographs. Accomplishments relative to funding level are below average in quantity, quality, and/or diversity. Opportunities are not entered into WFRP-MS and consequently do not accurately describe potential projects and programs through well written narratives and photographs or conceptual drawings.
- **Fiscal Accountability:** Financial support of the Naturewatch Program from Wildlife, Fisheries, TES/Botany, and Recreation is poor or not commensurate to that of other programs. Overhead assessments against Naturewatch funds are not “fair” (i.e., made on the basis of benefiting function or proportional to allocations.) Benefiting function principles are not adhered to. The Forest regularly carries-over Naturewatch funds, and when carry-over does occur, Naturewatch funds are not reprogrammed but used for other resource management activities.
- **Partnerships:** Forest working relationships with other Federal, state, and tribal management agencies are limited or ineffective. Partnership efforts contribute little to program effectiveness and program funds are not significantly leveraged through partnerships. Partners play little or no role in the decision making process. A solid understanding of FS Partnership rules and regulations is lacking and is a barrier to effective use of partnership benefits.

Sample Naturewatch Program Evaluation Worksheet

Region/Forest/ District 6/na /na Rating for FY 03 Draft or Final X

ELEMENT	Low - 1	2	3	4	High - 5
Program Definition/Integration					5
Visions, Missions, Goals and Objectives					
Integration with other programs				4	
Continuity among Forests/Districts					
Line Officer/Regional PM Involvement				4	5
Work Force Capability					
Naturewatch "employees" proficiency					5
Availability of Support/Technical Skills					5
Naturewatch Positions/Assignments					
Employee Recognition					
Accomplishments/Expenditures/Opps.					
Balanced Program				4	
New/Current Site Construct/Re-Constr.			3		
Naturewatch Products and Presentations				4	
Accomp./Expend./Opps. in WFRP				4	
Fiscal Accountability					
Funding support from other resources		2			
Benefiting Function Application					5
BFES and Carryover Management				4	
Partnerships					
Working relationship with other agencies				4	
Partnership Development is active.					5
Partnership Funds Leveraged					5
Partnership common and productive		2			
Subtotals	0	4	3	28	40
Grand total 75	Average*		4.2		

* Average -- Grand total divided by the number of elements rated.

Performance and Accountability Score:

Ratings are based on "average score" where:

- 1.0 - 2.5 = "Low"
- > 2.5 - 3.5 = "Moderate"
- > 3.5 = "High"

To access the worksheet, go to the Program Development Section of the DIY NatureWatch CD-ROM

Region/Forest/ District	Rating for FY 03	Draft	or Final		
ELEMENT	Low - 1	2	3	4	High - 5
Program Definition/Integration					
Visions, Missions, Goals and Objectives					
Integration with other programs					
Continuity among Forests/Districts					
Line Officer/Regional PM Involvement					
Work Force Capability					
Naturewatch "employees" proficiency					
Availability of Support/Technical Skills					
Naturewatch Positions/Assignments					
Employee Recognition					
Accomplishments/Expenditures/Opps.					
Balanced Program					
New/Current Site Construct/Re-Constr.					
Naturewatch Products and Presentations					
Accomp./Expend./Opps. in WFRP					
Fiscal Accountability					
Funding support from other resources					
Benefiting Function Application					
BFES and Carryover Management					
Partnerships					
Working relationship with other agencies					
Partnership Development is active.					
Partnership Funds Leveraged					
Partnership common and productive					
Subtotals					
Grand total	Average*				

* Average – Grand total divided by the number of elements rated.

Performance and Accountability Score:

Ratings are based on "average score" where:

1.0 - 2.5 = "Low"

> 2.5 - 3.5 = "Moderate"

> 3.5 = "High"

To access the worksheet, go to the Program Development Section of the DIY NatureWatch CD-ROM

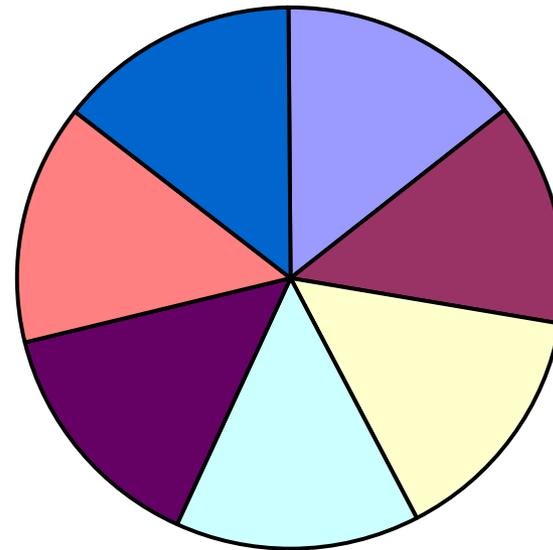
NatureWatch Program Strategy

- Tells how the Program is going to get there..... to achieve its vision and mission.

NatureWatch Program Elements

NatureWatch Program Program Elements

- Administration
- New Site Construction
- Site Restoration
- Partnerships
- Marketing
- Programs and Projects
- Research and Monitoring



Program Element Definitions

Administration: Includes budget, staffing/personnel, employee recognition, training, strategic program planning, site visits (travel), regional/forest/district visits, conferences, etc. **When entering WFRP data you may include this work/dollars spent under a Naturewatch “salary and expenditure only” entry.**

New Site Construction: Includes time, dollars and labor towards new Naturewatch site planning and construction. A “site” refers to an actual structure that aids in the viewing of wildlife. In other words, taking a group of kids to watch salmon spawning at a river is not a viewing site. This would be considered a Naturewatch program or project (see below). **When entering WFRP data, enter data as a new site, including planning, and overhead costs.**

Site restoration: Includes time, dollars and labor toward site restoration. Examples may include adding or repairing signage, road/trail maintenance, replacing viewing platform boards/railings, etc. **When entering WFRP data, enter this data as the number of sites restored including planning and overhead costs.**

Partnerships: Includes development and management of new and existing partnerships that contribute dollars, or in-kind work towards Naturewatch program. **When entering WFRP project data remember to include partner dollar and in-kind contributions. In-kind labor is valued at \$10.00 per hour.**

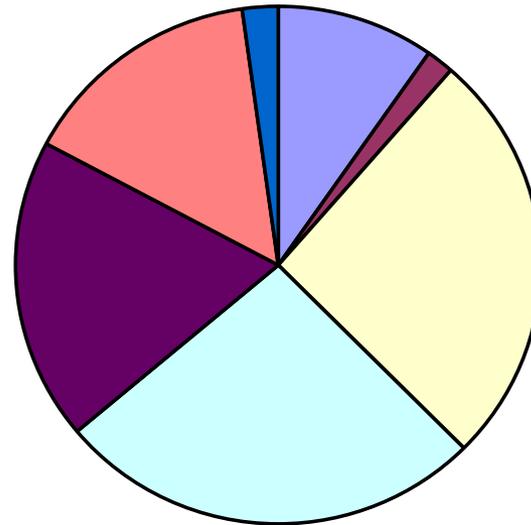
Marketing: Includes all marketing efforts and mediums designed to raise the level of awareness and visibility of the Naturewatch program. Examples might include brochures, magazine ads, newspaper articles, websites, radio announcements or programs, posters, presentations about the site, buttons, etc. **Refer to the WFRP-MS NatureWatch definitions located in the WFRP-MS home page for a complete explanation of “presentations” and “products.”**

Programs and Projects: Includes the development of Naturewatch related (non-viewing site) efforts. Examples might include school programs where kids are taken on field trips to areas without viewing “sites,” festivals (e.g. migratory birds), national fishing week celebrations, etc. **Refer to the WFRP-MS NatureWatch definitions located in the WFRP-MS home page for a complete explanation of “presentations” and “products.”**

Research and Monitoring: This element is a relatively new idea, but an important one. Includes work or dollars spent towards monitoring numbers of people who visit the site, a study designed to assess the economic or social values of viewing sites, a study to assess attitudinal or behavioral changes of people who watch wildlife, etc. **Note: there is currently no WFRP data entry related to this program element.**

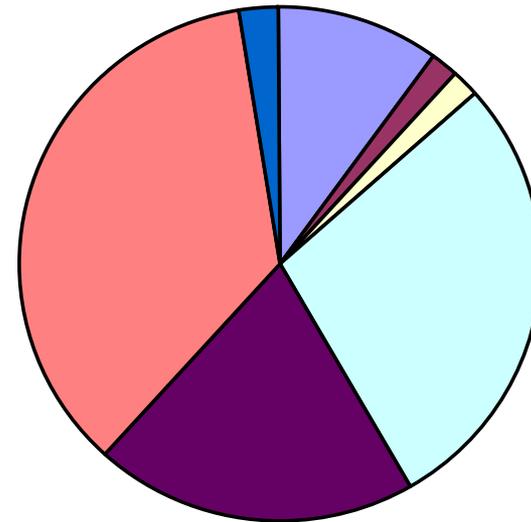
Hypothetical program where strategy focuses on restoring existing viewing sites with partnerships.

- Adminstration
- New Site Construction
- Site Restoration
- Partnerships
- Marketing
- Programs and Projects
- Research and Monitoring

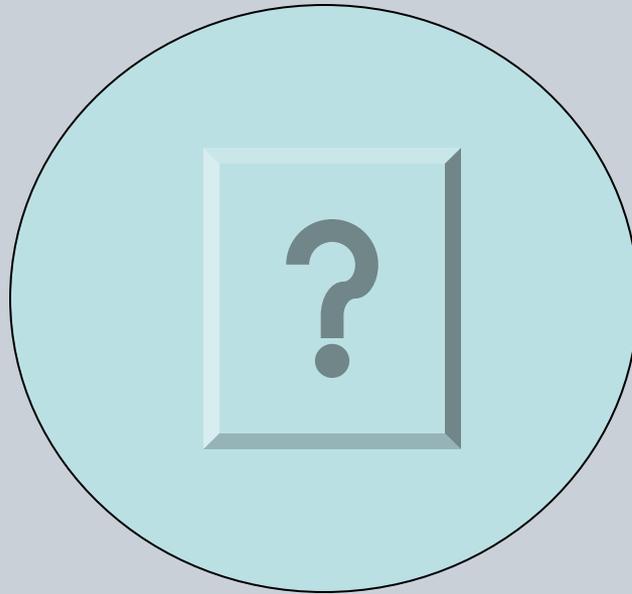


Hypothetical program where strategy focuses on developing environmental education programs with partners, that tie to existing viewing sites.

- Adminstration
- New Site Construction
- Site Restoration
- Partnerships
- Marketing
- Programs and Projects
- Research and Monitoring



What does your Strategy look like?



WFRP-MS

**Alaganik Angler Access Signs
Cordova Ranger District
Chugach National Forest
USDA Forest Service, Alaska Region
for Fiscal Year 2003**

Objective/Purpose of Project: The purpose of this project was to provide interpretation of natural cycles on the Copper River Delta that affect fish and fish resources along the newly installed Alaganik Slough Angler Access Trail.

Methods or Techniques Used: A fish crew member wrote most of the text for the signs with assistance from the district I&E staff. The artwork was created by a talented wildlife biologist on the district. Many district folks reviewed and edited the signs.

Realized/Expected results: Five signs were created. Topics covered include Pacific salmon life cycles, tide cycles, beaver pond cycles, human use cycles and an introduction to cycles effecting the Copper River Delta (like earthquake uplifts, glaciers, etc).

Contact Person and telephone number: Samantha Greenwood (907)424-4740 or Deyna Kuntzsch (907)424-4737

Links to sites:

Project Data:

Category	# New Sites	# Sites Restore Enhance	# Presentations	Under 18 Attendance	Over 18 Attendance	# Products	(a) P&M Mgmt. Plan \$	(b) P&M Overhead \$\$	(c) NFWL \$\$	(d) NFAF \$\$	(e) NFIF \$\$	(f) NFTE \$\$	Other Res. \$	Total FS \$\$ (a)+(b)+(c) +(d)+(e)+(f)
Totals	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	22,000	0	0	0	22,000
Fish Watch	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	22,000	0	0	0	22,000

The Budget Process

- **Become involved.**
- Your P3 and P4 points in BFES should match your NatureWatch "existing (current year) and opportunity" expenditure and accomplishment totals in WFRP.

Partnerships are likely to be the backbone to your NatureWatch Program Success.

Visit the partnerships section on the DIY NatureWatch CD to help you develop and manage your partnerships.

Program Management Workshop

- Develop your Program Management Skills
- When: April
- Where: Logan, Utah
- Contact: Shelly Witt (435) 753-4838

Explore Your DIY NatureWatch CD

- Set aside a few hours to explore the CD and keep a mental note of the materials that are available.
- Always ask yourself – is there anything on the DIY NatureWatch CD that can help me – before I begin a program or project?
- Download the entire CD on your hard drive so you don't have to load it every time you use it.

Keys to Your Success

- Ownership
- Support
- Persistence
- Marketing
- Vision
- Patience
- Take Risks
- Commitment
- Recognize excellence
- Honesty – “A Good Heart!”

Thank You!

Don Virgovic

(503) 808-2675

dvirgovic@fs.fed.us