

Special Agents

Mission

- To protect wildlife resources through the effective enforcement of Federal laws

Functions

- Break up international and domestic wildlife trafficking rings that target imperiled animals
- Investigate unlawful commercial exploitation of protected U.S. species
- Support species reintroduction programs, pursue habitat destruction cases, and help promote and enforce habitat conservation plans
- Forge partnerships with industry groups to reduce threats to protected wildlife
- Enforce Federal migratory game bird hunting regulations
- Work with States and Tribes to protect game species from illegal take and preserve hunting and fishing opportunities
- Provide investigative expertise to wildlife refuges and other Federal agencies
- Support international wildlife conservation by providing training and investigative assistance to other countries

Staffing & Locations

- 191 special agents including managers and field supervisors (as of April 1, 2010)
- Stationed across the country at locations that range from major metropolitan areas to one-person offices in more rural settings or near wilderness areas

FY 2009 Program Performance

- More than 13,000 investigations worked
- Investigative work secured
 - More than \$6.1 million in criminal fines
 - Federal prison sentences totaling 40 years
 - Federal probation terms totaling more than 500 years
 - More than \$1.1 million in civil penalties

History

- Trace history back over a century to the 1900 hiring of 6 Federal officers to enforce the Lacey Act – the Nation’s first Federal wildlife protection law
- Mission expanded in early decades of 20th century to enforce protections for migratory birds
- Mandate today encompasses significant involvement in protecting endangered and threatened species, including native and foreign species listed under the Endangered Species Act as well as wildlife and plants regulated under the CITES treaty and foreign law