



# U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

PART 224 FW 3-6	SUBJECT Personnel Service Awards and Recognition Program Monetary Awards Nonmonetary Awards & Informal Honors Honor Awards	RELEASE NUMBER 384
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT Division of Human Resources		DATE December 27, 2001

## EXPLANATION OF MATERIAL TRANSMITTED:

These chapters are revised to mandate the use of FWS Form 3-2207 (Award Certification) for processing all awards.

  
Acting ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - BUDGET,  
PLANNING AND HUMAN RESOURCES

## FILING INSTRUCTIONS:

### Remove:

224 FW 3, FWM 382, 11/29/01 (2 sheets)  
224 FW 4, FWM 382, 11/29/01 (2 sheets)  
224 FW 5, FWM 382, 11/29/01 (1 sheet)  
224 FW 6, FWM 382, 11/29/01 (3 sheets)

### Insert:

224 FW 3, FWM 384, 12/27/01 (2 sheets)  
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**6.1 What is an honor award?** An honor award provides nonmonetary recognition to Service employees and partners-in-mission. Honor awards are highly esteemed and coveted awards and are the most prestigious recognitions that the Service or the Department grant for career accomplishments, exceptional support of the Department's mission, or heroism.

**6.2 What is the policy on honor awards?** Honor awards are granted independently of cash awards, although consideration for honor awards does not preclude additional consideration for a cash award. Honor awards are not intended to serve as a substitute for deserved monetary recognition, but they are designed to give official recognition of singular or career achievements and to serve as an incentive to further accomplishment. All nominations for honor awards are forwarded through the normal supervisory channels and the servicing personnel office of the individual or group being recommended for the award before they are forwarded to the Washington Office for approval.

**6.3 Does the Service pay travel expenses for attendance at an honor award ceremony?** The Service is authorized to pay necessary expenses associated with the award recipient's travel to the Departmental Honor Awards Convocation. This authority extends also to employees to be honored at a Presidential award ceremony or a prestigious honorary award ceremony sponsored by another Federal agency or a non-Federal organization that recognizes outstanding Federal employee achievements. Regional and Assistant Directors also have authority to provide reimbursement for travel costs for an individual of the award recipient's choosing to attend a major awards presentation ceremony as defined above, funds permitting, provided that the person is related by blood or affinity (a close association with the award recipient that is the equivalent of a family relationship) and that the travel must be directly to and from the site of the ceremony and is to be compensated at the rates and for the expenses authorized under the Federal Travel Regulations (41 CFR 301-304). The travel reimbursement is intended to cover instances in which the award recipient and his or her guest are both geographically distant from the site of the ceremony, rather than in instances in which the award recipient's residence is in the same area as the ceremony. Travel expenses are paid by the recommending organization.

**6.4 What is the Service's Honor Award Program for employees?**

**A.** Employees of the Fish and Wildlife Service at all grade levels are eligible to be nominated for an honor award in accordance with the criteria established for each type of award cited herein. Employees may receive only one honor award of each type while employed by the Department, with the exception of the Valor and Exemplary Act Awards and

as a participant in the Unit Award for Excellence of Service. Consultants and contractors are not eligible for honor awards.

**B.** When considering nominations for honor awards, supervisors and managers should ensure that the awards are initiated well in advance of retirement or other separation from the Service. Honor awards granted when employees are contemplating retirement or have retired are untimely and inappropriate. These awards are designed to recognize significant accomplishments and notable careers while an employee is still employed and is able to receive and enjoy the recognition and esteem afforded by the awards from peers, colleagues, and other Service officials. Similarly, consideration should be given to appropriately monitoring employees at various levels in their careers to provide the opportunity and further incentive for the employee to aspire to higher and more prestigious awards, as well as give incentive to other employees through the acknowledgment of a caliber of performance worthy of emulation. The graduated use of honor awards will help to ensure that worthy employees are appropriately recognized throughout their careers and receive the award that most aptly reflects the significance of the contribution.

**C.** A nomination is based primarily on the employee's contributions while he or she is an employee of the Department of the Interior. Contributions to other Government agencies where the employee may have worked can also be cited. Length of service is not a primary factor in the granting of an honor award and should be used only in the context of recognizing a significant or distinguished career over a substantial period of time. For honor award nominations, the nominee's Official Personnel Folder (OPF) is to be reviewed and any derogatory information contained therein furnished with the nomination. If no derogatory information is contained in the OPF, the section stating: "There is no derogatory information contained in the nominee's Official Personnel Folder." will be initialed and dated by the person who conducted the review of the OPF.

**D.** Although it is desirable that awards be given before an employee leaves the Service, the Service Incentive Awards Committee will consider nominations received within 6 months after the date of retirement or separation of an employee provided a special justification fully supporting the submission delay is provided.

**6.5 What awards can employees receive and what is the criteria for each?**

**A. Distinguished Service Award.** The Distinguished Service Award was established in 1948 and is the highest Departmental honor award that can be granted to a career employee. The DSA is given at any time during an employee's career for an outstanding contribution to

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science, outstanding skill or ability in the performance of duty, an eminent career in the Department, an outstanding record in administration, an outstanding contribution to equal opportunity in Government, an outstanding contribution to energy conservation, or any other outstanding contribution to the public service. Employees nominated for a DSA must have previously received a Meritorious Service Award. In rare instances, consideration will be given to granting an exception to this policy if the sponsor of the nomination provides a fully justified request for a waiver. The following standards serve as a general criterion guide for the DSA:

(1) Leadership, ability, and devotion to duty displayed over a considerable period, reflecting significant credit on the Service and/or Department and resulting in the advancement of program goals.

(2) An extraordinary service, suggestion, or accomplishment demonstrating exceptional ingenuity and ability and contributing significantly to improved efficiency of operations in program areas within the Service and/or Department.

(3) Performance of assigned duties in such an outstanding manner and with such identifiable benefits as to be clearly exceptional and deserving of the highest form of recognition.

(4) Development and improvement of methods and procedures demonstrating original thinking and resulting in extraordinary tangible and/or intangible benefits.

**B. Meritorious Service Award.** The Meritorious Service Award was established in 1948 and is the Department's second highest Departmental honor award that can be granted to a career employee. The MSA is given at any time during an employee's career for an important contribution to science or management; a notable career; superior service in administration or in the execution of duties; initiative in devising new and improved work methods and procedures; superior accomplishments in fostering the objective of equal employment opportunity; or important contributions to energy conservation. Consider nominating employees for this award at the time an important contribution is made or at least during mid-career. This will not preclude consideration for a DSA later in a career, and should, in fact, enhance the justification of the higher award. The following standards serve as a general criterion guide for the MSA:

(1) Highly superior performance and devotion to duty displayed over a considerable period.

(2) A service, suggestion, or accomplishment demonstrating a high degree of ingenuity and ability and resulting in significant benefits to the Service and/or Department or to the public.

(3) Exceptional achievements in improving morale of employees that result in substantial improvement in work performance.

(4) Performance of assigned duties in such an exemplary manner as to be deserving of high honorary recognition.

(5) Any other superior performance related to assigned duties deemed to be worthy of special recognition as a reward for accomplishment and as an incentive to others.

**C. Superior Service Award.** The Superior Service Award was established in 1971 and is a Departmental Honor Award granted for significant acts, services, or achievements that materially aid or effect the successful accomplishment of the Service's and/or the Department's mission. The Director may grant this award at the time a superior contribution is made. The nomination is primarily based on the employee's contributions while an employee of the Department. The achievement or contribution cited must show one or more of the following:

(1) Accomplishment of a particularly difficult or important mission, operation, or assignment in a manner that reflects credit on the individual or the Service.

(2) Development of a new procedure or process that results in substantially increased productivity, efficiency, or economy of operation and for which the employee has not been otherwise rewarded.

(3) Any other aspect of superior performance related to assigned duties and deemed to be deserving of special recognition.

**D. Unit Award for Excellence of Service.** The Unit Award is a Departmental honor award granted to a group of employees who have worked together as a team or unit and whose efforts and contributions are considered to be superior. A Unit Award nomination is appropriate for recognizing units when it is not feasible to individually identify the participants or their respective contributions. The nomination is based on the group's results and must be specific as to the scope of the contributions and the period covered by the nomination. The period should ordinarily not exceed 2 years.

**E. Valor Award.** The Valor Award, established in 1957, is the highest honor granted by the Department to employees who demonstrate unusual courage involving a high degree of personal risk in the face of danger. A Valor Award nomination requires that the employee's life was in jeopardy in attempting to save another. There is no requirement that the act be related to official duties or that the site of the incident be the official duty station. The award is based on the nature of the act and is given individually. Employees at all levels in the Department are eligible for this award.

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**F. Exemplary Act Award.** The Exemplary Act Award, established in 1982, is designed to honor employees or private citizens who exhibit bravery in attempting to save the life of another. An Exemplary Act Award recognizes those individuals whose prompt decision or action significantly contributed toward the saving of a life or property or who helped another person in need of physical assistance. The critical or emergency situation need not be one that involved personal risk to the nominee. There is no requirement that the act be related to official duties or that the site of the incident be the official duty station. The award is based on the nature of the act and is given individually or to a group.

**6.6 Who can initiate awards for employees?**

**A.** Any official or employee who is aware of the facts may initiate a recommendation for a Distinguished Service, Meritorious Service, or Superior Service Award. However, you must route the formal nomination and supporting documentation through normal supervisory channels. FWS Form 3-2207 (Award Certification) must contain only the signature of the nominated individual's Regional or Assistant Director in the block titled "Nominating Official." Forms incorrectly signed will be returned.

**B.** The immediate supervisor or superior most familiar with a group's contribution is responsible for recommending the group for a Unit Award. You must forward nominations to the Division of Human Resources within 6 months after the superior performance cited.

**C.** Any individual or group of individuals, public or private, who is aware of the facts may initiate a recommendation for a Valor or Exemplary Act Award. However, you must route the formal nomination and supporting documentation through normal supervisory channels. Forms incorrectly signed will be returned. The Service Incentive Awards Committee will not consider nominations received by the Division of Human Resources more than 6 months after the date of the heroic act unless special justification is provided that fully supports the submission's delay.

**6.7. How do I submit a nomination?** Submit nominations on FWS Form 3-2207 through normal supervisory channels to the servicing personnel office. After review, the SPO will forward the nominations under the signature of the Regional Director or Assistant Director, as appropriate, to the Washington Office, Division of Human Resources, Attention: Service Incentive Awards Coordinator. After review, the Service Incentive Awards Coordinator will forward nominations to the Service Incentive Awards Committee, which is responsible for recommending approval or disapproval. If the SIAC and the Director concur, nominations for Distinguished Service, Meritorious Service, Unit, and Valor Awards will be forwarded to the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife

and Parks for approval and to the Office of the Secretary for signature. The Director is the approving authority for Superior Service and Exemplary Act Awards. Servicing personnel offices are responsible for ensuring that an award nomination has the correct signature and an appropriate draft citation that consists of approximately 300 words to highlight the nominee's contributions. The draft citation cannot exceed one page, and it must be in the format of Exhibit 1 or 2, as appropriate. Email a copy of the citation to the Service Incentive Awards Coordinator.

**6.8 What does the employee receive as evidence of the award?**

**A. Distinguished Service Award.** Each recipient receives a gold medal, engraved with the employee's name and date of the award, a matching lapel pin, and a certificate and citation signed by the Secretary of the Interior. Presentation is made at the Department's Honor Awards Convocation.

**B. Meritorious Service Award.** Each recipient receives a silver medal engraved with the employee's name and date of the award, a matching lapel pin, and a certificate and citation signed by the Secretary of the Interior. Presentation is made at an appropriate ceremony at the Regional or Washington Office level, whichever is applicable.

**C. Superior Service Award.** Each recipient receives a lapel pin and a certificate and citation signed by the Director. Presentation is made at an appropriate ceremony at the Regional or Washington Office.

**D. Unit Award.** The award includes one certificate and citation in the Unit's name signed by the Secretary. Presentation is made at an appropriate ceremony at the Regional or Washington Office.

**E. Valor Award.** Each recipient of the Valor Award receives a gold medal engraved with the employee's name and a citation signed by the Secretary of the Interior. Presentation is made at the Department's Honor Awards Convocation.

**F. Exemplary Act Award.** Award recipients receive a citation and certificate signed by the Director. Presentation is made at an appropriate ceremony at the Regional or Washington Office.

**6.9 What is the Service's Honor Award Program for partners-in-mission and private citizens?** Partners-in-mission and private citizens are eligible to be nominated for an honor award in accordance with the criteria established for the various award. When considering nominations for honor awards to partners-in-mission and private citizens, nominators should ensure that the award avoids any

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possibility of embarrassment to the Service. A nomination of a partner-in-mission or private citizen is based on contributions to the Service and/or Department. Nominations received more than 6 months after the date of the contribution of partners-in-mission or private citizens will not be accepted, unless a special justification fully supporting the submission delay is provided.

**6.10 What awards can partners-in-mission and private citizens receive and what is the criteria for each?**

**A. Conservation Service Award.** The Conservation Service Award was established in 1951 and is a Departmental honor award granted to a partner-in-mission for direct service. It is considered to be the highest honor that can be bestowed upon a private citizen or group by the Department. This award recognizes partners-in-mission for their outstanding performance and direct service to the effectiveness of the Department's mission. The direct service may be in conjunction with one or more bureaus or the Office of the Secretary.

**B. Director's Corporate Wildlife Stewardship Award.** This award was established in 1991 to recognize efforts on the part of private corporations operating within the United States and its territories to protect and enhance the Nation's fish and wildlife resources. It is awarded to further the mission of the Service through the fostering of a cooperative spirit and working relationship with private businesses by honoring their efforts to preserve and/or enhance the natural resources of this country. Corporations may be recognized for a substantial donation of money, land, or materials provided for the Service's cause, or for an exemplary service rendered for the benefit of wildlife resources. Contributions can result from working directly with the Service or from an independent effort. This form of recognition is appropriate when the accomplishment(s) of a corporation is(are) determined to be of such significance that it is deserving of a higher honor than that accorded by the Service Citizen's Award. Consideration may also be given to nominating the organization for the Department's highly esteemed Conservation Service Award in addition to the subject award.

**C. Service Citizen's Award.** This award is granted to officially commend private citizens for contributions they have voluntarily made to the public service that, while meaningful, do not meet the high standards of the criteria for the Department's Conservation Service Award.

(1) A commendation may be given to any individual or organization outside of Government whose contribution has benefitted the Service's programs, services, or operations. To maintain the honor and significance of this award, it should never be recommended for or granted to several organizations or individuals performing the same service on a repetitive or continuous basis based solely on precedent.

Rather, each case should be considered on its own merit and recognized accordingly. An award should be granted only to a single individual or organization among many who may have performed the same services.

(2) An individual or organization may be nominated for this special recognition through such voluntary actions as the following:

(a) A contribution or donation to the Service of money, land (habitat), or material directly for Service programs.

(b) Dedication or reservation and maintenance of privately owned habitat specifically for the preservation and protection of fish and/or wildlife.

(c) Personal effort on behalf of Service programs.

(d) Exemplary service in an advisory capacity to a Service committee, program, project, et cetera.

(e) Direct assistance through actions or useful ideas that are beneficial in eliminating or minimizing problems or in actively contributing to mission accomplishment.

(f) Assistance of a significant nature through the cooperative use of facilities, equipment, or staff.

(g) Authorship in research or for a publicity effort that has made a significant contribution to Service programs.

**D. Citizen's Award for Bravery.** The Citizen's Award for Bravery is the highest honor granted by the Department to a private citizen who demonstrates unusual courage involving a high degree of personal risk in the face of danger. A Citizen's Award for Bravery nomination requires that the nominee's life was in jeopardy in attempting to save the life of a Departmental employee on duty or anyone on Departmental property or trust land.

**E. Exemplary Act Award for Private Citizens.** Exemplary Act Awards may be granted to private citizens whose actions meet the requirement of the award. See paragraph 6.5F for further details.

**6.11 Who can initiate awards for partners-in-mission and private citizens?**

**A.** Any official or employee who is aware of the facts may initiate a recommendation for the awards in paragraph 6.10A, B, or C. However, the formal nomination and supporting documentation must be routed through normal supervisory channels. FWS Form 3-2207 must contain only the signature of the nominated individual's Regional or Assistant Director in the block titled "Nominating Official." Forms incorrectly signed will be returned.

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**B.** Any individual or group of individuals, public or private, who is aware of the facts may initiate a recommendation for a Bravery or Exemplary Act Award. However, you must route the formal nomination and supporting documentation through normal supervisory channels. Forms incorrectly signed will be returned. The SIAC will not consider nominations for the Citizen's Award for Bravery that are received by the Division of Human Resources more than 6 months after the date of the heroic act unless special justification is provided that fully supports the delay.

**6.12 How do I nominate a partner-in-mission or private citizen for an honor award?** Submit nominations on FWS Form 3-2207 through normal supervisory channels to the servicing personnel office. After review, the SPO will forward the nomination under the signature of the Regional Director or Assistant Director, as appropriate, to the Washington Office, Division of Human Resources, Attention: Service Incentive Awards Coordinator. After review, the Service Incentive Awards Coordinator will forward nominations to the Service Incentive Awards Committee, which is responsible for recommending approval or disapproval. If the SIAC and the Director concur, nominations for the Conservation Service and Bravery Awards will be forwarded to the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks for approval and to the Office of the Secretary for signature. The Director is the approving authority for the Corporate Wildlife Stewardship, Citizen, and Exemplary Act Awards. Servicing personnel offices are responsible for ensuring that an award nomination has the correct signature and an appropriate draft citation that consists of approximately 300 words to highlight the nominee's contributions. The draft citation cannot exceed one page in length, and it must be in the format of Exhibit 1, 2, or 3, as appropriate. Email a copy of the citation to the Service Incentive Awards Coordinator.

**6.13 What does the partner-in-mission or private citizen receive as evidence of the award?**

**A. Conservation Service Award.** Each recipient receives a certificate and citation signed by the Secretary. Presentation is normally made at the Department's Honor Awards Convocation.

**B. Director's Corporate Wildlife Stewardship Award.** Each recipient receives a personal letter of commendation/appreciation signed by the Director and a nonmonetary award uniquely designed to represent the nominee's contribution(s) to the Service. Such nonmonetary awards will take the form of a plaque, print, or other similar item that has an award or honor connotation as determined appropriate by the nominating office and will be inscribed with "U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Corporate Wildlife Stewardship Award." The total dollar value of the nonmonetary recognition will not exceed \$500.00. When practical, the Director or Deputy Director will personally

present the award. Otherwise, the award may be presented by a Regional or Assistant Director at an appropriate ceremony.

**C. Service Citizen's Award.** Each recipient receives a certificate and letter of commendation signed by the Director. Presentation should be made at an appropriate ceremony with accompanying publicity at the Regional or Washington Office.

**D. Citizen's Award for Bravery.** Recipients receive a certificate and a citation signed by the Secretary of the Interior. Presentation is made at the Department's Honor Awards Convocation.

**6.14 What is the Service's Outside Award Program?** Outside awards are sponsored by non-Federal organizations. Federal employees may be eligible. Nominations for these awards are solicited on a case-by-case basis and are usually transmitted by means of a Division of Human Resources Notice. Sponsoring agencies and organizations solicit nominations for outside awards at various times throughout the year. More detailed information concerning eligibility requirements, nomination criteria, and submission dates are provided when each award is announced.