Module 4b

Interactions
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mission Statement

“The mission is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.”
Refuge Improvement Act

Compatibility

Compatibility is totally unique to the USFWS. We require a compatibility determination for all refuge uses.

This requirement will apply to all such facilities, structures, improvements, and refuge actions associated with uses and the replacements or major repair or alteration of facilities, structures, and improvements associated with already approved uses.
Some recreational uses *may or may not* be compatible with coastal birds and will differ among refuges.
Public Interaction

Representation

Professionally:
Remember you are representing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Wildlife Refuge System. As a Steward or volunteer, you should present yourself in a professional manner and wear the appropriate attire that your site requires.

Friendly:
The old adage, “You get more with honey than you do with vinegar” has bearing. You will “usually” have a better interaction with the public if your actions and speech are of a positive friendly demeanor.
Public Interaction

Role

Your Role:
Your job and goal is to protect shorebirds through education and interpretation. You should educate visitors about the importance of your site to the wildlife that lives there.

Our mission is “conservation and wildlife first”

You are not an enforcer of the law.
If a visitor is unresponsive or hostile, contact your supervisor or the law enforcement officer for assistance.
Be Safe!

The most dangerous situation for a non-law enforcement employee is getting into an encounter, by taking matters into their own hands, without proper authority, training and equipment.

Always act on the side of caution!

Even with having such an important message and role, it is not always possible to educate and influence the public to hear what you have to say.
Serious Violations

Stop, Take a Breath, and Observe

When should you call 911?
- When you or someone else is in imminent danger OR needs or requests medical attention.
- When describing an incident remain calm, know your location, give pertinent details.

Call a Federal Wildlife Officer ASAP and contact your Supervisor and Refuge Manager.
Do not disturb a possible crime scene.

Document the Incident:
By taking notes and pictures; this will be helpful later to remember the incident.

Note descriptions of people, vehicles, location, distances, weather conditions, date and time, what happened, etc.

Use the Witness Observation Form.