



Strategic Plan 2003-2008



Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Land Management
Bureau of Reclamation
Minerals Management Service
National Park Service
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Geological Survey

Strategic Plan 2003-2008 (Revised)

**United States Department of the Interior
United States-Mexico Border
Field Coordinating Committee**

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**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
UNITED STATES-MEXICO BORDER
FIELD COORDINATING COMMITTEE
STRATEGIC PLAN 2003-2008 (Revised)**

Mission Statement

The mission of the United States–Mexico Border Field Coordinating Committee (the FCC) is to identify and facilitate opportunities to communicate and coordinate at regional, state, and field levels between and among U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) bureaus and offices and between field and headquarters offices on border natural and cultural resource issues.

Who We Are

The FCC was chartered in August 1994. It consists of seven bureaus within DOI—the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, Minerals Management Service, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Geological Survey. Each bureau has a representative who serves on the FCC leadership team, along with the FCC Chair and Vice-Chair (also from the bureaus). The regional environmental officers of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Oakland, California, are ex officio members of the FCC leadership team as is an international affairs representative from the Office of the Secretary of the Interior in Washington, DC. FCC membership is comprised of DOI employees with an interest in or responsibility for resource management or research activities along the U.S.-Mexico border.

No full-time equivalents have been assigned to the FCC. Participation by bureau personnel is in addition to the other duties of their positions. The FCC is not funded through a separate Federal appropriation. Expenses are borne by the participating bureaus. The achievement of long-term goals presented in this strategic plan will be accomplished largely through the bureaus' current and future contributions and participation.

What We Do

The FCC accomplishes its mission on the U.S.-Mexico border through bi-annual meetings, information sharing, and work groups (formerly called issue teams) established to address a specific subject. Work groups are generally made up of field experts from the bureaus, who have specific responsibilities, special expertise, or bona fida interest in the issue.

The FCC also facilitates relationships between agencies that have an interest in natural and cultural resource issues along the border. Important border relationships include those among Federal, Tribal, State, and local governments on both sides of the border concerning programs, projects, and activities affecting the border area. By assisting the member bureaus in building partnerships and enlisting volunteers, FCC advances its objectives of improved communication, coordinated activity, and implementation of best conservation practices in the border area.

The FCC was chartered in 1994, but its mission and methods remain consistent with the current vision of DOI, particularly with former Secretary Norton's "4 Cs": Conservation through cooperation, consultation, and communication. The "4Cs" are at the core of the FCC's strategic goals. The components of the strategic plan presented here are constructed from the "4 Cs". Improving communication among the FCC's many partners is one of the FCC's four specific strategic goals. As a committee without DOI funding, the FCC relies on participation, consultation and cooperation with managers of the member bureaus, including bureau field offices. Development and implementation of cross-border agreements and cooperative projects with Mexican government agencies, non-governmental organizations and other partners puts the "4Cs" into action. Through this work, the FCC strives to add value to the efforts of field offices, on-the-ground projects and programs along the U.S.-Mexico border.

2003-2008 FCC Strategic Plan

This is the second FCC Strategic Plan. The first plan began in 1999 and continued through 2002. The FCC completed a significant number of the actions proposed under the first plan. Others actions have been established as routine, on-going activities, and are shown as such in this strategic plan. Past and recent accomplishments are described on the FCC web site at www.cerc.usgs.gov/fcc/. Many of the FCC's accomplishments, are, or will be, recorded as performance measures and outputs by the field offices of the DOI bureaus. This second plan was updated in 2006 to reflect minor changes in the FCC's operating procedures.

Consistency with the 2003-2008 DOI Strategic Plan

In September 2003, DOI released its five-year strategic plan. The DOI strategic plan has four broad mission areas: Resource Protection, Resource Use, Recreation, and Serving Communities. Under each mission area are more specific "end outcome" and "intermediate outcome" goals and performance measures. The FCC has established four strategic goals which are linked with key departmental strategic goals and end outcomes. The FCC strategic goals support the DOI strategic plan directly in three of the four DOI mission areas. The FCC long-term resource protection goals are consistent with advancement of the DOI end and intermediate outcome goals in improving the health of bi-national watersheds and water bodies, sustaining cross-border biological communities, and protecting cultural and natural heritage resources. The FCC's strategic goal in project management and conservation practices tiers readily into the DOI mission area of Resource Use, while strategic goals in international cooperation and communication tier into Serving Communities. Actions to be taken in the FCC Strategic Plan will be consistent with DOI plans and policies. Planned outcomes of the DOI plan include increased survival of threatened and endangered species and control of invasive species. These outcomes are supported by the goals of the FCC plan through cooperation with DOI bureau managers, Mexican counterparts, other federal agencies, tribes, academia, and nongovernmental organizations to improve and sustain habitat in many cross-border watersheds, and along the entire border region. Some specific examples of cooperative efforts can be seen in FCC support of work to protect the Sonoran pronghorn and the aplomado falcon.

Key Cross-cutting Tools: Science and Partnerships

Key tools which contribute to meeting all strategic goals support the four DOI mission areas. Effective use of two of those tools, science and partnerships, is critical to the achievement of the FCC's strategic goals and end outcomes. The DOI plan recognizes science as the foundation of its pursuit of "collaborative efforts with other countries in identifying and dealing with natural resource problems of an international and global nature." The FCC will draw on the scientific expertise in its member bureaus to implement its strategic plan and the DOI plan in the US-Mexico border region.

The FCC has encouraged and participated in partnerships with "sister" protected areas, tribes, non-government organizations and private sector associations on both sides of the United States-Mexico border. The partnerships address current land management issues ranging from management of cross-border land uses to protection of fragile and threatened areas of biological importance. The FCC has organized conferences, published papers, sponsored research, and worked with Federal, Tribal, State, and local government partners in all border states on a variety of projects. Major government partners have been the Environmental Protection Agency (in Border XXI), USDA-Agricultural Research Service, Institute for the Environment and Sustainable Development of the State of Sonora, (IMADES), Mexico's federal Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT), the Tohono O'odham Nation, the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission, and others. The FCC's strength is founded on its partnerships, and its capacity to increase the effectiveness of its partners and member agencies.

FCC 2003-2008 STRATEGIC GOALS AND PLANNED ACTIONS

DOI MISSION AREA: RESOURCE PROTECTION

FCC STRATEGIC GOAL in RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION:

Improve understanding, management, conservation, and protection of shared natural and cultural resources along the United States-Mexico border.

Explanation: As the nation's principal conservation agency, DOI and its bureaus are responsible for the management, conservation, and protection of natural and cultural resources for present and future generations. The FCC seeks to promote the development and distribution of information specific to the border region that helps its member agencies succeed in their missions and build positive cross-border resource relationships with Mexican land managers, while recognizing the environmental, cultural, social, economic and legal differences between the United States and Mexico. As natural and cultural resource management concerns arise, the formation of work groups (formerly called issue teams) or other strategies may be necessary to help the member agencies effectively address those issues. Some of the activities of work groups are listed in Table 1 along with other actions important to encouraging and supporting sound resource management in the border area. The performance measure for progress toward achievement of this goal is the number of field office projects that would not have occurred or would have differed significantly without contributions from the FCC.

TABLE 1: ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF BORDER AREA NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT		
Action	Responsibility	Timetable
1. Assess and characterize the status of border species and habitats to identify areas of binational interest and concern	FCC members	Ongoing, subject to funding availability through the member agencies
2. Continue to advise bureau managers on resources needed to support each bureau's mission on the border.	Each FCC member	Ongoing
3. Encourage the development of standards for data and geographic information systems used in border work to ensure compatibility among the DOI bureaus, other agencies, and, to the extent possible, Mexico.	FCC members, with USGS lead	2008
4. Document US and Mexico partners interested and involved in identifying, protecting, and managing cultural resources along the US-Mexico border. a. Catalog projects and sites in which partners are active b. Documentation should include annotated lists of agencies, academic and research institutions, museums, archives, maps and regularly updated reports.	FCC members,	Ongoing
5. Facilitate professional exchanges to promote cultural research, raise awareness of historic and cultural ties with Mexico, and encourage heritage and cultural tourism as a component of sustainable economic development.	FCC members,	Ongoing
6. Evaluate work groups a. Review accomplishments and progress toward work group objectives b. Review border natural and cultural resource issues to determine the need for existing or new work groups	FCC members FCC members	Annually Annually

DOI MISSION AREA: RESOURCE USE

FCC STRATEGIC GOAL in PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION PRACTICES:
Improve understanding and efficiency of project management and conservation practices for natural and cultural resources along the United States-Mexico border.

Explanation: The FCC coordinates with bureaus in DOI, as well as partners in other departments, tribes, the four US and six Mexican border states, and a variety of non-government organizations to facilitate improved resource management along the border. Some of the lands managed by DOI bureaus or other landowners are used for specific limited purposes, such as recreation or wildlife habitat. Other lands support more diverse uses in transportation, grazing, agriculture, energy production, and other natural resource uses. The FCC’s role is to assist member bureau managers and partners in land use analysis and approval processes for various land uses affected by the international border. The FCC also assists in implementing best management practices, and mitigating impacts on natural and cultural resources. The performance measure for progress toward achievement of this goal is the number of field office projects for which management practices or impact mitigation were significantly enhanced through interaction with the FCC.

Action	Responsibility	Timetable
1. Disseminate, to DOI managers working on the border, information on cooperative projects, with emphasis on those that effectively incorporate sound management practices in the border area.	FCC members	Ongoing
2. Identify and recruit partners and expertise, and seek DOI support to advance effective field office work in the border area.	FCC members	Ongoing
3. Improve DOI manager understanding of binational cultural perspectives, social values and governmental processes.	FCC members	Ongoing
4. Create communication links among communities in the border area to establish a network of support for sound management practices.	FCC members	Ongoing

DOI MISSION AREA: SERVING COMMUNITIES

FCC STRATEGIC GOAL in INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION:

Implement and improve existing and future border area agreements, formal and informal, on natural and cultural resource management with Mexico by fostering cooperation and communication with partners in Mexico and the United States, DOI Headquarters and field offices.

Explanation: DOI resource managers and Mexican counterparts understand well that political boundaries can have significant effects on the condition and management of natural and cultural resources. Managers also understand species habitats, watersheds, migration routes and other geographic features straddle borders and boundaries with indifference to human intervention. The interactions among users, management, and natural forces that occur in the international border area require a high level of cooperation and commitment to improve and sustain the health of natural ecosystems and human communities. Often agreements of various kinds are tools in this mutual management effort. Existing agreements include those among government agencies at the Federal and State levels. Most of the DOI bureaus have individual agreements with Mexican counterparts. FCC commits to encouraging appropriate and joint involvement among various United States and Mexican government offices to address border natural and cultural resources issues, and to provide means for consultations with Mexican counterparts. FCC also promotes communication between DOI bureau field offices and border area communities to share information on effective resource management practices. The performance measure of progress toward achieving this goal is the number of contacts and actions taken by FCC that significantly contribute to fulfilling obligations of the DOI Memorandum of Understanding with SEMARNAT, and other existing or new agreements. Table 3 lists the actions needed to realize this key goal.

TABLE 3: ACTIONS TO IMPROVE AND IMPLEMENT INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION		
Action	Responsibility	Timetable
1. Present at least one major issue to the United States- Mexico Binational Commission forum.	FCC Leadership Team	Annually
2. Support the United States-Mexico Border States Conference on Recreation, Parks, and Wildlife.	FCC members	As scheduled
3. Develop and provide binational compatible digital geospatial information.	USGS lead	Ongoing
4. Conduct meetings involving Mexican partners.	FCC members	Ongoing
5. Conduct binational letter of intent meetings.	FCC members	As needed
6. Provide field-level input and develop recommendations for the binational activities of DOI.	FCC members	Ongoing

DOI MISSION AREA: SERVING COMMUNITIES

FCC STRATEGIC GOAL in COMMUNICATION:

Improve communication of information on border natural and cultural resource issues

Explanation: Good communication is essential for effective natural and cultural resource management. FCC members are responsible for communicating border and FCC information within their individual bureaus and to various outside sources. Interaction between FCC members and bureau personnel in the field offices and at all management levels in supports bureau objectives and management plans in the border area. The interaction also provides a means of transferring information and obtaining assistance from other Federal, Tribal, State, and local government offices, Mexico, academia, non-government organizations, and interested individuals along the border. The FCC is available to accomplish DOI border tasks that require broad coordination and communication among the field offices along the border. FCC’s interaction with the Commission for Environmental Cooperation and the Good Neighbor Environmental Board are examples. The performance measure of progress toward achieving this goal is the number of contacts with border area land managers, land owners, academic or government partners that make significant contributions to the successful completion of projects and activities. Table 4 identifies actions which the FCC believes can improve communications on border natural and cultural resource issues by the year 2008.

TABLE 4: ACTIONS FOR IMPROVING COMMUNICATIONS		
Action	Responsibility	Timetable
1. Maintain communications with border field offices a. Keep field offices up to date on FCC activities b. Support field office activities in border area c. Obtain field office input to public documents related to DOI and border issues, such as the annual Good Neighbor Environmental Board Report	Each FCC member Each FCC member Each FCC member	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing
2. Maintain a mailing list for FCC activities	FCC Chair	Ongoing
3. Communicate important activities of the FCC a. Develop fact sheets, issue papers, informational brochures, videos, and public service announcements that communicate important activities of FCC b. Invite DOI staff and managers and bureau senior managers (e.g. State or regional directors), field office managers, staff, and headquarters reps. to participate in FCC meetings, as appropriate c. Inform/update headquarters & bureau international affairs offices about FCC activities	FCC members FCC Chair & meeting host bureau FCC Leadership Team	As appropriate At semi-annual FCC meetings Ongoing
4. Seek input from other federal, state, tribal, and local government offices, Mexico, academia, non-government organizations and interested public	FCC members	Ongoing
5. Consult and form partnerships, as appropriate, with other government agencies and non-government organizations that are involved in border natural and cultural resource issues	FCC members	Ongoing
6. Maintain a World Wide Web page of FCC information with links to bureau web pages. a. Provide information to main web page. b. Maintain web page.	FCC members with USGS lead	At least every 6 mo. At least every 6 mo.
7. Hold FCC meetings twice a year to facilitate communication among bureaus.	FCC Leadership Team	Twice annually
8. Report FCC accomplishments and annual work plan to bureau directors and international offices, and to the DOI International Affairs Office	FCC Leadership Team	January 1 for previous calendar year
9. Present a Border Tech Transfer symposium, or session at DOI Environmental Conf. to show successful projects and practices in natural and cultural resource management in the border area.	Lead for each conf. will rotate among bureaus	Every 2-3 years, depending on DOI schedule