

U.S. Ramsar Site Nomination and Designation

Who can nominate a site:

Almost any local government, group, community, private organization, or landowner can nominate a site for inclusion on the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance. The Federal government can also nominate sites, such as National Parks, National Forests, or National Wildlife Refuges.

Basic requirements:

The site must meet any one of the nine criteria for inclusion on the Ramsar List. The criteria can be found online at http://www.ramsar.org/key_criteria.htm. All of the proposed site landowners and stakeholders must agree to its inclusion on the Ramsar List.

Nomination package:

The petitioner must submit a complete nomination package to the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The package must include:

- A cover letter addressed to the Director of the USFWS describing how the proposed site meets the Ramsar criteria;
- Written endorsements from each of the landowners, the local or state wildlife or natural resource agency, and a Member of Congress representing the geographic area. Although not required, additional letters of support from other stakeholders associated with the proposed site greatly contribute to the nomination process; and
- A completed Ramsar Information Sheet, available online at http://www.ramsar.org/ris/key_ris_e.doc. Additional information on completing the RIS can be found at http://www.ramsar.org/ris/key_ris.htm.

The petitioner should send a copy of the complete package to the Division of International Conservation, USFWS.

Designation process:

1. Trained staff at the USFWS review the completed nomination package and make a recommendation as to its qualification for inclusion on the Ramsar List;
2. The USFWS review team submits a designation recommendation to the USFWS Director, who makes the final designation decision;
3. The USFWS delivers the nomination package and communicates U.S. Ramsar site designation to the Ramsar Secretary General. Typically, the date the Ramsar Secretary General receives the package becomes the official designation date for that site;
4. The Ramsar Secretariat conducts a thorough review of package and may request additional information or revisions to the Ramsar Information Sheet.
5. Once the Secretariat completes its review, the Ramsar site is added to the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance.

Ramsar site obligations:

In coordination with the U.S. National Ramsar Committee, Ramsar site owners and managers shall:

- Promote the conservation of the Ramsar site;
- Inform the Ramsar Secretariat if the ecological character of the Ramsar site has changed, is changing or is likely to change as the result of technological developments, pollution

or other human interference; and

- Update the Ramsar Information Sheet for the site every six years.

For more information:

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www.ramsar.org

<http://www.fws.gov/international/ramsar/ramsar.htm>

<http://www.ramsarcommittee.us/>



Black-crowned Night Heron
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