

NBS names science center directors

In a spate of activity last fall, the National Biological Service (NBS) announced the selection of four biologists to serve as science center directors around the country. Dr. James A. Kushlan, an internationally renowned wetlands scientist, has been named director of the Patuxent Environmental Science Center. Located in Laurel, Maryland, this center focuses its research on environmental contaminants, populations and habitats of migratory birds, endangered species, urban ecology, and vertebrate systematics in the eastern United States. Field stations reporting to this director include the Northeast Research Station in Orono, Maine and the Center for Urban Ecology in Washington, D.C.

Biologist and geneticist Dr.

William Mokahi Steiner will head the Pacific Islands Science Center located in Honolulu, Hawaii. His responsibilities will include directing research into the uniqueness, diversity, stability, and conservation of Hawaiian ecosystems and various Pacific Islands under U.S. jurisdiction. Projects currently under way there address ecosystem degradation resulting from biodiversity loss, endangered species surveys and recovery, and nonnative species monitoring and management. An estimated 35% of the endemic plant species and 76% of the endemic bird species in Hawaii are extinct, endangered, or need protection.

The Northwest Biological Science Center in Seattle, Washington, also has a new director. Dr. Frank A. Shipley is experienced in dealing with estuarine issues and hopes to direct the science program to provide sound information on natural resource issues, including the complex and controversial plight of Pacific Northwest salmon. Established in 1934, the center is known internationally for fish disease research contributing to the success of salmon and steelhead hatcheries. Today, the center also emphasizes research in the Columbia basin and other Northwest river systems, and on forestry and wildlife concerns throughout the west.

Coming from a 9-year appointment as Director of the Alaska Science Center, Dr. A. William Palmisano, Jr., will head the Leetown Science Center in Kearneysville, West Virginia. A wildlife biologist and botanist, Palmisano will oversee a research program that concentrates on restoring and protecting aquatic species and their supporting ecosystems.

Center scientists use specialized training in ecology, health and disease, genetics, behavior, population modeling, fish physiology, and aquatic populations restoration technologies to support management of healthy populations of declining or threatened fish and other aquatic organisms.