This Is Who We Are
Our Code and Commitments

Our Code is grounded in our core values:

Our dedication to service describes not only our commitment to the American people, but also our commitment to each other.

Recognizing the interdependence between us as colleagues – and between our agency and the people we serve – means we know what we do always has an impact on others.

We respect diversity in all things, including the people and communities we engage, and the cultures, perspectives, ideas, and experiences they embody and bring to the table.

Every individual is entitled to safety in every way: physical, psychological, and social.

We understand that caring about conservation is not possible without also caring about each other.

Respect is not something anyone has to earn. It is something everyone deserves and can expect.

We Do...
...appreciate that each person has a valuable contribution to make.
...act in ways that convey our respect for people's life experiences, cultures, and perspectives.
...treat every person the way they would like to be treated.

We Do Not...
...discriminate against anyone in any way for any reason.
...use racial, cultural, age, sexual orientation, gender, or religious slurs, stereotypes, or generalizations in any form.
...display discourteous or disrespectful behavior.

Empower One Another

Conservation is possible only if everyone can bring their best selves forward.

We Do...
...share leadership and work collaboratively.
...listen to employees who raise concerns about anything that makes them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
...build our knowledge and skills to address inappropriate behavior.

We Do Not...
...demean, insult, or attack the thoughts or beliefs of another person.
...dismiss any person without listening openly to their ideas, beliefs, and opinions.
...blame others in order to separate ourselves from responsibility.

Invest In Relationships

Our ability to engage and be of service to others depends on how we nurture our relationships.

We Do...
...show curiosity about other people, ask questions, and listen openly.
...exhibit interest in the well-being of other people.
...seek feedback on how your relationship is serving shared needs.
...spend time getting to know each other and the people we serve.

We Do Not...
...default to doing things on our own and in our own way.
...talk at rather than with people.
...disengage or distance ourselves from the communities we serve.

Model Integrity

Demonstrating integrity builds confidence in our ability to get the job done.

We Do...
...act in ways that represent our values.
...comply with all codes, regulations, and guidelines.
...build personal connections while respecting professional boundaries.
...take responsibility for our own conduct.

We Do Not...
...demonstrate inappropriate, illegal or unsafe conduct in our own behavior.
...tolerate inappropriate, illegal, or unsafe behavior by others.
...act unfairly or show favoritism.

Protect One Another

We all deserve to be safe from physical, emotional, and psychological risk or harm at work.

We Do...
...take precautions to keep people safe in every way.
...report behaviors or conditions that put people at risk.
...stand up to intimidation, bullying, harassment, assault, and retaliation.
...resolve conflicts in a positive and constructive manner.

We Do Not...
...intimidate, bully, harass, assault or retaliate against anyone, or look the other way if someone else is doing so.
...initiate unwanted physical or sexual contact with other people.
...knowingly make false accusations against anyone.

Learn From Mistakes

Showing growth makes us worthy of trust and respect.

We Do...
...take responsibility for our mistakes and encourage others to do the same.
...share what we learned from our mistakes.
...take action to prevent the mistakes from being repeated.

We Do Not...
...hide or cover up when a mistake has been made.
...ignore the opportunity to assess what happened and learn from it.
...create an environment where people feel afraid to admit to having made a mistake.

Our Code and Commitments reinforces and supplements the USDA’s Employee Responsibilities and Conduct policy and the Forest Service’s Anti-Harassment policy, which every employee is also expected to know. In applying these commitments in situations where the right choice is not clear, consult your manager, the Office of Ethic and Compliance, our Legal Department, or one another to help determine the right course of action.