

The Endangered Species Program and How It Works On Private Lands

The Endangered Species Program conserves endangered and threatened species and the ecosystems upon which they depend. As of December 31, 2001, there were 1,254 U.S. species listed as endangered or threatened, 249 candidate species and 40 species proposed for listing. Conserving endangered and threatened species is necessary to preserve our natural heritage for future generations and to maintain our quality of life. Conserving ecosystems benefits all users of ecosystem resources and is essential to maintaining our nation's long term economic prosperity.

Our Program's priorities are:

- 1) Making listing species unnecessary.
- 2) Recovering species that are listed.
- 3) Providing quality customer service to Federal, State, and local governments and private individuals to assist them in conserving endangered species while meeting their social and economic objectives.

Endangered Species Program Elements

■ Through the *Candidate Conservation* program, the Service, in partnership with public agencies, private organizations, and landowners, works to reduce the threats to declining species, and thus avoid listing. By acting early before a species becomes imperiled, the Service can reduce the costs of recovery and maintain land use flexibility for landowners.

■ Through the *Listing* program, the Service follows Federal rulemaking procedures and specific ESA requirements to determine whether to list a species. A formal peer review process and an opportunity for public comment ensure that the Service obtains the best available scientific information to support its decisions. When necessary, essential species habitat is protected through a critical habitat designation at the time of or soon after listing. Once listed, the species is afforded the full range of protections available under the ESA. These protections include prohibitions on

killing, harming or otherwise taking a species as well as restrictions on import/export to prevent trade-related declines.

■ Through the *Consultation* program, the Service works with private landowners and other non-Federal entities to develop Habitat Conservation Plans that authorize the incidental take of listed species. The HCP process allows private economic development to proceed while promoting listed species conservation. Also through this program, the Service works with other Federal agencies to ensure that their activities and the activities they authorize are compatible with species needs.

■ Through the *Recovery* program, the Service develops partnerships with Federal, State, and local agencies, tribes, researchers, conservation organizations, landowners, and individuals to conserve listed species. Recovery efforts include a wide range of management actions, such as controlled propagation and habitat protection and restoration, that reduce threats or otherwise benefit populations so they will stabilize and ultimately increase. A species is considered for delisting once it recovers to the point where it no longer needs the ESA's special protections.

Assistance to Landowners

According to a 1993 study by the Association for Biodiversity Information and The Nature Conservancy, half of listed species have at least 80% of their habitat on private lands. Because of listed species' dependence on private lands, the Service recognizes the importance of private landowner participation in endangered species conservation. Several programs provide mechanisms for increased cooperation with private landowners, tribes, State and local governments, industry, and agricultural interests:

Endangered species are defined by the Endangered Species Act (ESA) as those species that are in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of their range. Threatened species are those species that are likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future.

■ The *Safe Harbor Policy*, finalized in June 1999, encourages voluntary management for listed species to promote recovery on non-Federal lands by giving assurances to the landowners that no additional future regulatory restrictions will be imposed.

■ The *Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances Policy*, also finalized in June 1999, provides incentives for non-Federal property owners to conserve candidate species, thus potentially making listing unnecessary.

■ *Habitat Conservation Planning* allows private landowners to develop land supporting listed species provided they undertake conservation measures. The *No Surprises Policy* assures participating landowners that they will incur no additional mitigation requirements beyond those they agreed to in their Habitat Conservation Plans, even if circumstances change.

Incentive and Grants Programs

■ The *Landowner Incentive Program* provides matching, competitively awarded grants to States, Territories, and Tribes to establish or supplement their own Landowner Incentive Programs. Through these programs, our partners will provide technical and financial assistance to private landowners to protect and manage habitat for listed, proposed, or candidate species, or other at-risk-species, while continuing to engage in traditional land use practices.

■ The *Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund* (section 6 of the ESA) provides grants to States and territories to participate in a wide array of conservation projects for candidate, proposed and listed species. Activities include integrating habitat conservation into local land use planning and furthering species conservation through acquisition of land and easements and development of habitat protection agreements. For FY 2001, Congress authorized expansion of the Fund to provide grants to States and territories to develop and implement Safe Harbor Agreements, Candidate Conservation Agreements, and Habitat Conservation Plans and to acquire lands essential to the recovery of listed species.

Private Stewardship Program (\$10.0 M) provides grants and other assistance on a competitive basis to individuals and groups engaged in local, private, and voluntary conservation efforts that benefit federally listed, proposed, or

candidate species, or other at-risk-species. A diverse panel of representatives from State and Federal government, conservation organizations, agriculture and development interests, and the science community will assess applications and make recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior, who will award the grants.

Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (\$96.2 M) provides funding to States and Territories for species and habitat conservation actions on non-Federal lands. States and Territories must contribute 25% of the estimated program costs of approved projects, or 10% when two or more States or Territories implement a joint project. A State or Territory must enter into a cooperative agreement with the Service to receive grants. Most States and Territories have entered into these agreements for both plant and animals species.

Looking Ahead

All of these efforts will require additional resources to achieve the best possible outcome for the species and landowner partners. By building strong partnerships and initiating early and collaborative conservation efforts, the Service can best achieve the purpose of the Endangered Species Act to conserve endangered and threatened species and the ecosystems upon which they depend.

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Endangered Species Program
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February 2002**



Contact Us

Want more information on a particular endangered species or to enter into a partnership with us? Please contact the Regional Office which handles the State(s) in which you are interested. If they can not help you, they will gladly direct you to the nearest local Service office or in the direction you need.

Washington D.C. Office

Division of Endangered Species
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Arlington, VA 22203
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Chief, Office of Conservation and Classification: Christine Nolin, 703/358 2105

Chief, Office of Consultation, HCPs, Recovery, and State Grants: Renne Lohofener, 703/358 2106

Chief, Office of Partnerships and Outreach: 703/358 2390

Region One — Pacific

Eastside Federal Complex
911 N.E. 11th Avenue
Portland OR 97232-4181
<http://pacific.fws.gov/es/endsp.htm>

Chief, Division of Endangered Species: 503/231 6158

Region Two — Southwest

P.O. Box 1306, Rm 4012
Albuquerque, NM 87102
<http://ifw2es.fws.gov/EndangeredSpecies>

Chief, Division of Threatened and Endangered Species: Steve Chambers, 505/248 6920

Region Three — Great Lakes, Big Rivers

Bishop Henry Federal Building
One Federal Drive
Ft. Snelling, MN 55111-4056
<http://midwest.fws.gov/endangered/>

Chief, Endangered and Habitat Conservation: T. J. Miller, 612/713 5334

Region Four — Southeast

1875 Century Boulevard
Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30345
<http://es.southeast.fws.gov/endspec.html>

Chief, Endangered Species: Noreen Walsh, 404/679 7085

Region Five — Northeast

300 Westgate Center Drive
Hadley, MA 01035-9589
<http://northeast.fws.gov>

Chief, Division of Threatened and Endangered Species: Paul Nickerson, 413/253 8615

Regional Office Boundaries



Region Six — Mountain Prairie

134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood CO 80228
<http://mountain-prairie.fws.gov/endspp/>

Chief, Ecological Services: Jill Parker, 303/236 7400

Region Seven — Alaska

1011 E. Tudor Road
Anchorage, AK 99503-6199
<http://alaska.fws.gov>

Division of Endangered Species: Sue Detwiler, 907/786 3505