



# FY 2014 FUNDING PRIORITIES FOR WILDLIFE

*Wildlife and its habitat are valuable national assets. Wildlife related recreation is a \$145 billion a year industry.<sup>i</sup> Moreover, protecting wildlife and its habitat also supports healthy natural systems that provide clean air and water, flood protection, food, medicines and other products. The value of benefits provided by natural habitats in the 48 contiguous states in the U.S. is estimated at \$1.6 trillion per year.<sup>ii</sup>*

Despite this importance, wildlife and habitat conservation programs have endured draconian budget cuts. Defenders of Wildlife urges opposition to any further funding cuts in crucial programs that support wildlife and habitat conservation in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, and the U.S. Geological Survey. In addition, we support crucial but modest increases in the President's FY 2014 request, but have several concerns as well. Increases are in comparison with the final FY 2012 enacted level.



## **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

**Renewable Energy** – A crucial \$7.4 million increase associated with renewable energy development that includes \$1.5 million for Endangered Species Consultation, \$2.8 million for Conservation Planning Assistance, \$750,000 for Migratory Bird Management and \$1 million for the Office of Law Enforcement. This increase will help to ensure siting of projects in a way that prevents harm to species such as golden eagles, seabirds, bats and desert tortoise. This in turn will reduce conflicts and speed project approval.

**Cooperative Recovery** – The \$9.4 million program increase includes \$3.2 million for National Wildlife Refuges, \$1.5 million for Partners for Fish and Wildlife, \$1.5 million for Fisheries Population Assessment, \$770,000 for Adaptive Science, \$1.9 million in the Endangered Species program and \$500,000 for migratory birds. This initiative is supporting more efficient and strategic efforts across landscapes to recover threatened and endangered species on National Wildlife Refuges and surrounding lands.

**Endangered Species** – The request includes a total increase of \$9.5 million for endangered species and one disappointing cut that Congress should rectify that includes:

- A \$3.7 million increase specifically for efforts to recover listed species.
- A \$1 million increase for science to support consultations on pesticides that may impact listed species including the development of protocols to determine safe levels of exposure.
- A \$1.8 million increase for listing species. This funding will support progress in listing approximately 180 candidate species, many of which have awaited protection for years.
- An \$8.3 million increase for the Cooperative Endangered Species Fund to provide assistance to states for research, monitoring, recovery actions, and land acquisition to protect threatened and endangered species.
- A \$998,000 reduction for the Wolf Livestock Loss Demonstration Program that assists livestock owners co-existing with wolves. We urge restoration of this funding.

**National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS)** – A net increase of \$13.5 million for NWRS Operations and Maintenance in the request includes not only the \$3.2 million for Cooperative Recovery but also \$3 million for baseline inventory and monitoring of refuge resources, \$3.6 million for Challenge Cost share projects with partners and volunteer groups, and \$1.3 million for refuge law enforcement.

Environmental Contaminants – A \$98,000 increase will help expedite and complete more restoration activities for Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration cases.

Office of Law Enforcement – In addition to the \$1 million increase related to renewable energy development, a \$5.1 million increase will support wildlife science forensics and efforts to combat illegal trade in wildlife.

Cooperative Landscape Conservation – An increase of \$2.1 million will support the continued development and work of the Landscape Conservation Cooperatives.

## **BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

Sage Grouse – A critically needed increase of \$17.1 million in the Wildlife and Fisheries Management program, \$15 million of which will go for sage grouse conservation in 10 western states supports amendments to Resource Management Plans, on-the-ground habitat restoration, and inventory, monitoring and mapping.

Threatened and Endangered Species Management – An increase of \$309,000 supports work to recover listed species. Even at this level, the BLM only has funding to implement about 10 percent of the work it is required to do in recovery plans for listed species on BLM lands.

Renewable Energy – A \$9.1 million programmatic increase that includes support for regional land use planning studies and environmental reviews to help identify potential wind energy zones that will avoid areas with natural resource conflicts, including conflicts with sensitive wildlife species.

Resource Management Planning – A \$4.4 million increase for Resource Management Planning is crucial to address 57 new plans which the agency expects to complete within the next three to four years.

## **US GEOLOGICAL SURVEY**

Ecosystems – A \$22.5 million increase that will help to support numerous crucial research needs including White Nose Syndrome that is devastating bat populations and efforts needed to avoid harm to birds, bats, desert wildlife, and other species that could be impacted by the development of wind and solar energy.

National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center/Climate Science Centers – A \$10.1 million increase to address scientific needs in planning for adaptation to climate change.

## **FOREST SERVICE**

Integrated Resource Restoration (IRR) – The budget has again proposed merging a number of accounts, including Wildlife and Fish Habitat Management, into an integrated budget, however Defenders supports continuing IRR as a pilot as directed by Congress in the final FY 2012 Omnibus appropriations bill so that the agency can demonstrate its ability to adequately protect habitat for fish and wildlife under the consolidated program. The Wildlife and Fish Habitat Management program should be funded at no less than the FY 2012 level of \$140 million.

## **LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF)**

The request includes an increase of \$277.7 million for LWCF that includes an Interior-Forest Service collaborative land acquisition program. This interagency initiative will protect strategic landscape-scale projects that at the same time meet core agency acquisition priorities and will help to bring larger conservation benefits and build resilience across landscapes.

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/fhw11-nat.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> The Economics Associated with Outdoor Recreation, Natural Resources Conservation and Historic Preservation in the United States  
[www.nfwf.org/Content/ContentFolders/NationalFishandWildlifeFoundation/HomePage/ConservationSpotlights/TheEconomicValueofOutdoorRecreation.pdf](http://www.nfwf.org/Content/ContentFolders/NationalFishandWildlifeFoundation/HomePage/ConservationSpotlights/TheEconomicValueofOutdoorRecreation.pdf)