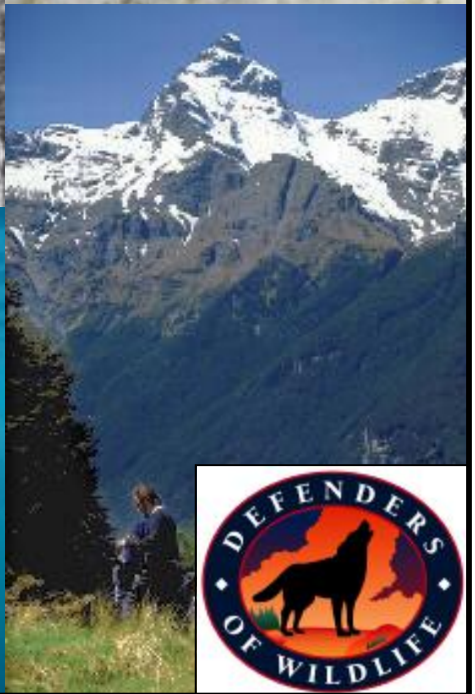


The Land and Water Conservation Fund

2007





About Defenders of Wildlife

Defenders of Wildlife is a leading conservation organization recognized as one of the nation's most progressive advocates for wildlife and its habitat. Defenders uses education, litigation, research and promotion of conservation policies to protect wild animals and plants in their natural communities. Founded in 1947, Defenders is a 501 (c) (3) organization with 490,000 members and supporters nationwide and headquarters in Washington, D.C.

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The Land and Water Conservation Fund 2007

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The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (LWCF) is a visionary law enacted by Congress in 1964 through bipartisan recognition of the importance of safeguarding special places and providing outdoor recreation opportunities. Chances are the average American has never heard of LWCF. But most Americans are probably more familiar with its benefits than they realize. The LWCF has been a vital source of funding for creating and protecting parks, playgrounds, open space, wetlands, and wildlife habitat, increasing the quality of life of every American.

In a 1962 letter to Congress by President John Kennedy supporting the passage of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the President stated:

“Actions deferred are all too often opportunities lost, particularly in safeguarding our natural resources. I urge the enactment of this proposal at the earliest possible date so that a further significant step may be taken to assure the availability and accessibility of land and water-based recreation opportunities for all Americans.”

Forty years later, these words are more true than ever. Although authorized at \$900 million from revenues generated from federal offshore oil royalties, the LWCF has only been fully funded once. But the pace of development and the conversion of open space to houses and asphalt has accelerated, at the same time that LWCF has dwindled. The Natural Resources Inventory estimates 2.2 million acres are lost to development each year – once these lands are lost, they can never be recovered. If LWCF is funded at the level of the president’s request for fiscal year 2007, it will be at its lowest level since 1974. Without major increases in LWCF funding in the next decade, there will be scant open space and wildlife habitat left to save in the future.

For fiscal year 2007, Defenders of Wildlife recommends Congress increase the LWCF budget to at least \$320 million -- \$220 million for federal land acquisition and \$100 million for grants to states.

In a race to save species habitat before it is lost, Defenders of Wildlife evaluated hundreds of National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, and Bureau of Land Management land acquisition projects to determine some of the highest priority needs for wildlife conservation. Projects evaluated are all within approved unit boundaries, have completed the necessary planning, and have willing sellers. All they need is funding. Projects were evaluated based on their importance to threatened and endangered species, nexus with the State and Tribal Wildlife Grant Program’s State Wildlife Action Plans which identify priority habitats for special attention and conservation, and their degree of threat.

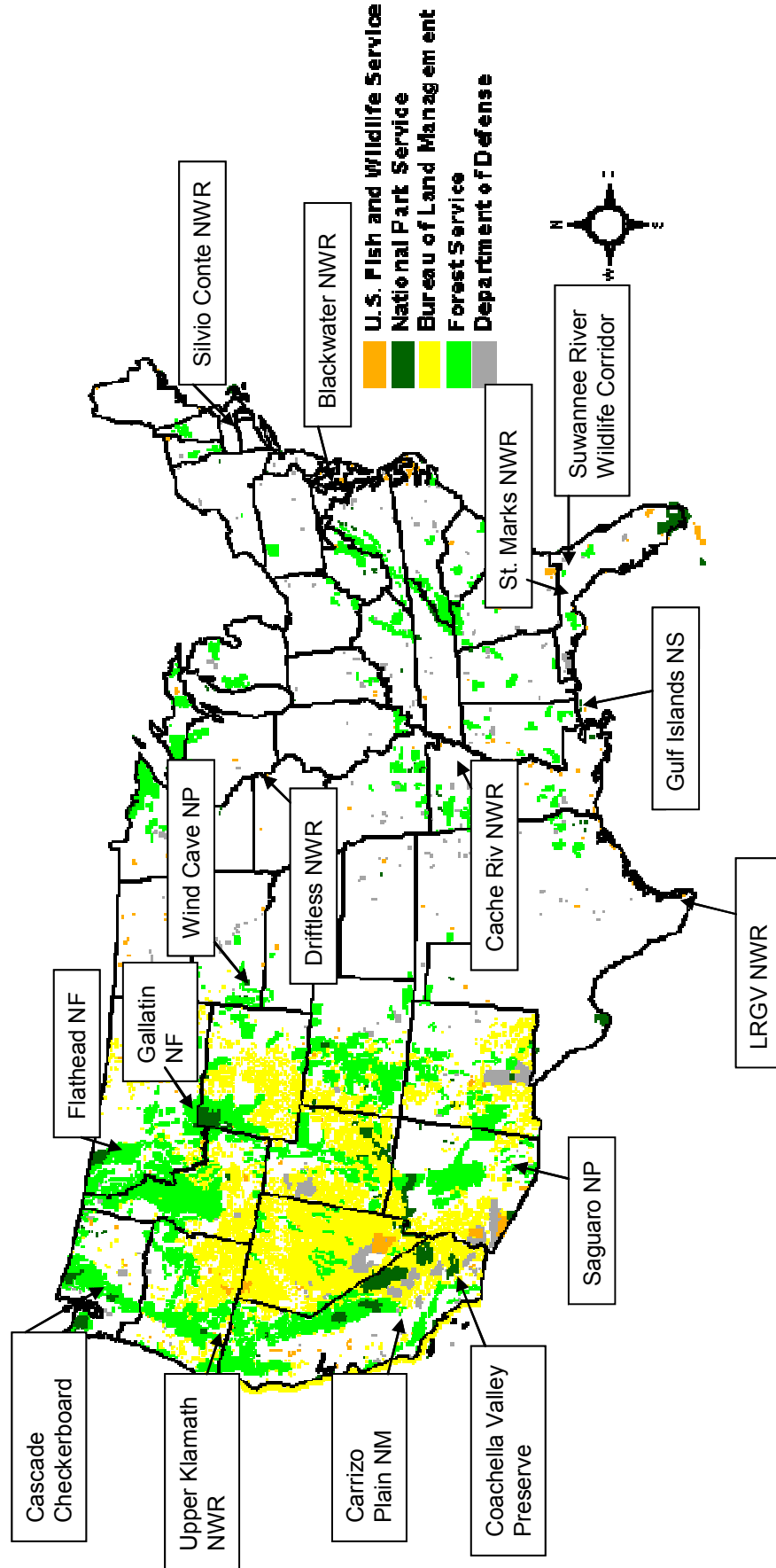
Based on this analysis, Defenders of Wildlife recommends Congress specifically fund the 16 projects totaling \$51.2 million identified in the table and map below. These projects should be viewed as only a small subset of the overall enormous need.

| Project | Description | Agency | State | Funds |
|----------------------------------|---|--------|----------------|----------------|
| Blackwater NWR | Provides habitat for the endangered Delmarva fox squirrel, bald eagles, and migratory birds | FWS | MD | \$1.8 million |
| Cache River NWR | The site of the recent rediscovery of the endangered Ivory-billed woodpecker | FWS | AR | \$485,000* |
| Driftless NWR | Supports remaining populations of two listed species, the Iowa Pleistocene snail and Northern monkshood | FWS | IA | \$550,000 |
| Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR | Protects over 480 species of birds and at least seventeen listed species | FWS | TX | \$1 million |
| Silvio O. Conte NWR | Supports ten listed species in the Connecticut River watershed | FWS | CT,MA NH,VT | \$4 million |
| St. Marks NWR | Spans 42 miles of coastline and protects habitat for several endangered species | FWS | FL | \$1.5 million* |
| Upper Klamath NWR | Protects wetlands for migrating waterfowl and the largest bald eagle population in the Lower 48 | FWS | OR | \$3.4 million* |
| Gulf Islands NS | The last remaining breeding habitat for the endangered diamond-backed terrapin in Mississippi | NPS | MS, FL | \$2.1 million |
| Saguaro NP | The only riparian hardwood forest in the Park for several listed species such as the lesser long-nosed bat | NPS | AZ | \$4.2 million |
| Wind Cave NP | Protects mixed-grass prairies that support the Park's large herds of bison, deer, and elk | NPS | SD | \$5 million |
| Cascade Checkerboard | Secures vital wildlife migration corridors for the greater Cascade Mountain area | NFS | WA | \$3.3 million |
| Flathead NF | Provides important habitat for many listed species such as grizzly bear, lynx, bald eagle, and bull trout | NFS | MT | \$16.2 million |
| Gallatin NF | Establishes crucial habitat connectivity within the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem | NFS | MT | \$1.6 million |
| Suwannee River Wildlife Corridor | Protects important habitat and migration corridors for the imperiled Florida black bear and other species | NFS | FL | \$5 million |
| Carrizo Plains NM | One of the largest grouping of listed species on public lands in the U.S. including the San Joaquin kit fox | BLM | CA | \$700,000 |
| Coachella Valley Preserve | Protects sand source vital to maintain endangered fringe-toed lizard habitat | BLM | CA | \$250,000* |

* FY 2007 Presidential request

NWF=National wildlife refuge, NF=National Forest, NP=National Park, FWS=Fish and Wildlife Service, FS=Forest Service, NPS= National Park Service, BLM=Bureau of Land Management

2007 LWCF Recommended Project Locations



Land
&
Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2007

FY 2007 Project

1,076 acres

\$1,800,000



Threatened bald eagle

The Refuge was established in 1933 as a haven for ducks and geese migrating along the Atlantic Flyway. It supports over 280 species of birds, 35 species of reptiles and amphibians, and large mammals such as white-tailed deer, foxes, and otters.



Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge is currently over 27,000 acres. The mix of fresh and saltwater make the Refuge's marsh some of the most productive habitat on the east coast.

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge

Maryland



Endangered Delmarva fox squirrel

Importance

The Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge is located on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and is a part of the Chesapeake Marshlands National Wildlife Refuge Complex. The Refuge is a haven for over 200 bald eagles (the largest population on the Atlantic coast north of Florida), the endangered Delmarva fox squirrel, 35,000 Canada geese, and over 15,000 ducks. It is a designated Wetland of International Importance by the RAMSAR convention, and an Internationally Important Birding Area.

The primary goals of the Refuge are to protect habitat for endangered species, to support healthy populations of fish, waterfowl, and other migratory birds, and to maintain a healthy and diverse ecosystem with a full range of natural processes and vegetation communities. Another priority is to support waterfowl population numbers sufficient to meet the objectives of several conservation plans, including the North American Waterfowl Management plan and the Management Plan for Canada Geese in Maryland.



Indigo bunting

Public Use Opportunities

include birdwatching, hiking, biking, fishing, crabbing, boating, deer hunting, environmental education, and photography.



Habitat

The plant communities in the Refuge include forested wetlands, swamps, hardwood, loblolly pine, and Atlantic white cedar forests, freshwater ponds, and grasslands. The Refuge alone accounts for 1/3 of all Maryland's tidal wetlands.



Canada geese

Threat

Intense development pressures surround the Refuge, including a 3,200-home and golf course construction project. This land conversion is threatening the ability of the Refuge to protect the diverse habitats that sustain wildlife, maintain water quality, provide flood and erosion control and groundwater recharge. Loss of suitable woodland habitat is the major factor in the decline of the Delmarva fox squirrel, a species now severely restricted to 10% of its former range in isolated populations in Maryland. Land acquisition and forest management programs at the Refuge are essential to the recovery of this endangered species.

Support

The current land acquisition project will contribute to several large-scale conservation plans: the Nanticoke River BioReserve Strategic Plan, Maryland Rural Legacy Plan, Chesapeake Bay Waterfowl Policy and Management Plan, Smith Island Environmental Restoration and Protection Plan, Marsh Restoration, Harriet Tubman Special Resources Study Act, and the Dorchester County Comprehensive Management Plan.

Land
&
Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2007

Cache River National Wildlife Refuge

Arkansas

FY 2007 Project

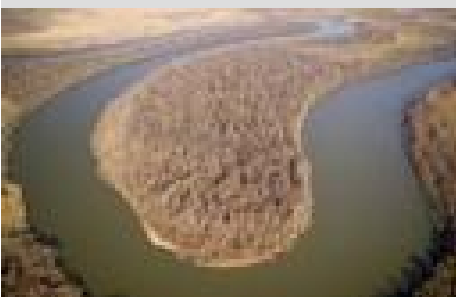
370 acres

\$485,000



Mallard drake

The Refuge supports large concentrations of waterfowl, songbirds, and wadingbirds. Deer, coyotes, and beavers are also found year-round.



The Cache River National Wildlife Refuge is located in east central Arkansas, and is currently 62,000 acres. primary objective is to provide habitat for migratory waterfowl and to preserve remaining tracts of bottomland hardwood forests in the Cache River Basin. The final acreage of the Refuge will be 175,000 acres.



Courtesy of David Allen

Endangered Ivory-billed Woodpecker

Importance

The Cache River National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) consists of 62,000 acres of wetland communities that provide habitat for numerous wildlife species. Most notably, the Ivory-billed woodpecker, believed to be extinct, was recently rediscovered in the Refuge. The Refuge is recognized as a Wetland of International Importance by the RAMSAR Convention and the most important wintering area for mallards by the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.

Threat

As one of the few remaining wetland forest areas in the Lower Mississippi River Valley, the Cache River basin contains some of the most intact and least disturbed bottomland hardwood forests in the Mississippi Valley region. However, most of the forest remains as islands in a sea of agricultural lands. Connecting the fragmented forests, through land acquisition and aggressive reforestation, is an essential task for the protection of habitat and conservation of natural resources.



Public Use Opportunities include wildlife observation, environmental education, photography, hiking, kayaking, fishing, and hunting.



Habitat
The Cache River wetlands include bottomland hardwood forests, cypress-tupelo swamps, and oxbow lakes that support a tremendous array of wildlife.



Great blue herons on nests

Support

The Big Woods Conservation Partnership is working to conserve 200,000 acres of forest habitat and rivers in the Big Woods over the next 10 years. Partners include The Nature Conservancy, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the Arkansas Game and fish Commission, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Wildlife Federation, Arkansas Audubon Society, the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, Arkansas State University, the Arkansas Wildlife Federation, Audubon, Audubon Arkansas, the Audubon Society of Central Arkansas, Birdman Productions, LLC, the Cities of Brinkley and Clarnedon, Arkansas, Louisiana State Univeristy, The University of Arkansas, Civic Enterprises, LLC, and Oakwood College.

Land
&
Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2007

Driftless Area National Wildlife Refuge

Iowa

FY 2007 Project

200 acres

\$550,000



Courtesy of Gary Tonhouse

Threatened Northern monkshood

The Refuge was established in 1989 to support the recovery of the Iowa Pleistocene snail and the northern monkshood. At least eight other snail species, considered glacial relicts, are also protected on the Refuge.



American woodcock



Courtesy of Bill Witt

Endangered Iowa Pleistocene snail

Importance

The Driftless Area National Wildlife Refuge consists of scattered tracts of land in northeast Iowa that include upland hardwood forests, grasslands, algific talus (cold air, loose rock) slopes, and stream and riparian habitats. The Refuge was established to protect and recover the endangered Iowa Pleistocene snail and the threatened northern monkshood (a delicate violet wildflower), which both rely on the algific talus slopes for habitat. Thought to be extinct until discovered in 1955, the Iowa Pleistocene snail now occurs nowhere else in the world except in 37 algific talus slopes in Iowa and Illinois.

When the proposed acquisition is completed, at least 70 percent of the known northern monkshood population and 75 percent of the known population of the Iowa Pleistocene snail will be protected. In addition, protection of the algific talus slopes may help prevent the need for threatened or endangered status for many other rare snails and plants living in the area.



White-tailed deer

Habitat

Algific slopes support lowa Pleistocene snails, the northern monkshood, and other unusual species. These steep slopes are comprised of talus at the base and are connected to upslope sinkhole drainage systems.



Wild turkey

Threat

The physical and biological composition of the algific talus slopes create a very specific microclimate that both the snail and flower depend on. These species' habitat cannot be restored once lost, therefore protecting the remaining habitat is essential to the recovery of these species. The most immediate habitat threats are from logging, livestock grazing and trampling, quarrying, road building, sinkhole filling and contamination, human foot traffic, and misapplication of pesticides. Critical areas are being fenced to prevent grazing and human foot traffic. Additional purchases of habitat and fencing is needed, as well as continued monitoring to determine population status and extent of threats. Refuge expansion would also provide protection for at least eight other rare snail species, and three rare plant species that depend on the algific talus slopes found on Driftless National Wildlife Refuge.

Land
&
Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2007

Lower Rio Grande Valley

National Wildlife Refuge

Texas

FY 2007 Project

833 acres

\$1,000,000



Endangered Northern aplomado falcon

Endangered/Threatened Species

at the Refuge include the ocelot, jaguarundi, piping plover, Northern aplomado falcon, Peregrine falcon, Wilson's plover, reddish egret, loggerhead sea turtle, and Kemp's Ridley sea turtle



The Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR is located in south Texas. It currently consists of 90,000 acres following the last 275 river miles of the Rio Grande River. The final acreage of the Refuge will be 132,500 acres.



Endangered ocelot

Importance

The Lower Rio Grande River National Wildlife Refuge (LRGV) is considered one of the most biologically diverse in the continental United States, as it represents 11 distinct biotic communities that are host or home to 1,100 types of plants, 700 vertebrate species (including 484 bird species) and over 300 species of butterflies. Two major migratory bird flyways collide at the Refuge, resulting in one of the premier birding refuges in the nation. At least 17 federally listed endangered and threatened species occur here.

Because 95% of the vegetation in the Valley has been cleared or altered, the LRGV is a crucial link in the effort to protect the region's tremendous biodiversity. The Refuge consists of scattered fragments of habitat, and acquisition of property to connect these fragments is essential to the protection of the biological diversity in south Texas.



Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 2006

Green Jay

Public Use Opportunities

include wildlife observation, photography, hiking, canoeing, fishing, and hunting.



Habitat

Coastal barrier islands, oxbow lakes, desert-like brushlands, riverside woodlands, and caliche hillsides play host to a variety of plant and animal life. Native brush and trees include mesquite, sabal palm, Texas ebony, prickly pear, and Montezuma bald cypress.



Great kiskadee

Threat

The cities along the U.S. Mexico border in South Texas are booming: the city of McAllen located at the center of the Refuge acquisition boundary was the 4th fastest growing city in the U.S. during the 1990-2000 census period. This fast growth is quickly converting habitat and agricultural areas into housing and commercial developments.

Support

The refuge and the corridor project have strong support from the local population and from city, county and state officials. Partners in the corridor project which are actively acquiring or protecting land and habitat by fee purchase or easement include The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Natural Resources Conservation Service, The Nature Conservancy, The Conservation Fund, National Audubon Society and the Valley Land Fund. The refuge will be a major partner in the new World Birding Center Complex developed in the area by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and local communities.

Land
&
Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2007

Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge

CT, MA, NH, VT

FY 2007 Project

\$4,000,000



Woodland bog habitat, VT

The Refuge was established in 1991 to restore and protect the native fish and wildlife species within the 7.2 million acre Connecticut River watershed, which spans four New England states.



Endangered shortnose sturgeon

The Refuge supports 59 species of mammals, including lynx, black bear, bobcats, moose, and white-tailed deer, 250 species of birds, and over 40 species of reptiles and amphibians.



Boblink

Importance

The Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge provides habitat for many fish, wildlife, and plant species throughout the Connecticut River watershed that spans Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. Species on the Refuge include at least 10 federally listed endangered or threatened species, and at least 18 more species that may be listed in the future.

The refuge works in partnership with a wide variety of individuals and organizations to provide environmental education, to encourage and support appropriate habitat conservation and management on public and private lands, and to protect additional habitat. The Refuge's goal is to involve the people of the watershed, especially landowners and land managers, in environmental education programs and cooperative management projects, with hopes of becoming the model for future refuges.



Endangered dwarf wedgemussel

The Refuge contains a wide variety of habitats, including northern forests, swamps, fresh and saltwater marshes, riparian wetlands, grasslands, and meadows.



Courtesy of Yong Xia

Connecticut River, MA



Grasshopper sparrow

Public Use Opportunities include wildlife observation, environmental education, fishing, hunting, and photography.

Threat

The Connecticut River watershed is home to over 2.5 million people, and development pressures pose a huge threat to the Silvio O. Conte NWR and its ability to preserve and protect habitat for wildlife. Based on biological information, roughly 180,000 acres of “special focus areas” have been identified. These areas contribute substantially or in unique ways to supporting natural diversity in the watershed. One of the proposed land parcels is part of the Grasslands Complex Special Focus Area, with several other parcels within the Connecticut River watershed that will protect important wetland, grassland, lowland, hardwood, and boreal forest habitats. If the land is not acquired by the Refuge, the land will surely be used for housing development. Development of the land within the current acquisition project will not only jeopardize the mission of the Refuge and directly harm the fish and wildlife species of the watershed (particularly the endangered dwarf wedgemussel), but will also negatively affect the quality of drinking water for millions of people.

Land
&
Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2007

FY 2007 Project

853 acres

\$1,584,000



Endangered Red-cockaded woodpecker

Endangered/Threatened Species at the Refuge include the Red-cockaded woodpecker, wood stork, Bald eagle, green sea turtle, leatherback sea turtle, and West Indian manatee



The St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge is located along the Gulf coast of northwest Florida. It currently consists of 68,000 acres spanning 43 miles of coastline. The final acreage of the Refuge will be 74,469 acres.

St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge

Florida



Endangered Wood stork

Importance

The St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) consists of 68,000 acres that provide habitat for over 300 species of birds, 52 species of mammals, 40 species of amphibians, 65 species of reptiles, and 12 federally-listed endangered or threatened species. In fact, there are 14 active bald eagle nests and the endangered least tern and red-cockaded woodpecker also nest on the refuge. St. Marks NWR's location also makes it an ideal host for the natural marvel of the migrating monarch butterflies in October on their way to Mexico. This unique refuge was established in 1931 to provide wintering habitat for migratory birds, and is one of the oldest refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System. Birds are not the only wildlife protected by the Refuge. The salt marshes also provide valuable spawning and nursery areas for commercially important fish, shrimp, and shellfish, and the inland hardwood swamps support a broad range of mammals including the Florida Black Bear, white-tailed deer, otter and raccoon. The refuge also has strong ties to a rich cultural past, and is home to the St. Marks Lighthouse, which was built in 1832 and is still in use today.



Monarch butterfly

Public Use Opportunities

include wildlife observation, environmental education, photography, hiking, canoeing, biking, fishing, and hunting.



Habitat

Longleaf pine and bottomland hardwood forests, islands, wilderness saltmarshes, swamps, tidal creeks, and estuaries of seven Florida rivers provide habitat for a diverse community of plant and animal life.



Endangered West Indian manatee

Threat

Not unlike many other National Wildlife Refuges around the country, St. Marks NWR faces strong pressure for private development around its borders. The acquisition of land adjacent to the Refuge is essential to the ongoing effort to restore populations of endangered species and provide habitat for the diverse wildlife that lives in and/or migrates through the Refuge. The project area will help establish a buffer area around the refuge to help ensure the integrity of the Refuge's land and water resources, which are important to both wildlife and people. In fact, the ecologically rich tidal marshes are vital spawning and nursery habitat for much of the Florida Gulf Coast's commercial seafood harvest. In addition, the area will create a wildlife corridor to enhance the connectivity of habitat that is critical for many species, such as the bobcat and Florida black bear.

Land
&
Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2007

Upper Klamath National Wildlife Refuge

Oregon

FY 2007 Project

2,670 acres

\$3,475,000



Great egret

The refuge is currently 15,000 acres of mostly freshwater marsh and open water that provide crucial wetland habitat for many fish and bird species. Other species include the endangered Lost River and Shortnose suckers, river otters, beavers, and muskrats.



Endangered shortnose sucker



Importance

The Upper Klamath National Wildlife Refuge is in southern Oregon bordering the Upper Klamath and Agency Lakes. The refuge's wetlands attract tens of thousands of nesting and migrating birds, including ducks, grebes, terns, herons, egrets, raptors, and songbirds. The refuge is one of the few remaining large natural marshes in the Upper Klamath Basin, which is used by almost 90% of all migrating waterfowl using the Pacific Flyway and home to the largest population of bald eagles in the U.S. outside of Alaska. The refuge also hosts a large colony of white pelicans, a species slowly recovering from near extinction.

Threats

However, many of Upper Klamath Lake's wetlands have been lost to diking and drainage, and remaining marshes suffer from poor water quality and continuing habitat degradation.



Public Use Opportunities

Include wildlife observation, photography, canoeing/boating, fishing, and waterfowl hunting.



Northern pintail

The current project involves the acquisition of the Barnes Ranch from a willing seller for wetland restoration purposes. Combined with several other federal and non-profit projects, this acquisition will eventually double the amount of marsh habitat around the Upper Klamath Lake by 2010.



White pelicans

Opportunity

The Klamath Basin has lost 80% of its wetlands. The lack of suitable wetland habitat and poor water quality are the key factors that threaten the recovery of two federally listed endangered species, the Lost River and Shortnose suckers. The proposed acquisition of the Barnes Tract will eventually allow removal of dikes to restore more than 10,000 acres of historic lakeshore marshes. Restoration will improve the habitat for these endangered fish, and increase the water storage capacity of Upper Klamath Lake. The additional storage capacity will help provide much needed relief for fish, farmers and downstream wildlife refuges entangled in conflict over Klamath Basin water. Restoration of wetlands on the Barnes Tract will also reduce the amount of nutrients being pumped into the Upper Klamath Lake and improve the lake's water quality.

Land & Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2007

FY 2007 Project

600 acres

\$2,100,000



The preserve is currently a 95,000 acre stretch of barrier islands and coastal mainland in Mississippi and Florida. The warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico nourish habitats such as bayou, salt marsh, live oak and southern magnolia forest, and snow-white beaches.



Endangered least tern

Almost 280 species of birds inhabit the Gulf Islands National Seashore.

Gulf Islands National Seashore

Mississippi, Florida



Courtesy of Jonathan Helms

Endangered Mississippi diamondback terrapin

Importance

The Gulf Islands National Seashore is the nation's largest national seashore, stretching 160 miles from Cat Island in Mississippi to the eastern tip of Santa Rosa Island in Florida. Behind the snowy-white beaches are patchworks of dunes, lagoons, fertile salt marshes and dense maritime pine forests. In addition, Horn and Petit Bois Islands located in Mississippi are federally designated wilderness areas.

The barrier island and coastal wetland ecosystems of the National Seashore provide habitat for many endangered and sensitive species, including the diamondback terrapin, alligator snapping turtle, loggerhead sea turtle, Gulf salt marsh snake, brown pelican, least tern, osprey, and sandhill crane. In fact, the current project area represents the last remaining breeding habitat for the endangered diamondbacked terrapin in Mississippi. The inland ponds and salt marshes of the National Seashore are also nurseries for young shrimp and crabs, which are vital to the local economy.



Endangered loggerhead sea turtle hatchling

Public Use Opportunities

Include wildlife observation, kayaking/boating, biking, hiking, camping, scuba diving, snorkeling, and fishing



Of all the barrier islands between Maine and Mexico, those of the National Seashore are some of the last still in a natural state.



Brown pelican

Threat

Like most coastal areas around the country, the property along the coast of Mississippi surrounding the Gulf Islands National Seashore is threatened by oil spills and pressures for the development of casinos, homes, and resorts. Allowing the development of Marsh Point, in particular, would not only destroy the last remaining habitat for a critically endangered species, the diamondback terrapin, but it would also threaten public recreational opportunities and spawning and nursery habitat for commercial fisheries. These salt marsh nurseries add millions of dollars to the economy through commercial and sport fishing opportunities. Because of the abundance and protected status of wildlife at Gulf Islands National Seashore, wildlife watching is one of the most popular activities in National Park areas. It is therefore very important to protect the coastal habitat in order to safeguard wildlife for generations to come.

Land
&
Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2007

Saguaro National Park

Arizona

FY 2007 Project

184 acres

\$4,200,000



Coatimundi

The tracts of land included in the current project are the only riparian hardwood forest in the Park, and are of immense value to hundreds of species.



Western diamondback

Saguaro National Park's mission is to protect and preserve the saguaro cactus, the diverse vegetation and wildlife habitat of the Sonoran Desert, and the riparian habitats associated with the Sonoran Desert.



Saguaro cacti

Importance

Saguaro National Park is situated in southeastern Arizona within the unique Sonoran Desert, which is home to the most recognizable cactus in the world, the majestic saguaro. The Park consists of 71,400 acres of designated wilderness area, and contains the largest roadless sky island, or isolated mountain range, in the Sonoran Desert. Southeastern Arizona's network of sky islands and river corridors are virtual desert oases, and thus are the preferred pathway for many neotropical migrant birds traveling to or from their breeding grounds. This rich assortment of migratory birds attracts thousands of birdwatchers every year that bring millions of dollars to the state's economy. The Rincon Mountains of Saguaro National Park provide breeding grounds or stopover points for several species such as red-faced warblers, painted redstarts, hepatic tanagers, and zone-tailed hawks. The Park's diversity of habitats, ranging from desert scrub to conifer forest, occupies a wide range of elevations that allow extraordinary biodiversity within a small geographic area. The cactus forests support species such as the endangered lesser long-nosed bat, javelina, coyote, and desert tortoise, whereas the higher elevation, riparian woodlands and conifer forests support species such as the black bear, mountain lion, and coatimundi. 20



Hepatic tanager



Desert tortoise

Public Use Opportunities The Park's location next to Tucson, Arizona provides easily accessed wilderness experiences that include birdwatching, hiking, biking, camping, environmental education, and photography.



Habitat

The plant communities in the Park vary from desert scrub to pine forest. With six different biotic communities, the Park hosts a tremendous array of wildlife and plant species.

Threat

Arizona is the second fastest growing state in the nation, having grown by 40% between 1990 and 2000. Saguaro National Park is within a half-hour drive of the nearly 1 million residents of the Tucson metropolitan area. The rapidly growing population of the Tucson area is putting intense pressure on the surrounding ecosystems that are already suffering the effects of habitat destruction and fragmentation. The riparian areas especially are extremely vulnerable to disruption, as they support many species that, surrounded by an essentially inhospitable desert, rely solely on this riparian habitat for existence. For this reason, the acquisition of land containing riparian habitat, in particular, is absolutely essential to the preservation of wildlife in and around Saguaro National Park. The tracts of land included in the current project are, in fact, the *only* riparian hardwood forest in the Park, and are of immense value to hundreds of species. Allowing the development of this land would be disastrous for the wildlife that depends on this unique riparian corridor. Furthermore, the negative impact that development will have, through water extraction, diversion and contamination, on an already water-stricken area, will be significant and irreversible.

Land
&
Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2007

Wind Cave National Park

South Dakota

FY 2007 Project

5,675 acres

\$5 million



Endangered black-footed ferret

The black-footed ferret is missing from the Park's ecosystem. Expanding the Park's habitat through land acquisition would greatly enhance the likelihood of a successful ferret reintroduction program .



Pronghorn

The park's mixed-grass prairie is one of the few remaining and is home to native wildlife such as bison, elk, pronghorn, mule deer, coyotes, and prairie dogs.



Importance

Wind Cave National Park is located in southwestern South Dakota in a transitional zone between the grasslands of the Great Plains and the ponderosa pine forests of the Black Hills and eastern Rocky Mountains. The park itself is recognized as an exemplary site because of the quality and diversity of plant communities found here and the natural way they are managed.

The Park provides suitable habitat for several federally or state listed species, such as the bald eagle, peregrine falcon, mountain lion, and black-footed ferret. Prior to the Park's establishment, native animals had been driven off by uncontrolled hunting and the land was plowed for farming and grazed by cattle. The Park's mission to protect and reestablish native wildlife within its boundaries began as early as 1913, when 14 bison were donated by the Bronx Zoo. Now numbering around 350, this bison herd is one of only three herds in the U.S. free of cattle genes, making it essential for maintaining the bison genome into the future. But 350 is too small a number to maintain all of this herd's important genetic diversity; additional habitat is needed to allow Wind Cave's bison herd to number greater than 500.



Black-tailed prairie dogs

One of the keystone species in the Park is the prairie dog. Managing their population is important in maintaining a balance of systems within the park. They are preyed upon by eagles, hawks, owls, coyotes, bobcats, badgers, and the endangered black-footed ferret.



Coyote

Established in 1903, the Park was the first to protect a cave. Wind cave is one of the longest, most complex caves in the world, with an estimated 95% still unexplored.



Bison jump, dating back to 1030AD

Threat

Unfortunately, there is limited rangeland to support the growing bison, deer, and elk populations within the Park. The proposed lands will increase much-needed acreage for the Park’s herds. The land acquisition will also provide winter rangeland for the herds that is not currently available within the Park’s boundaries. In addition, a large cave that may serve as an important roosting site for bats and several cultural resources are located on the proposed lands.

The requested funds for this land purchase will successfully complete Phase I of a very important land acquisition project. If not sold to the National Park Service, the land will be turned over for residential development. The subdivision and modification of the property will destroy important plant communities and habitat for the Park’s diverse animal populations, and will affect the hydrologic features that sustain the icon of the Park, Wind Cave.

Land
&
Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2007

Cascade Checkerboard

Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

Washington

FY 2007 Project

2,088 acres

\$3,300,000



Threatened Northern spotted owl

The proposed lands include the headwaters of the Green River, which provides habitat for both migrating salmon and steelhead.



Marmot

Acquisition of these lands will also provide permanent protection for segments of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail.



Mt. Baker

Importance

The Mt Baker-Snoqualmie and Wenatchee National Forests are located in northwestern Washington, extending more than 140 miles along the Cascade Mountains. The proposed lands are all within the boundaries of these two National Forests. Within one of the most visited national forests in the country, this area also provides important habitat for many endangered, threatened, and sensitive species such as the northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, grizzly bear, steelhead, salmon, bull trout, and mountain lion. The rich biodiversity of these National Forests is accompanied by rich habitat diversity, including glaciers, tundra, alpine lakes, old-growth forests, wild and scenic rivers, and mountain meadows.

In addition to providing valuable habitat for fish and wildlife, the proposed lands create vital connectivity within a “checkerboard” pattern of protected lands. Not only do wildlife suffer from fragmented habitat, but fragmented forestlands are more difficult and expensive to manage with respect to fire suppression, invasive species control, public access, and protection of natural resources and wildlife. Thus, acquisition of the current project areas have long been a Forest Service priority.



Endangered marbled murrelet

Public Use Opportunities

Include wildlife observation, rafting, horseback riding, mountain climbing, hiking, hunting, camping, and fishing



Mountain lion



Bobcat

While public appreciation for the Forests is valuable, the roads and highways that provide access are also significant barriers to wildlife passage, and are therefore sites of frequent road-kills.

Threat

The project area lies within King County, the 12th most populous county in the U.S. with 1.7 million people. It is also within an hour and half drive of 3.5 million residents, or 62% of the state's population. An additional 1.5 million residents of Vancouver, British Columbia also have easy access to the Forests. Explosive population growth over the last 20 years has created high demand for the beautifully forested areas of the Cascade Mountains. If not acquired by the Forest Service, the proposed lands will be subdivided and developed, which will further fragment forest lands and wildlife habitat. Private development of these lands will also place people and private property at risk from catastrophic wildfires, which will be more challenging and expensive to suppress. Acquisition of these lands will also provide protection for large areas of valuable old-growth forests and watersheds that supply drinking water to millions of people.

Land & Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2007

Flathead National Forest

Montana

FY 2007 Project

2,680 acres

\$16,200,000



Threatened bull trout

The Forest currently includes over a million acres of designated wilderness, including the Swan River which supports one of the very few stable populations of the threatened bull trout.



Threatened grizzly bear

The current project areas lie within the grizzly bear linkage zones established by the Swan Valley Conservation Agreement.



Importance

The Flathead National Forest in northwestern Montana is currently over 2.3 million acres and stretches south from the US Canadian border approximately 120 miles. Wetlands and mountain ranges sculpted by glaciers and covered with a rich thick forest provide habitat for approximately 250 species of wildlife and 22 species of fish. This includes the threatened grizzly bear, lynx, bald eagle, bull trout, water howellia, and the endangered gray wolf. In fact, the Swan River Valley is one of the largest strongholds for grizzly bears and lynx in the nation.

The sustainability of wildlife populations in the Flathead National Forest depends on the formation of corridors to connect the fragmented habitat within the Forest. The checkerboard-patterned land ownership of the Swan River Valley is a high-priority target for land acquisition, because public ownership will create and protect corridors linking the Bob Marshall and Mission Mountain wilderness areas. Critical to grizzly bears, moose, elk, deer, black bears, and mountain lions, the corridors will also make resource management and recreational access in the Forest much more effective.



Threatened lynx

Public Use Opportunities

Include wildlife observation, rafting, skiing, hiking, hunting camping, and fishing



One of Montana's most productive forested valleys, the Swan River Valley contains an extensive system of high quality wetland habitat.



Wolverine

Threat

Located within one of the fastest growing counties in the state, the highly scenic area of the Swan River Valley is under intense pressure for residential development. Public ownership of land in the Swan River Valley is essential to the long-term sustainability of many federally listed endangered and threatened species that inhabit the Flathead National Forest. Development of these lands would not only destroy and fragment much needed habitat for numerous vulnerable species, but it would also significantly reduce public recreation opportunities in the Forest, and set the stage for dangerous conflict between humans and wildlife. Public ownership of these lands will also allow the Forest Service to manage the forest and its resources in a more efficient and cost effective manner. This acquisition plan involves strong local, state, and national support for both funding and implementation.

Land & Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2007

FY 2007 Project

395 acres

\$1,605,800



Gray wolf

The 1.8 million-acre Gallatin National Forest spans six mountain ranges and includes two Congressionally-designated Wilderness Areas.



Gallatin National Forest

Montana



Moose

Importance

Gallatin National Forest is located in south-western Montana, just north of Yellowstone National Park. It is part of the 18 million-acre Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE), the largest intact ecosystem in the continental United States that covers parts of Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming. Home to one of the last viable populations of grizzly bears in the lower 48, the GYE also provides some of the best wildlife habitat for numerous species, including bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, mountain lions, moose, black bears, elk, bald eagles, osprey, wolves, lynx, wolverines, and mountain goats. The Gallatin National Forest consists of several areas that are separated by private property and the Interstate 90 highway. The current project area (Bozeman Pass) is strategically located between two Forest segments, the Gallatin Mountains and the Bridger/Bangtail Mountains, and will help to establish crucial connectivity within both the Gallatin National Forest and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. The Bozeman Pass project is considered by the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP) to be one of the most unique and important acquisitions for wildlife and wildlife habitat to be proposed in the Gallatin Valley.



Threatened grizzly bears

The project area provides recreational opportunities such as wildlife viewing, hiking, mountain biking, skiing, horseback riding, rock climbing, fishing and hunting.



Mountain goat



Threat

The 20 counties that make up the GYE are among the fastest growing in the nation. Located only five miles from Bozeman, Montana, the proposed lands are under intense pressure for residential development. In fact, nearly one third of the area's three million private acres have already been subdivided for development. Without public acquisition, the proposed lands will likely be sold for subdivision and residential development, which would permanently destroy critical wildlife habitat and scenic open space. The wildlife that depend on the large areas of protected habitat that Gallatin National Forest provides, also require protected corridors that connect these large areas. Existing development has already reduced habitat that would allow wildlife passage between the Gallatin and Bridger/Bangtail Mountains and across Interstate 90, so protecting the current project area is extremely important. In fact, a recent study showed that this particular area offers the best route for connectivity between habitat on either side of I-90.

Land
&
Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2007

Suwannee River

Wildlife Corridor

Florida

FY 2007 Project

3,551 acres

\$5,000,000



American alligator

The project area will link the Osceola National Forest and the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge creating one of the largest conservation areas in the eastern U.S.



Endangered Florida panther



William J. Weber

Florida black bear

Importance

The Suwannee River Wildlife Corridor, or Pinhook Swamp, helps to bridge the gap between the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge and the Osceola National Forest, creating one of the largest forested wetland wildlife corridors east of the Mississippi River. The ecosystem is a critical stopover for neotropical migrant birds and is home to many endangered plants and federally listed species such as the wood stork, red-cockaded woodpecker, gray bat, bald eagle, and eastern indigo snake. It is critical to the state-listed Florida black bear, and is a potential reestablishment area for the critically endangered Florida panther. This wetland ecosystem supports globally significant populations of pond cypress trees, little blue herons, American alligators, wood storks, sandhill cranes, carpenter frogs, and canebrake rattlesnakes. Protecting sensitive lands in this corridor, by including the Pinhook Swamp area as part of the Osceola National Forest, is critical to preserving the biodiversity of this wetland ecosystem.

The Pinhook Swamp also provides watershed protection for two major rivers, the Suwannee and St. Mary's, that supply water for more than 13 million Floridians and 6.5 million Georgians.



The project area is an irreplaceable ecological treasure that is also a potentially valuable natural recreation area for the 2.6 million people who live within a two-hour drive.



Endangered red-cockaded woodpecker



Sandhill cranes

Threat

With over 1,000 new residents moving to Florida every day, habitat loss and fragmentation are by far the greatest threats facing the Florida black bear, and many other native species. Without sufficient habitat, bears are not able to find mates, adequate food or denning sites, and may suffer genetic problems associated with inbreeding. Habitat fragmentation by roads and highways also threatens the future of the black bear, as vehicle-caused mortality is the leading direct cause of death. Connecting all the conservation areas in northeast Florida will not only help the Florida black bear, but will create a potentially viable reintroduction site for the critically endangered Florida panther. Allowing the proposed lands to be developed will cause more habitat destruction and fragmentation, which will severely hinder recovery efforts for Florida's sensitive species. There is also a potential for mining, undue logging, and swamp draining that would threaten both the area's ecological integrity and the water quality for millions of people.

Land
&
Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2007

Carrizo Plains National Monument

California

FY 2007 Project

1,500 acres

\$700,000



Endangered California jewelflower

The Carrizo Plains National Monument is home to at least 13 plant and animal species that are state or federally listed as endangered. Tule deer and pronghorn, previously hunted to near extinction, have been reintroduced and are thriving once again in their native habitat.



Sandhill crane

Importance

The Carrizo Plains National Monument is a 250,000-acre grassland and scenic mountainous preserve that contains the last remaining undeveloped remnant of the San Joaquin Valley ecosystem. It provides critical habitat for one of the largest assemblages of threatened and endangered species surviving on any public lands in the United States, including the blunt-nosed leopard lizard, San Joaquin kit fox, giant kangaroo rat, Kern primrose sphinx moth, longhorn fairy shrimp, vernal pool fairy shrimp, California jewelflower, San Joaquin woolly threads, and the San Joaquin antelope squirrel. Soda Lake, the largest alkali wetland remaining in Southern California, provides important habitat for migratory birds, including shorebirds, waterfowl and a quarter of the state's wintering sandhill crane population.

Despite past human use, the size, isolation, and relatively undeveloped nature of the area make it ideal for long-term conservation of the dwindling flora and fauna characteristic of the San Joaquin Valley region.



Courtesy of Paul Opler

Endangered Kern primrose sphinx moth

Public Use Opportunities

The Monument's diversity and proximity to over 20 million people living in Southern and Central California attracts thousands of people every year that enjoy wildlife observation, hiking, biking, horseback riding, hunting, camping, and fishing.



Endangered bluntnose leopard lizard

In addition to providing habitat for a large concentration of endangered species, the Monument also boasts dramatic geology and a rich cultural past: Native American cultural sites and rock art that are thousands of years old.



Endangered San Joaquin kit foxes

Threat

The San Joaquin Valley's arid grasslands have been almost completely eliminated by agricultural, urban, and industrial development, and the Monument represents what little is remaining of this biologically productive ecosystem. Today it is threatened by oil and gas development, urban and agricultural development, and the incompatible uses on the inholdings within the Monument. The acquisition of inholdings and adjacent lands, and subsequent habitat restoration, is essential to the sustainability of the Monument as an ecosystem. The primary reason for the decline of the Monument's endangered species is habitat loss, particularly the San Joaquin kit fox. The native vegetation supports the fox's prey species, provides protection from predators, and provides habitat for denning. Without supplying additional native vegetation through land acquisition and restoration, the kit fox has very little chance of recovering.

Coachella Valley Fringe-toed Lizard Preserve

California

FY 2007 Project

75 acres

\$250,000



Coachella Valley round-tailed
ground squirrel

The project area protects a vital sand source critical to maintaining the dune system that the Coachella Valley lizard needs to survive.



Endangered desert pupfish

The location of the project area also offers increased recreational opportunities and public access between the Preserve and Joshua Tree National Park.



Threatened Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard

Importance

The Coachella Valley Fringe-toed Lizard Preserve is located in a low elevation valley surrounded by steep mountains in central Riverside County. The valleys and canyons of the Preserve form a desert oasis with localized water, natural biodiversity, cultural heritage and recreational opportunities. The Preserve is a part of the Coachella Valley Preserve System, a 20,000-acre sanctuary that is home to several species of increasingly rare wildlife. The Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) addresses thirty different species, including the Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, the Coachella round-tailed ground squirrel, the flat-tailed horned lizard, and the desert pupfish.

The Preserve includes the most viable habitat known for the threatened Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard. While protecting the fringe-toed lizard, the Preserve also protects many species with overlapping habitat requirements, such as the burrowing owl, Coachella Valley milkvetch, Palm Springs pocket mouse, Palm Springs ground squirrel, Coachella Valley giant sand treader cricket, and the Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket.



The Coachella Valley Preserve contains several palm oases, formed because San Andreas Fault lines allow water flowing underground to rise to the surface, creating pools containing endangered desert pupfish.



Endangered flat-tailed horned lizard

The project area contains a unique diversity of vegetation, including Sonoran creosote bush scrub and Mojave mixed woody scrub.



Threat

The plan area is located only 100 miles east of Los Angeles in Riverside County, which is experiencing tremendous population growth and suburban sprawl. The primary threats to most of the imperiled species, particularly the fringe-toed lizard, are loss or degradation of habitat. Restricted to the Coachella Valley and its large areas of aeolian (wind-blown) sand, the fringe-toed lizard is extremely vulnerable to disturbances. Between 1980 and 2000, development in the Coachella Valley caused the lizard's habitat to decline by more than 80%. Major threats including the conversion of habitat for commercial, residential, and agricultural development, as well as off-highway vehicle abuse, can be avoided by the acquisition of the project area. Public ownership of the project area will also create wildlife corridors connecting Joshua Tree National Park to the Coachella Valley Fringe-Toed Lizard Area of Critical Environmental Concern, which will help to preserve the aeolian sand ecosystem.



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