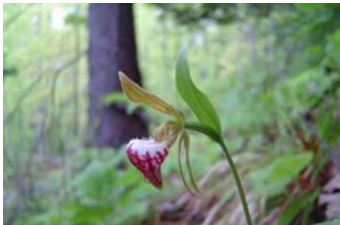


Threatened, Endangered & Sensitive Species Program USDA Forest Service



The *Threatened, Endangered & Sensitive (TES) Species Program* is the Forest Service's dedicated initiative to conserve and recover plant and animal species that need special management attention and depend on National Forest and Grassland habitats. From 1980 to 2007, the number of species endangered or threatened with extinction and listed under the Endangered Species Act rose from 281 to 1,311. As of 2006, 425 (32%) of those species either use National Forest/Grassland habitats, or potentially are affected by Forest Service management activities. An additional 270 species are candidates for listing (i.e., meet listing criteria, but have not yet been formally proposed), and several of those occur on National Forest or Grasslands.



There are several factors that can lead to endangerment and extinction of species. The single-most important one—and the one the Forest Service has the greatest influence over—is the alteration and loss of habitats. As manager of over 192

million acres of public lands and species habitats, the Forest Service and its partners play key roles in the conservation and recovery of at-risk species and maintenance of native biological diversity in the United States. In addition to contributing to the recovery threatened and endangered species, the Forest Service management also conserves habitat for some 3,250 “sensitive” species—species that need special management to maintain and improve their status on National Forests and Grasslands, and prevent a need for listing under the Endangered Species Act. “Keeping all the parts” is a central tenet of ecosystem management, and is a core principle that guides the Forest Service's management of the National Forests and Grasslands.

The TES program involves a variety of activities conducted by the Forest Service and partners, including inventory and monitoring, habitat assessments, habitat improvements through land treatments and structure installation, species reintroductions, development of conservation strategies, research, and information and education. Working with other Federal and State agencies, academic institutions, private organizations and citizens is vital to leverage limited resources and achieve effective on-the-ground conservation accomplishments. In FY 2006, the Forest Service invested \$33.2 million of wildlife and fish funds and \$31.0 million of other resource funds in TES recovery and conservation through 1,373 programs and projects that benefited hundreds of TES species. Some 552 of these

“The last word in ignorance is the man who says of an animal or plant: ‘What good is it?’ If the land mechanism as a whole is good, then every part is good, whether we understand it or not. If the biota, in the course of eons, has built something we like but do not understand, then who but a fool would discard seemingly useless parts? To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering.”
— Aldo Leopold



projects were partnerships, made possible with partner contributions of \$10.9 million. Over 248,000 acres and 625 miles of stream were improved for TES species, and numerous other (non-TES) species also benefited from these projects. Implementation of all Forest Service management activities is done to avoid or minimize adverse effects to TES species and their habitats. Opportunities and needs exist to do much more species and habitat recovery and conservation than the agency currently is funded to do.

The importance of the National Forests and Grasslands to species and ecosystem conservation is better recognized each year. Inventory and monitoring is providing much needed and very useful scientific information about the status, management needs, resource relationships and conservation opportunities of both at-risk and common species. At the same time, the public increasingly demands more from public lands to meet their material, recreational and social needs. Species and habitat conservation is consistently identified by the public as an extremely high management priority for public lands. The Forest Service continues to build on and expand its internal expertise, partnership development, research, and TES species and habitat project implementation to meet this complex challenge, and to continue to be a leader in land and resource stewardship in the 21st Century.