

Endangered Species Timeline

The following timeline summarizes some of the many events, both positive and negative, in our nation's growing effort to conserve our rare animal and plant resources:

PRE-1970

1903 President Theodore Roosevelt establishes the first National Wildlife Refuge at Pelican Island, Florida, to protect wood storks, brown pelicans, and other dwindling water birds.

1914 The passenger pigeon, once the most abundant bird in North America, and the Carolina parakeet both become extinct.

1944 Whooping crane population reaches nadir with 21 birds remaining.

1962 Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* warns of impacts on wildlife and people from unregulated pesticide use.

1966 Endangered Species Preservation Act of 1966 authorizes land acquisition to conserve "selected species of native fish and wildlife."

1969 Endangered Species Conservation Act of 1969 expands on 1966 act, authorizing the compilation of a list of wildlife "threatened with worldwide extinction" and prohibiting their import without a permit, except as specifically allowed for zoological and scientific purposes and propagation in captivity. Crustaceans and mollusks are included for protection, along with mammals, fish, birds, and amphibians.

1970's

1970 Peregrine falcon is listed as endangered.

1972 The Environmental Protection Agency outlaws DDT as a pesticide because of its potential danger to people. The chemical is linked to the thinning of eggshells of bald eagles and peregrine falcons, reducing hatching success and contributing to their endangered status.

1973 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)—80 nations sign this treaty to protect designated plant and animal species by regulating or prohibiting international trade in certain taxa except by permit

1973 Endangered Species Act of 1973 supersedes earlier acts, broadens and strengthens protection for all plant and animal species listed by the U.S. as threatened or endangered, prohibits take and trade without a permit, requires Federal agencies to avoid jeopardizing their survival, and requires species recovery efforts.

1977 First plant species are listed as endangered—San Clemente Island Indian paintbrush, San Clemente Island larkspur, San Clemente Island broom, and San Clemente Island bush-mallow.

1978 Endangered Species Act Amendments of 1978 include the establishment of a Cabinet-level Endangered Species Committee authorized to exempt Federal actions from compliance with certain protective provisions (section 7) of the Act.

1979 Endangered Species Committee meets in January and exempts Grayrocks reservoir project in Wyoming from section 7 of the Act but denies exemption for Tellico Dam project in Tennessee.

1979 In September, Congress passes an appropriations bill that includes an exemption for the Tellico Dam project, flooding critical habitat of the snail darter.

1980's

1981 Black-footed ferrets rediscovered near Meeteetse, Wyoming, ending fear that the species was extinct.

1982 Endangered Species Act Amendments of 1982 allow, by permit, the taking of listed species incidental to otherwise lawful activities, provided that the permit holder implements a habitat conservation plan (HCP) for the species. The 1982 amendments also include a prohibition against taking plants on Federal lands.

1983 First HCP approved for San Bruno Mountain, California.

1985 Southeastern brown pelican delisted due to recovery.

1987 American alligator delisted due to recovery.

1987 Red wolf reintroduced into wild in North Carolina.

1987 Last dusky seaside sparrow dies in captivity.

1989 U.S. bans ivory imports to reduce poaching of African elephants.

1989 Hurricane Hugo devastates red-cockaded woodpecker habitat in South Carolina.

1990's

1991 Captive-propagated black-footed ferrets reintroduced into Wyoming several years after last wild population was captured to prevent extinction from disease outbreak.

1991 California condor reintroduced into wild in southern California.

1993 Whooping crane reintroduced into Florida to establish non-migratory flock.

1993 Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge in West Virginia designated as nation's 500th refuge in the national system.

1994 Eastern North Pacific population of gray whale delisted due to recovery.

1994 Arctic peregrine falcon delisted due to recovery.

1995 Gray wolf reintroduced into Yellowstone National Park and central Idaho.

1995 U.S. Supreme Court, in its "Sweet Home" decision, upholds FWS regulations that define "harm" to include destroying or modifying habitat for an endangered or threatened species if the action results in the taking of the species.

1996 California condor reintroduced into northern Arizona.

1999 American peregrine falcon delisted due to recovery.

1999 Aleutian Canada goose proposed for delisting due to recovery.

1999 Bald eagle proposed for delisting due to recovery.