

**Subactivity: Endangered Species
Program: Recovery**

		2007 Actual	2008 Enacted	2009			Change from 2008 (+/-)
				Fixed Costs & Related Changes (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	President's Budget	
Recovery Program	(\$000)	69,551	71,041	+1,034	-3,658	68,417	- 2,624
	FTE	434	434	-	-	434	-

Summary of 2009 Program Changes for Recovery

Request Component	(\$000)	FTE
• General Program Activities	-754	-
• Additional wolf monitoring for ID, MT, WY based on State Management Plans	-246	-
• Pacific Salmon Grants – National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	-1,477	-
• Lahontan Cutthroat Trout	-246	-
• Peregrine Fund – California Condor Recovery	-246	-
• Peregrine Fund – Aplomado Falcon Recovery	-148	-
• White Sulphur Springs WV Mussel Recovery	-197	-
• Travel Reduction	-283	-
• Contracts Reduction	-61	-
Total, Program Changes	-3,658	-

Justification of 2009 Program Changes

The 2009 budget request for Recovery Program is \$68,417,000 and 434 FTE, a net program change of -\$3,658,000 and 0 FTE from 2008 Enacted.

General Program Activities (-\$754,000)

To enable the Service to address its highest priorities during constrained fiscal times, the Service proposes reducing FY 2009 program administrative funding in Endangered Species Recovery Program. The Service believes savings can be achieved through streamlining program management. The requested budget change will not affect performance of the Recovery Program. Funding provided for General Program Activities in FY 2009 will allow the Service to meet performance targets. For further information on performance data, please refer to the Program Performance Change table at the beginning of the Endangered Species section.

Additional Wolf Monitoring for Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming based on State Management Plans (-\$246,000)

This unrequested earmark is not necessary to accomplish recovery program goals. The gray wolf population in the western U.S. has reached its numerical and distributional recovery goals, and the Service is working to make a final decision on the proposed rule to delist the Northern Rocky Mountain Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of the gray wolf in FY 2008. The Service has approved state wolf management plans in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming and is already providing \$1,486,000 in funds for wolf monitoring to the States and the Nez Perce Tribe in FY 2009.

Pacific Salmon Grants (-\$1,477,000)

In FY 2008, Congress provided \$1,477,000 for Pacific Salmon grants that was not requested. This funding is a pass-through grant to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) for salmon habitat recovery projects in the State of Washington. The Service proposes to discontinue funding this earmark in FY 2009 in order to fund higher priority conservation activities elsewhere in the budget request. Although the Service plays a role in salmon management, the National Marine Fisheries Service is the Federal agency with lead responsibility for recovery of the Pacific salmon. An array of Federal grant programs are available for species and habitat conservation, particularly programs focused on salmon and anadromous fish recovery.

Lahontan Cutthroat Trout (-\$246,000)

In FY 2008, Congress provided an unrequested earmark of \$246,000 to the Service for recovery of the Lahontan cutthroat trout in Nevada. The Service has used these funds to coordinate recovery implementation on an ecosystem-based scale for the Lahontan cutthroat trout. Most of the funds are being used for on-the-ground actions and landowner assistance in the Walker and Truckee River basins. The funds enabled the Service to coordinate with stakeholders affected by the trout's listing and to involve stakeholders in the recovery planning process through the formation of a Management Oversight Group comprised of federal, state and tribal leaders to coordinate recovery efforts and revise the Recovery Plan for the Lahontan Cutthroat trout. Continued funding is not being requested since these on-the-ground actions have been implemented and the Management Oversight Group has been established; any recommendations for future actions—and the appropriate management entities to implement them—are expected to come out of the revised Recovery Plan.

Peregrine Fund – California Condor (-\$246,000)

In FY 2008, Congress provided \$634,000 for the California condor. These FY 2008 funds will be used for management activities, such as research, captive breeding, monitoring, and the release program to restore California condors within suitable habitat in the State of Arizona through transfer to the Peregrine Fund for implementation of these efforts. The Service proposes to fund other higher priority actions with this funding in FY 2009. This program is eligible for Service grant programs such as the State and Tribal, and section 6 Conservation grant programs.

Peregrine Fund – Aplomado Falcon (-\$148,000)

In FY 2008, Congress provided an unrequested earmark of \$394,000 for the Aplomado falcon. These FY 2008 funds will be used for on-the-ground implementation of efforts to restore northern Aplomado falcons within suitable habitat in the State of New Mexico and to transfer directly to the Peregrine Fund for implementation of this restoration. The Service proposes to fund other higher priority actions with this funding in FY 2009. This program is eligible for Service grant programs such as the State and Tribal, and section 6 Conservation grant programs.

White Sulphur Springs NFH, Aquatic Invertebrates and Amphibians (-\$197,000)

In FY 2008 Congress provided funding to maintain and enhance the recovery and restoration of freshwater mussels and other aquatic invertebrates at White Sulphur Springs National Fish Hatchery (WSSNFH) West Virginia. The Fish Hatchery will use these earmarked funds to develop propagation techniques for freshwater mussels, which have undergone tremendous declines in recent decades due to habitat destruction, poor water quality, and competition from exotic species. The Service proposes to discontinue funding these efforts in FY 2009 in order to fund higher priority conservation activities elsewhere in the budget request.

Program Performance Change

No table is included as the measures are not impacted by the projected funding changes.

Program Overview

The Recovery Program carries out the primary purpose of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) conserving endangered and threatened species and the ecosystems upon which they depend. The Recovery program prepares recovery plans that guide, prioritize, and identify necessary recovery actions. The Service works cooperatively with other federal, state, tribal, and non-government partners in a cross-programmatic manner to implement these recovery actions.

Recovery of endangered and threatened species is a challenging task. The factors that lead to species imperilment, including habitat degradation through land, water, and other resource development and extraction, and invasive species proliferation, are increasingly complex. In most cases, decades, if not centuries, of these impacts have resulted in a species' imperilment. Therefore, addressing these factors requires long-term coordinated action between the Service and its partners. Because listing species as endangered or threatened under the ESA does not immediately halt or alter these threats, species often continue to decline following listing. However, as knowledge of species and their requirements increase through the development of recovery plans and implementation of recovery actions, the status of species will often stabilize and begin to show improvement.

The Recovery Program contributes directly to the Department's strategic goal to sustain biological communities on Department managed and influenced lands, in the Resource Protection mission component, and the Service's proposed mission goal of "Conservation Leadership for Fish, Wildlife, and Their Habitats."

Recovery Planning – Recovery planning guides and focuses species recovery efforts and includes the development of recovery outlines shortly after a species is listed, preparation of draft and final recovery plans, and, as new information becomes available, revision of plans. Recovery outlines guide the immediate implementation of urgent recovery actions, and outlines the rest of the recovery planning development process. Recovery plans identify the recovery objectives, measurable criteria, site-specific management actions, costs, and methods for monitoring a species' recovery progress. Recovery teams, often established to develop recovery plans, often consist of species experts, federal and state agencies, non-government organizations and stakeholders. The Service has been working to increase stakeholder involvement throughout the recovery planning process to help ensure the feasibility of recovery actions and establish support for implementation of those actions following a plan's completion. Scientific peer review and public review ensure plans are based on the best available science and information.

Approximately 87 percent of the species requiring recovery plans had them by the end of FY 2007. The development of high quality recovery plans for currently listed species without plans, as well as for newly listed species, and the revision of older plans, continues to be a priority for the program. Recovery plans are essential to the effective and efficient implementation of recovery actions, not only by the Recovery Program, but also by other Service programs, DOI bureaus, and other partners. Recovery planning, therefore, is critical to the accomplishment of the DOI's end outcome measures for endangered species conservation under the Resource Protection goal to sustain biological communities.

Recovery Implementation – Recovery implementation includes organizing, coordinating, funding, and overseeing the on-the-ground actions identified in recovery plans. Recovery implementation is a priority for all Service programs, from the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program working with private landowners, to National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) staff implementing actions for listed species on our own lands, to the National Fish Hatchery system providing the technical expertise and facilities for captive propagation and refugia of listed aquatic species, to the Contaminants Program monitoring the health of listed species populations on and off NWR lands. The Service works with federal and state agencies, non-government organizations, the private sector, and private landowners to implement recovery actions.

Within its available resources, the Program must balance the need to implement urgent recovery actions for species on the brink of extinction with the need to continue support for ongoing recovery programs, and the need to initiate recovery programs for newly listed species. The Service engages and encourages multiple stakeholder input throughout the recovery implementation process to develop innovative approaches, broaden support for implementation of on-the-ground actions, and implement recovery actions. Involvement of as many partners as possible, especially the states, increases our ability to implement more recovery actions for more species.

The Service employs several tools that provide flexibility in meeting both species' recovery objectives and human needs. The development of special rules under section 4(d) of the ESA for threatened species allows the Service to tailor protections to the needs of the species while enabling human activities to proceed, consistent with the conservation of the species. Special rules have been developed for several fish species, such as the Apache trout, that allow the accidental catch of the species by anglers, provided the species is returned to the water. The revenues generated from fishing in waters inhabited by the Apache trout helps to promote conservation of habitat. The establishment of experimental populations under section 10(j) of the ESA provides for flexibility in management by considering the population as threatened, regardless of its status elsewhere in its range, and allowing for the development of a special rule to provide flexibility in management of the species. The 10(j) rule developed for the gray wolf population reintroduced into the northern Rocky Mountains allows livestock producers to harass wolves that threaten livestock, and in some cases for these wolves to be killed by appropriate authorities and permitted landowners if they prey upon livestock. Controlling problem wolves helps to maintain support for wolf recovery by reducing real and potential impacts to ranchers.

To prevent species extinction the Service will work with partners and stakeholders to:

- *develop recovery plans*
- *implement on-the-ground actions*
- *restore habitat*
- *find new and efficient methods for advancing species recovery*
- *enter into Safe Harbor Agreements*

Safe Harbor Agreements allow for flexible management by providing assurances to private landowners who implement conservation measures for listed species that their actions will not lead to additional ESA restrictions. Safe Harbor Agreements have contributed significantly to the conservation of the red-cockaded woodpecker in the southeast as well as other species inhabiting private lands. Developing and implementing special rules and Safe Harbor Agreements can require considerable resources as they are often complex, cover extensive areas, and require close coordination with states, communities, and other stakeholders.

Monitoring species populations and evaluating the results of recovery actions are essential to the success of recovery programs. Periodic review of all available information concerning a species' status ensures that: species are properly classified; recovery funds are appropriately prioritized; and, recovery plan recommendations remain valid. The ESA requires the Service to review the status of all listed species at least once every five years to determine whether a change in status (delisting or reclassification) is necessary. The Service is increasing the priority it places on conducting 5-year reviews with the intent of balancing the need to ensure that decisions are based on the best available information and the need to implement on-the-ground actions that directly further the recovery of listed species.

Delisting and reclassification are the results of recovery success. Delistings also represent the removal of regulatory restrictions that are no longer necessary to sustain the species. Removing a species from the Endangered Species List or reclassifying it from endangered to threatened requires a formal rulemaking

with the associated scientific peer review and public review. When a species is recovered and delisted, the ESA requires the Service, in cooperation with the states, to monitor the species for a minimum of five years to assess each species' ability to sustain itself without the ESA's protective measures.

The Recovery Program plays a vital role in guiding, facilitating, supporting, and monitoring the implementation of recovery actions by other Service programs, other DOI bureaus, Federal agencies, States, and other partners and stakeholders. Two examples of successful multi-party partnerships include the Upper Colorado River Recovery Program, where Federal, State, local agencies, and water users implement and assist in recovery activities for the humpback chub, Colorado pikeminnow, razorback sucker, and bonytail chub; and, the Platte River Recovery Program which focuses on protecting and restoring the Platte River ecosystem. The work of the Recovery Program, therefore, is critically important to the accomplishment of the DOI's end outcome measure for endangered species conservation under the Resource Protection goal to sustain biological communities.

Recovery and the Endangered Species Strategic Plan – Recovery of listed species is the primary objective of the ESA, and therefore represents one of the two primary goals of the Endangered Species Strategic Plan (Plan). The Plan is stepped down from both the Department and Service's strategic plans. The endangered species strategic plan recognizes that the Service should take an objective view and show meaningful progress on a set of priority species. While the Service will focus on the list of prioritized species, the plan also recognizes that there will be other listed species for which we will continue to seek current status information, conduct activities mandated by the ESA, or take other conservation actions. Thus the set of prioritized species will not represent the only species that the Endangered Species program will work on, but they indicate where the Program, in concert with its partners, would most like to track progress in achieving a positive change in species' status.

The ultimate goal for the Strategic Plan is to recover listed species. Developing a recovery plan that provides a blueprint for the species recovery and implementing the actions within that should improve the status of the species.

Five-year reviews contribute significantly to the success the program's strategic goal in that they encourage regular assessments of species status—assessments that are necessary in documenting performance measures. The ESA requires the Service to review the status of all listed species at least once every five years to determine whether a change in status (delisting or reclassification) is necessary. These assessments also consider and describe threats to the species and conservation efforts to ameliorate the threats. Given the importance of these reviews, one of the efficiency measures that may be included in the Plan is to track the average completion time for 5-year reviews of prioritized species.

In summary, the Plan places a substantial focus on the recovery of listed species, and in particular, realizing results related to recovery. The tools and processes that Service and their partners will use to achieve recovery do not change (e.g., recovery planning, 5-year reviews, safe harbors, recovery management agreements, conservation planning, interagency consultation), and recovery efforts and associated performance measures will focus on a list of prioritized species. Lower-order performance measures are nested under the overarching measure of delisting species.

2009 Program Performance

The Service anticipates the following accomplishments and activities:

- In FY 2009, improve the recovery status of 7 prioritized listed species, and stabilize or improve 527 listed species.
- In FY 2009, based upon funding and other new information, delist two prioritized listed species; possible examples include the Hawaiian hawk and Maguire daisy.
- Initiate 5-year reviews for 253 species in FY 2009, and complete 60 5-year reviews for prioritized listed species.
- Update recovery plans such that 124 prioritized species recovery plans are current.
- Build partnerships to help the Service implement recovery actions (including habitat restoration, captive propagation, and reintroduction) for all listed species.
- Implement over 2,000 recovery actions for prioritized listed species.

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