



Coordination of Federal Agency Priority Threatened, Endangered, and At-Risk Species (TER-S) Research

Project # 09-453

Background:

In 2003, U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) officials stated that threatened and endangered species protection may result in land-use restrictions that reduce the military's flexibility to use land for training. Congress subsequently directed the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) to conduct an investigation on the extent to which DoD and other nearby federal land managers are managing cooperatively for endangered species affecting military training ranges, and factors that can limit cooperative management for endangered species on military training ranges. The result was GAO-03-976, *Military Training-Implementation Strategy Needed to Increase Interagency Management for Endangered Species Affecting Training Ranges*. This study recommended that DoD, the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) better coordinate their natural resources science efforts and information sharing. Representatives from the three Departments later developed and signed an action plan to address the GAO's recommendations.

Objective:

Threatened, endangered, and at-risk species (TER-S) science programs within federal agencies can be based on complicated processes. To identify gaps, reduce redundancies, and facilitate cooperative synergies, this project sought to develop a *TER-S Interagency Research Coordination Manual* for the scientific community to address:

- how each participating agency's TER-S related science program processes work;
- how the priority objectives and projects are established and implemented; and
- how to influence the processes to the mutual benefit of all members.

Summary of Approach:

HydroGeoLogic, Inc. (HGL) and Booz Allen staff collaborated on this effort. Booz Allen staff identified a list of contacts within the designated federal agencies and Military Services to be included in the Manual. HGL staff then contacted the appropriate points of contact (POCs) from each agency and administered a set of survey questions to determine each agency's:

- ability to coordinate TER-S science research with external agency partner(s);

- ability to coordinate TER-S science research with the DoD/U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Roundtable;
- process for identifying research priorities;
- process for developing research agendas; and
- process for implementing research agendas and priorities.

HGL and Booz Allen staff coordinated to meet deadlines, and collaborated to produce the *TER-S Interagency Research Coordination Manual*.

Benefit:

The *TER-S Interagency Research Coordination Manual* provides insight into participating agency organizational structures related to TER-S programs. The Manual can help agencies by identifying appropriate POCs and/or offices in other agencies to promote coordination, understand priorities, and identify windows of opportunity to provide inputs into partner agency TER-S research program planning. The Manual provides the important distinction between those agencies that are chartered to perform and/or fund TER-S research, and those that may have critical research needs but must rely on the research agencies for the required resources. The Manual will be available as an online reference, which will simplify and facilitate communications, and help people reach appropriate POCs in these agencies.

Accomplishments:

The *TER-S Interagency Research Coordination Manual* provides insight into internal agency mechanisms for TER-S research and funding processes. The Manual also identifies relevant organizations and POCs who contribute to TER-S research. The larger scientific community can now use the Manual as a single resource for TER-S research information across participating federal agencies. This will enhance DoD's ability to coordinate TER-S priorities across the federal government.

Contact Information:

Alison Dalsimer
Lead Associate, Conservation
Booz Allen Hamilton
1550 Crystal Drive
Suite 1100
Arlington, VA 22202
Phone: 703-412-7578
Fax: 703-412-7556
Email: dalsimer_alison@bah.com

Jack Mulrooney
Senior Environ. Scientist
HydroGeoLogic, Inc.
11107 Sunset Hills Road
Suite 400
Reston, VA 20190
Phone: 703-326-7825
Fax: 703-471-4180
Email: jmulrooney@hgl.com

