



**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
ENDANGERED SPECIES PROGRAM**

An Introduction to the Endangered Species Act of 1973

Module 1 of 11 – Introduction

Time 2:33

Slide 1 (Music plays)

Slide 2

When the Endangered Species Act, or ESA, was signed into law by President Nixon in 1973, many of our nation's native plants and animals had become extinct.

Other species, here in the United States, and elsewhere in the world, faced a similar fate.

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In his signing statement President Nixon wrote:

“Nothing is more priceless and more worthy of preservation than the rich array of animal life with which our country has been blessed. It is a many-faceted treasure, of value to scholars, scientists, and nature lovers alike, and it forms a vital part of the heritage we all share as Americans.”

Slide 4

When writing the ESA, Congress also recognized that species do not live in isolation from each other.

Nor can they survive without healthy habitats and ecosystems which provide the food, water, shelter, and other resources necessary to survive, and to successfully rear their young.

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The ESA applies to threatened and endangered species of plants and animals with the exception of insect pests whose protection under the law would present an overwhelming and overriding risk to man.

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The ESA is jointly administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for terrestrial and freshwater species, and the National Marine Fisheries Service for marine species and anadromous species such as salmon.

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The ESA is divided into eighteen sections that work together to achieve the purpose of recovering endangered and threatened animal and plant species.

The sections work together by providing:

- a legal framework for identifying species in need of the ESA's protection;
- requirements to plan for and implement recovery;
- a framework and tools to work together with our partners, including the public;
- a process to identify recovery accomplishments leading to the point where a species can be removed from the list; and
- the requirement to monitor recently delisted species to ensure their continued ecological and population health in the wild.

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In this overview, we discuss the key sections that support the listing and recovery process within the United States and its Territories.

Section 2	Findings and Purposes
Section 3	Definitions
Section 4	Listing, Critical Habitat, Recovery, and Delisting and Monitoring
Section 6	Cooperation with States and Territories
Section 7	Federal Agency Actions and Consultations
Section 9	Prohibited Acts
Section 10	Permits
Section 11	Penalties and Enforcement

End Segment