

# Importance

GAP's tools and data are essential to achieving national goals of the highest priority:

- **Protect** America's key ecosystems and outdoor recreational resources—use data and analysis to increase effectiveness of planning and accountability for projects that protect and enhance the health of these crucial lands
- **Improve** management of conservation lands to safeguard nature—bring the best data and science to the protection of habitat and wildlife
- **Adapt** to and mitigate the impact of climate change—provide core information on sensitive landscapes, biodiversity and protected areas to scientists and policy makers
- **Evaluate** alternative land use proposals, such as renewable energy development, in order to minimize impacts to wildlife populations and take best advantage of existing public lands
- **Assess** vulnerability of America's wildlife—provide resource managers with data and analysis to proactively manage and maintain habitat

# About GAP

The Gap Analysis Program is part of the U.S. Geological Survey, in the Department of Interior. It supports a wide range of national, state and local agencies as well as non-governmental organizations and businesses with scientific tools and data.

GAP uses a collaborative approach to do research, analysis and data development, resulting in a history of cooperation with over 500 agencies and organizations.

## Key contacts

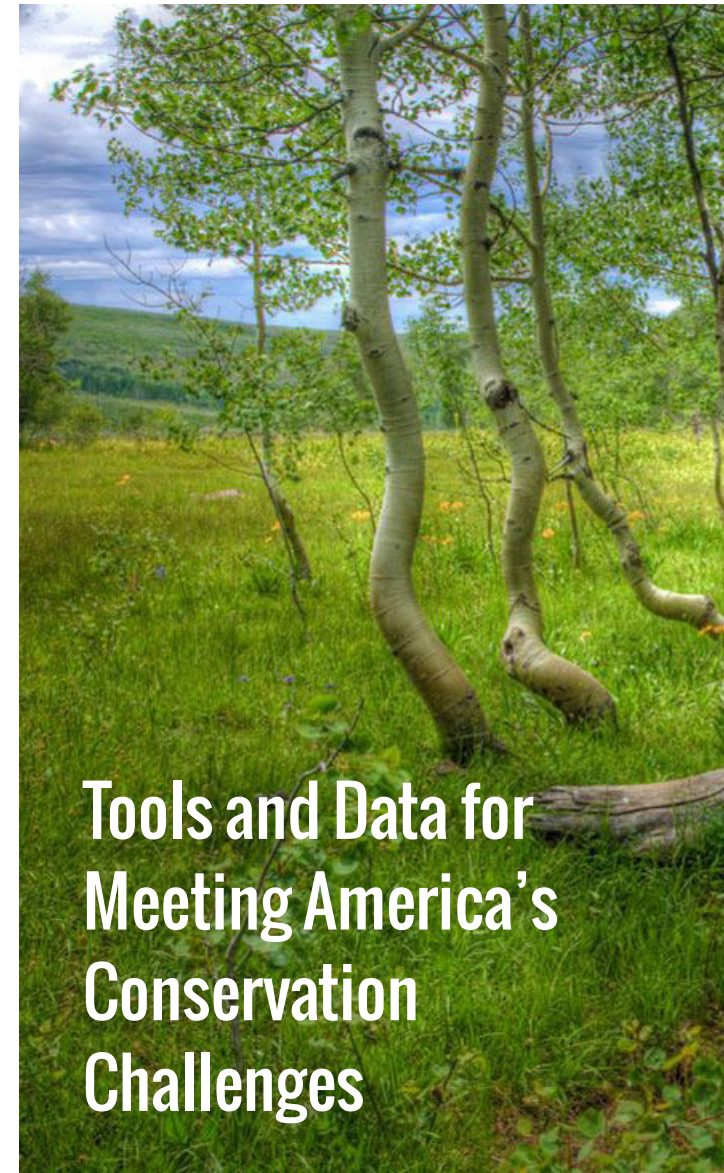
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# GAP ANALYSIS PROGRAM



Tools and Data for  
Meeting America's  
Conservation  
Challenges

# Mission

The USGS Gap Analysis Program (GAP) provides data and analytical tools for national, state and local policy makers and resource managers who are seeking to conserve biodiversity, inform climate action strategies, evaluate alternative land use proposals, and improve the use, management and protection of open space and recreational resources.

**GAP** | USGS GAP ANALYSIS PROGRAM  
Keeping Common Species Common

# GAP's Services

**SCIENCE AND ANALYSIS:** GAP provides data and tools for science-based analysis of biological diversity. Its widely recognized “gap analysis” methodology helps evaluate land use impacts on species and habitats to ensure that common species do not become endangered or threatened.

**DATA:** GAP publishes three critical U.S. data sets:

- **Protected Areas (PAD-US)** — ownership boundaries of federal, state and local parks and refuges. Widely used for planning future conservation and recreation investments, and assessing climate impacts and mitigation strategies.
- **Land Cover** — the most detailed and consistent data on natural vegetation communities as well as urban land uses. Widely used for biodiversity assessments, State Wildlife Action Plans, climate adaptation plans and more
- **Vertebrate Species** — defines where birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles are likely to occur and the extent of their range. Used to pro-actively plan for species conservation before threatened or endangered status is imposed.

Gap Analysis of Lark Bunting

