

Endangered Species

Endangered Species		2003 Actual	2004 Estimate	Uncontrollable & Related Changes (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	2005 Budget Request	Change from 2004 (+/-)
Candidate Conservation	\$(000) FTE	9,867 74	9,808 77	+46	-1,244 0	8,610 77	-1,198 0
Listing	\$(000) FTE	9,018 76	12,135 102	+51	+5,040 0	17,226 102	+5,091 0
Consultation/HCP	\$(000) FTE	47,460 480	47,146 500	+293	-1,989 0	45,450 500	-1,696 0
Recovery	\$(000) FTE	65,412 519	67,905 533	+314	-10,065 0	58,154 533	-9,751 0
CAM (see General Business Operation Expenses)		[3,701]	[TBD*]			[TBD]*	
Total, Endangered Species	\$(000) FTE	131,757 1,149	136,994 1,212	+704	-8,258	129,440 1,212	-7,554 0

* The Service is reviewing the Cost Allocation Methodology and will provide a FY 2005 budget proposal by April 15, 2004.

Program Overview

The Endangered Species program is comprised of four components: Candidate Conservation, Listing, Consultation and Recovery. Each component is integral in fulfilling the Service's responsibilities under the *Endangered Species Act*.

The **Candidate Conservation** program involves a proactive and collaborative approach with states and territories, tribes, federal agencies, and the private sector to keep species from declining to the point that they warrant listing under the *Endangered Species Act*. Through this program the Service works to: (1) identify species that are on the brink of becoming listed or that face threats that make listing a possibility; (2) provide information, planning assistance, and resources to encourage partnerships for conservation measures for these species; and (3) prioritize non-listed species so those most needing protection or additional study are addressed first. The Service believes this collaborative approach is an essential conservation tool to proactively address species decline, remove or reduce threats, and initiate actions so that listing might not be necessary.

The **Listing** program is the mechanism through which plant and animal species are afforded the full range of protections available under the *Endangered Species Act* including: prohibitions on taking, import/export and commerce, and possession of unlawfully taken endangered species; recovery planning and implementation; and federal agency consultation requirements. Listing a species is a responsibility of the Service when, on the basis of the best available scientific information, a species is determined to be threatened or endangered. The program includes listing species under the Act, designating critical habitat and responding to petitions from the public to list species.

The **Consultation** program responds to the needs of federal agencies through section 7 of the *Endangered Species Act*, as well as meeting the needs of non-federal entities through the Habitat Conservation Planning (HCP) program (section 10 of the *Act*). The Service works with its federal partners to identify and resolve potential species conflicts in the early stages of project planning. The Service also addresses the needs of non-federal entities by participating as an equal partner in the HCP planning process. Both the section 7 and section 10 processes are used to ensure that projects will be implemented in a manner consistent with the conservation needs of listed species.

The **Recovery** program supports the ultimate goal of threatened and endangered species conservation which is to recover listed species to levels where protection under the *Endangered Species Act* is no longer required and they can be removed from the list (delisted). Restoring listed species to a point where they are secure, self-sustaining components of their ecosystem is a challenging task. The factors responsible for their endangered status may have been at work for hundreds of years, and reversing declines, stabilizing populations, and achieving recovery goals may require coordinated actions from many partners over a lengthy period.

Endangered Species—Use of Cost and Performance Information

- Until FY 2000, the FWS allocated the listing appropriation to the Regions by formula. This formula-based allocation, however, did not ensure that the listing actions that needed to be carried out each year were funded. In FY 2000, the Service began funding listing actions individually, instead of by formula to the Regions. Based on our recent experience, we developed cost estimates for each kind of listing action, and we allocated funds to the Regions based on these estimated costs of court-ordered and other necessary listing actions. We have revised our cost estimates as necessary since FY 2000, and this approach to allocation has ensured that our highest priority (usually court-ordered) listing actions have been funded and undertaken.
- The Service targeted its 2002 and 2003 consultation increases to support energy development activities by other Federal agencies. The allocation formulas were revised to reflect the anticipated energy related consultation workload associated with petroleum development, coal mining, and hydropower. Information about the likely energy-related workload was derived from the Department of Energy. By taking this approach, instead of allocating consultation increase by the existing formula, the Service was able to anticipate and better meet this energy-related consultation workload and further contribute to the Department's resource use goal of fostering energy development in an environmentally sound manner.
- In FY 2004, Congress provided an increase to the Recovery Program. The Service requested this increase to address the high-priority needs of (1) species on the brink of extinction, and (2) species at the verge of recovery. Rather than allocate this increase by formula to the Regions, the Regions will request funding for specific projects. This competition-like approach to allocating this funding will ensure that the highest priority needs are met, no matter where they occur in the country, while encouraging increased efficiency in project implementation (as among projects of roughly equal priority, lower-cost proposals are more likely to be funded).
- Wildfires, especially in parts of the American West where fires near communities have been suppressed for decades, pose a significant threat to life and property. Fires can affect listed species, and at times fire management and prevention activities can also affect listed species. When carried out by federal agencies, actions to reduce hazardous fuel loads may require section 7 consultation. To ensure Service staff are available to conduct these consultations promptly, the Service, in fiscal year 2001 entered into cooperative agreements with the USFS and the BLM, which agreed to reimburse Service consultation costs for fire activities, as authorized by Congress. This approach ensured that these vital consultation needs are addressed promptly when needed, in support of the Department's and the President's fire management goals.
- In FY 2003, the Service, in cooperation with NOAA-Fisheries, BLM, USFS, and BIA, proposed section 7 counterpart regulations that allow the action agencies to make "not likely to adversely affect" determinations for fuels management projects. These regulations, which were finalized early in fiscal year 2004, allow the Service to focus consultation resources on those projects that are likely to have the greatest impacts on listed species, while reducing the workload burden of informal consultations on fuels management actions.
- We have implemented streamlined Section 7 consultation processes for several kinds of activities. When we have implemented these streamlined processes, the time to complete consultations has been reduced by one-third. For example, the Service developed streamlined processes to expedite consultations on timber sales, habitat restoration, recreation activities, and other projects in the Pacific Northwest. We also are engaging the Department of Transportation on approaches to streamline endangered species review for projects funded by TEA-21