SUPPRESSED:

How Politics Drowned Out Science for Ten Endangered Species

ENDANGERED SPECIES COALITION

This report is a distress signal for at-risk plants and animals. We can only successfully recover them–under the Endangered Species Act–when we follow science. Yet, we've fallen down on the job in many ways. Special interests, state agencies, and even some members of Congress have always applied pressure on species decisions. The difference now is that the Trump Administration is itself infiltrated with special interest officials who completely disregard science.

Science has not been followed in determining critical habitat, adequate population numbers, and needed protections. Bad practices continue—unsustainable fishing, dams, development, oil and gas seismic surveys, and the border wall. Some highly imperiled species haven't even been listed as endangered. Oil and gas industries, states, and others have resisted federal management and adapting to climate change. States have tried to manage at-risk wildlife themselves, and then they kept us in the dark on their conservation actions and population numbers.

As a result, species across the country, on land and in our waters, have suffered. This report examines the lack of scientific decisions for: dunes sagebrush lizard, greater sage grouse, Hermes copper butterfly, leatherback sea turtle, Mexican wolf, North Atlantic right whale, ocelot, pallid sturgeon, San Jacinto Valley crownscale, and wolverine. Together these species are part of a much larger story playing out in the United States right now—a turning back of the clock on science. This will harm not just nature, but all of us.

Introduction

If you were a 1970s biologist who studied declining ocelots or Hermes butterflies, you might take action. You might write a bill. And if you wrote that bill, it might have looked very similar to the Endangered Species Act. And because it follows the science, it's our nation's most effective law in preventing threatened and endangered species from going extinct.

Thanks to the Act, when a biologist decides whether to list a species as endangered, *the only thing that the biologist can consider is science*. Other matters, including economics, come into play later. The science, however, stays central to every step.

But will that approach stand under the Trump Administration? Will U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) biologists be allowed to follow the science? There are many reasons to fear they are not and will not.

Due to incredible pressure from oil, gas, fishing, and other industries, and the states, previous administrations struggled to hold the line on science. But the Trump Administration has gone a step further and thrown science out the window. The administration has hired industry representatives to run its agencies. It pulled out of the Paris Climate Accords. It deemed a scientific background unnecessary for positions that require scientific knowledge. And it's trying to slash science budgets at NASA, NOAA, EPA, and more.

The attack on science at the Department of Interior has mostly flown under the radar. But the threat here is just as real and dangerous. Science has been subverted to please special interests—from extractive industries to states—for these vulnerable species. What these species need is quick action to get their recovery back on track. And yet, they also serve as ambassadors to a larger story of species conservation concerns. Plants and animals need nothing less than a strong commitment to science. Without that, the forecast is dire for plants, wildlife, and humans.

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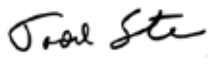

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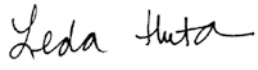

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TURTLE ISLAND RESTORATION NETWORK

Net Decline:

Pacific Leatherback Sea Turtle
(Dermochelys coriacea)

> *The Pacific leatherback is the only soft-shelled sea turtle and is one of the largest reptiles in the world, weighing up to 2,000 pounds. The leatherback can migrate over 10,000 miles from foraging grounds to nesting beaches.*

This beautiful species plays a key role in keeping its primary food source—jellyfish—in check. This helps protect important fisheries.[1] With the loss of leatherbacks, jellyfish consume more fish eggs and larvae, making it difficult for fish stocks to recover. When leatherbacks migrate to nesting beaches, their eggs transfer nutrients from ocean to land, helping to rejuvenate beaches.[2]

In 2015, the Pacific Fishery Management Council and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife approved a rule to protect the Pacific leatherback and other species from drift gillnet fishing for swordfish. THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION UNEXPECTEDLY WITHDREW THIS PROPOSED RULE IN JUNE OF THIS YEAR. The withdrawal reflects the fishing industry's powerful lobbyists and the Trump Administration's *blatant disregard for recommendations of its own fishery advisors*.

SCIENCE IGNORED

WESTERN PACIFIC LEATHERBACK POPULATIONS DECLINED BY MORE THAN 80 PERCENT AND EASTERN PACIFIC LEATHERBACK POPULATIONS DECLINED BY MORE THAN 97 PERCENT OVER THE LAST THREE GENERATIONS.[3] They are decreasing because of bad fishing practices such as driftnets, the illegal harvest of eggs, and ingestion of trash.[4] These threats have continued even though leatherbacks have been listed since 1970.

THREATS:
Entanglement in fishing gear
Illegal harvesting of eggs
Ingestion of trash (particularly plastic bags)

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Current Range
Eastern and Western Pacific Ocean

Conservation Status
Endangered - Endangered Species Act, Critically Endangered - IUCN Redlist

Remaining Population
estimated 2,300 total; Eastern Pacific subpopulation = 633 and declining

> Keystone Species

photo©Robin Silver

Wildlands
NETWORK

Science Snubbed:

Mexican Wolf
(Canis lupis baileyi)

The Mexican wolf is one of the most endangered North American animals and the most endangered subspecies of gray wolf in the world. As an apex predator at the top of its food chain, a recovered Mexican wolf population should help restore damaged habitats.

SCIENCE IGNORED

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) assembled Recovery Teams in 2003 and 2010 to develop up-to-date *Mexican Wolf Recovery Plans*. These teams of scientists and experts concluded that recovery requires THREE INTERCONNECTED U.S. POPULATIONS, each with at least 250 wolves for a MINIMUM TOTAL OF 750 ANIMALS.[1]

Unfortunately, FWS' *2017 Draft Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan* ignores the recommendations and falls far short of recovery, calling for:

- A RECOVERY GOAL OF 320 TO 380 WOLVES VS. 750
- ONE U.S. RECOVERY ZONE VS. THREE ZONES

The Colorado and Utah recovery zones were removed for *political reasons*, leaving just one zone crossing west-central New Mexico and east-central Arizona.[2]

The *Draft Plan* proposes giving Arizona and New Mexico veto power over species management activities! Both states have a long record of opposing conservation efforts, in spite of strong public support for the species. [3] The states' efforts included:

- Spending tax-payer money on anti-wolf lobbyists[4]
- Supporting the killing of wolves[5]
- Denying permits and suing the federal government to stop needed wolf releases[6]

If the *Draft Plan* is put in place, Mexican wolves will be delisted once they hit 320 in the United States. Based on science, and Arizona and New Mexico's opposition to wolf recovery, the *Draft Plan* is A RECIPE FOR EXTINCTION, NOT RECOVERY.

OTHER wolves threatened by human activities

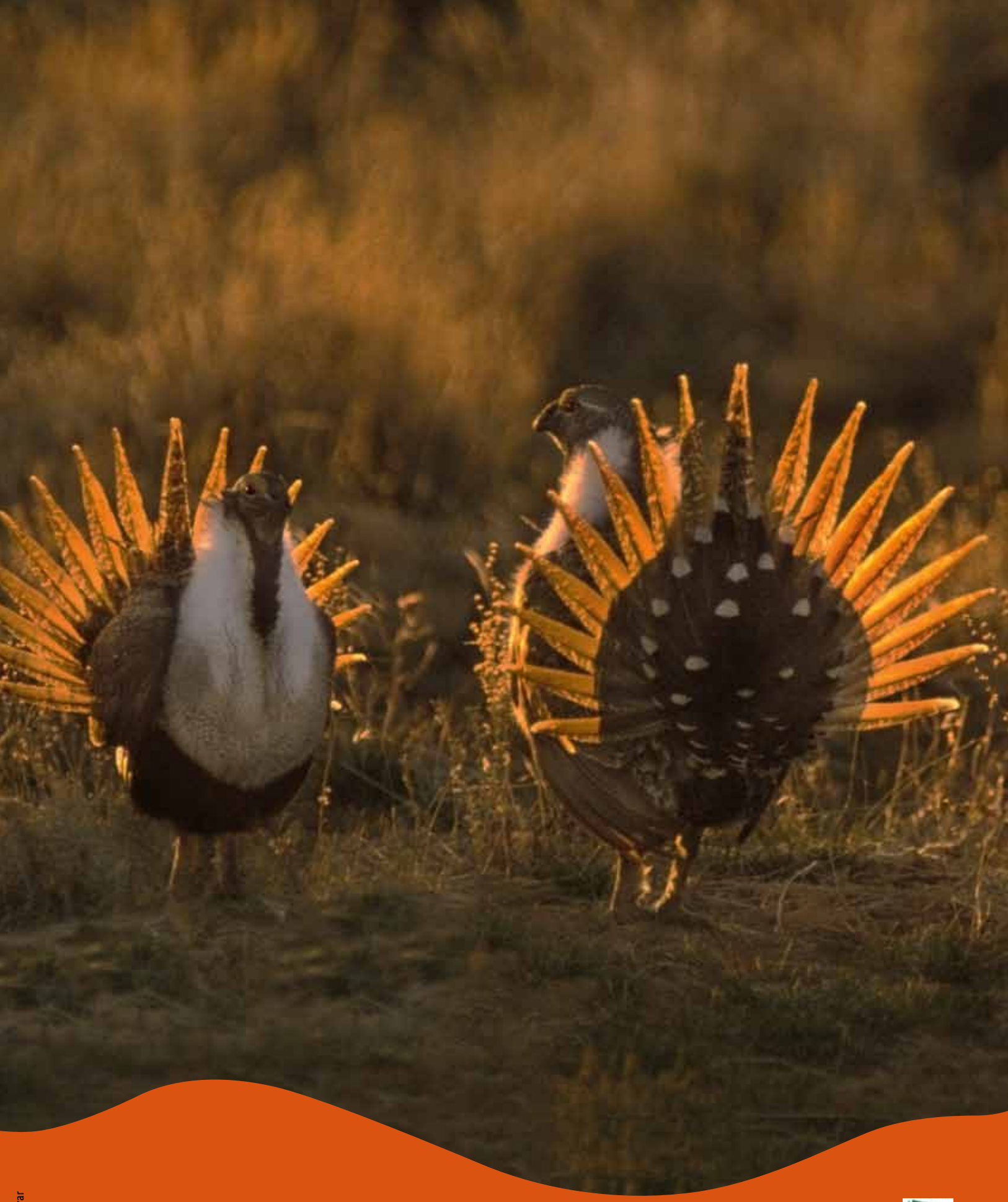
- **Red Wolf** – Critically Endangered – Fewer than 30-45 remain in the wild; previously hunted to extinction and now neglected and mismanaged by FWS.
- **Alexander Archipelago Wolf** – Not Listed – Pressures from logging, road building, and overharvest are destroying this rare wolf, the deer it depends on, and the old-growth forest it calls home.

THREATS:
HUMANS - Special interest and state government interference in recovery plans

Current Range
East-central AZ, West-central NM, and Northern Mexico

Conservation Status
Endangered subspecies of gray wolf – Endangered Species Act

Remaining Wild Population
Approximately
113
in the United States, and approximately
28 in Mexico



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Western Watersheds Project

Disappearing Dancers:

Greater Sage-Grouse
(Centrocercus urophasianus)

> *The greater sage-grouse is an umbrella species—protecting it protects over 350 other types of plants and wildlife—for sagebrush environments. When the sage-grouse is distressed, the entire landscape is likely ailing.*[5]

Sage-grouse require large areas of unspoiled, healthy sagebrush habitat. PROTECTING SAGE-GROUSE POPULATIONS SAFEGUARDS THE ENTIRE HABITAT, INCLUDING OTHER WILDLIFE SUCH AS ELK, PRONGHORNS, PYGMY RABBITS, SAGEBRUSH SONGBIRDS, AND FERRUGINOUS HAWKS.

SCIENCE IGNORED

Based on science, the greater sage-grouse should have been listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act. The federal government launched a *National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy* in 2011 to avoid listing. For sage-grouse priority habitats, scientists recommended:[6]

- No oil and gas leasing
- No mining
- A three percent limit on surface disturbances
- No more than one well-pad per square mile
- No roads, powerlines, or surface operations within four miles of mating sites (leks)

After pressure from state governments and oil and gas officials, the federal sage-grouse *Resource Management Plans (RMPs)* ignored these recommendations, allowing:

- **Up to a 70 percent reduction of priority habitats in some states**[7]
- Surface operations in Wyoming within **0.6 miles of leks instead of 4 mile buffers**
- **A 5 percent surface disturbance maximum in Wyoming vs. the recommended 3 percent**
- Exceptions, waivers, and modifications to the plan, **creating loopholes for development**

Now, the Department of Interior Secretary, Ryan Zinke, on behalf of the Trump Administration, favors ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY CHANGES AND PLAN AMENDMENTS, THAT HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO WEAKEN SAGE-GROUSE PROTECTIONS PROMISED UNDER THE PLANS. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service relied heavily on plan protections to justify its 2015 decision not to list the bird under the Act. Stripping current protections will lead right back to listing.[8]

THREATS:

Extreme sensitivity to oil and gas development:

Drilling or siting one producing well within a few miles of a lek causes population decline[1]

Development exceeding three percent of habitat within five miles of a mating location leads to localized extinction[2]

Livestock grazing leading to:

Invasive cheatgrass infestations[3] and thus frequent burns and loss of sagebrush used for food and cover

Loss of grass cover needed for hiding[4]

Current Range

11 Western US States (WA, OR, CA, NV, ID, UT, MT, CO, WY, ND, SD)

Conservation Status

BLM (Bureau of Land Mgmt.) and Forest Service Sensitive Species; Endangered Species Act Listing "not warranted"

Remaining Population

200,000-
500,000
of an original **16 million**

photo©Katie Steiger-Meister/USFWS

Dammed:

Pallid Sturgeon *(Scaphirhynchus albus)*

The pallid sturgeon—a top predator in the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers—has ancestors that date back to the dinosaurs. This "living dinosaur" has silver bony plates, lives for more than 50 years, grows up to six feet long, and weighs up to 80 pounds.

Dams built in the last century changed the flow of major rivers, and blocked pallid from freely swimming. Newly hatched pallid need hundreds of miles of free-flowing, oxygen-rich waters to survive. When dams break up these rivers, the young fish drift into reservoirs. There, they sink to the bottom and die from lack of oxygen. The Upper Missouri and Yellowstone river population has fewer than 100 wild-born adults and hasn't reproduced in 60 years.[1]

SCIENCE IGNORED

The pallid sturgeon was listed as endangered in 1990. The impacts of dams on fish are well known, but federal agencies have not followed expert recommendations that include:[2,3,4]

- Changing the amount and timing of water from Fort Peck Reservoir on the Missouri River to be more natural (so fish will be cued to migrate and spawn)
- Increasing the temperature of the water from Fort Peck Reservoir (so newly hatched pallid can grow faster)
- Removing the Intake Diversion Dam on the Yellowstone River and using pumps to provide water for farmers (so adult pallid can spawn further upstream)

THESE RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD HELP PALLID RECOVERY IN THE WILD. NONE HAVE HAPPENED**.** In fact, federal agencies have proposed replacing the rock dam on the Yellowstone River with a permanent, concrete dam. A human-made side channel for fish passage would be added.[5] *Pallid sturgeon experts believe it is very unlikely that the fish will use the channel.*

The side channel alternative was selected by federal agencies because it was the least expensive option. Regional farmers who receive irrigation water from the dam agreed.

THE SCIENCE INDICATES THAT PALLID STURGEON RECOVERY WILL ONLY BE POSSIBLE IF THEIR YOUNG ARE ABLE TO MATURE. This can only happen with enough drift distance (determined by river miles, water temperatures, and flow rates) for sturgeon after spawning.

Other Examples of Species Threatened by Dams

- Snake River Spring/Summer Chinook Salmon – Threatened – Four lower Snake River dams devastating this salmon species.
- Southern Resident Orca – Endangered – Only 77 individuals remaining and still declining because their food source, Snake River salmon, are dwindling.

THREATS:

Loss of habitat due to a series of dams

Current Range

Northern MT to New Orleans, LA (Missouri, Mississippi Rivers and major tributaries)

Conservation Status

Endangered under the ESA

Remaining Population

Extremely depleted with no stable populations

photo©Larry Sward

Union of Concerned Scientists

Development Debacle:

San Jacinto Valley Crownscale
(Atriplex coronata var. notatior)

The San Jacinto Valley Crownscale is an annual plant found only in the floodplains of Riverside County, California.

The species is a small, shrubby plant with gray leaves, with a unique ability to absorb salts from soil making the plant's leaves glow in sunlight.[1] The species also controls soil erosion.[2]

The crownscale population is declining, much like populations of many other rare plants in California. In fact, there are 136 plant species listed under the Endangered Species Act that are endemic to California.[2]

SCIENCE IGNORED

There is NO DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT FOR THE CROWNSCALE CURRENTLY. The species has been listed for almost 20 years, but, as the following timeline portrays, political interference has restricted full recovery of this critical species.

- In 2004, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) scientists recommended 15,232 acres of critical habitat designation.[3]
- In 2005, FWS issued a final ruling denying critical habitat for the San Jacinto Valley crownscale.
- In 2008, the Center for Biological Diversity filed a lawsuit citing interference by the Bush Administration in the final ruling on critical habitat designation for the crownscale.
- In 2012, as part of a settlement agreement for the lawsuit, FWS proposed a rule to establish 8,020 acres of critical habitat for the crown scale.[4]
- In 2013, the FWS chose not to finalize this rule because the species was already covered under other state and local conservation plans.[5]
- Currently, developer Highland Fairview is planning to build the nation's largest master planned corporate park adjacent to the San Jacinto Valley Wildlife Refuge, home to the crownscale.

The FWS decision not to designate critical habitat for the San Jacinto Valley crownscale in 2005 is a result of CLEAR POLITICAL INTERFERENCE BY FORMER DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR**.** This individual tampered with fieldwork by ordering biologists to exclude vernal pools (temporary pools of water) from critical habitat designations in California. Having close connections with building industry officials and lobbyists, the Deputy Assistant Secretary said that the economic cost of including these areas was unacceptable.[6] These temporary pools are one of the primary habitats for the crownscale.[7]

SAN JACINTO VALLEY CROWNSCALE HABITAT WILL LIKELY CONTINUE TO BE DEVELOPED SO LONG AS CRITICAL HABITAT DESIGNATIONS ARE NOT SET BY FWS.

THREATS:
Loss of habitat—fragmentation, modification, and degradation—due to agriculture and urban development
Competition from non-native plants

Current Range
San Jacinto Valley in Southern California

Conservation Status
Endangered - Endangered Species Act

Remaining Population
106,000
as of 2000; current data unavailable

Photo©eli77

Walled In:

Ocelot
(Leopardus pardalis)

Ocelots, beautiful and elusive cats, are top predators and serve the ecosystem role of controlling the population size of rabbits, birds, fish, rodents, snakes, lizards and other prey.

Commercial exploitation had been a major threat to the species, but the poaching of ocelots has significantly declined since the species was originally listed under the Endangered Species Act.

In Texas, it has been estimated that more than 95 percent of the dense thornscrub habitat preferred by ocelots has been converted to agriculture, rangelands, or urban developments.[1] These changes to one of the last U.S. strongholds for ocelots have made recovery extremely difficult. Continuing habitat loss, collisions with vehicles and inbreeding of small, isolated groups are keeping ocelot population numbers low.[2]

THREATS:
Loss of habitat connectivity

SCIENCE IGNORED

THE LAST STRAW FOR THE U.S. OCELOT POPULATION MAY BE THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S PROPOSED U.S.-MEXICO BORDER WALL. A barrier of this magnitude would further worsen the isolation of Texas and Arizona ocelots from those in Mexico and lead to continued inbreeding and most likely extinction within the United States.[3]

The administration's decision to move forward with the border wall is contrary to science that shows that habitat connectivity is a primary threat to the ocelot and other rare wildlife. THE BORDER WALL WOULD OBSTRUCT WILDLIFE MIGRATIONS THAT ARE ESSENTIAL TO HEALTHY HABITATS. A recent study has identified more than 90 endangered or threatened species that would be severely harmed by this 2,000-mile wall.[4]

THROWING BILLIONS OF DOLLARS AT THIS BORDER WALL PLAN AND DEMOLISHING AN ICONIC WILDLIFE REFUGE WILL NOT MAKE THE U.S. SAFER. It will, however, be a disaster for people and communities, and tragically sacrifice endangered species like jaguars and ocelots and their fragile environment.[5]

Current Range
AZ and TX, plus Mexico and Central and South America

Conservation Status
Endangered – Endangered Species Act

Remaining Population
53 in two isolated populations in TX; a few scattered in AZ;
1421 in Senora, Mexico; decreasing population trend per IUCN

photo©USFWS

Political Pressure:

Dunes Sagebrush Lizard
(Sceloporus arenicolus)

> *The insect-eating dunes sagebush lizard is small at 2.5 inches long, has one of the tiniest ranges of any U.S. lizard, and is very picky about its small home.*[1]

It only lives among shinnery oak trees in the Mescalero and Monahan Sand Dunes of New Mexico and Texas. Its fate directly reflects the health of these two dune systems. Conservation of this lizard helps protect many other rare dune-dwellers, including an endemic tiger beetle and a june beetle.

SCIENCE IGNORED

Listing the dunes sagebrush lizard under the Endangered Species Act (the Act) was tried multiple times, but the listing was denied in 2012 due to political and industry pressure on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).[2,3]

New Mexico and Texas offered state-based conservation plans instead of federal listing. Withdrawing the dunes sagebrush lizard from its candidate status under the Act was not based on scientific recommendations. Instead, AS ADMITTED BY THE FORMER REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF THE FWS SOUTHWEST REGION, *"there was no way that we were going to list a lizard in the middle of oil country during an election year."*[4]

Private, local, and state officials, as well as Texas State agencies, hammered FWS about the alleged negative economic effects of listing.[5] As a result, FWS approved the inadequate state plans.

The conservation plan prepared by Texas has unclear commitments and lacks transparency, making it nearly impossible to measure results. WORSE YET, SAND MINING BEGAN ON PRIVATE LANDS WITHIN THE LIZARD'S HABITAT AFTER THE CONSERVATION PLAN WAS APPROVED.[6] The sand is mined for nearby fracking.[7] This activity was not addressed in the plan, so even Texas has no authority to regulate the sand mines or their effect on the lizard.[8] IF WE ARE UNABLE TO MONITOR THE DECLINE OF THE DUNES SAGEBRUSH LIZARD, IN TEXAS PARTICULARLY, IT MAKES ITS RECOVERY ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE.

THREATS:
Extreme sensitivity to wind and solar energy development, off-road vehicles, shinnery oak removal, and oil and gas development

Sand mining (for use in fracking) in Texas

Current Range
Mescalero and Monahan Dune Systems in southeastern New Mexico and West Texas

Conservation Status
New Mexico – Endangered; Not listed in Texas or under Endangered Species Act

Remaining Population
Unknown - found only in shinnery oak dune habitats

photo©David Horner

Fed Funding Foiled:

Hermes Copper Butterfly
(Lycaena hermes)

The Hermes copper butterfly, one of the most endangered species in California, is a couple of new subdivisions and one major wildfire away from extinction.

Hermes are rarely seen far from their spiny redberry plants or buckwheat nectar plants, and live in small distinct colonies (groups). The colonies are often independent from each other even when close to each other. Although the Hermes lives in only a small area of San Diego County, California, protecting this butterfly can help preserve the environmental functions, services, and biodiversity provided by its unique range.

Of the 57 known historic populations, 17 populations were still in existence, 28 populations were believed to be locally extinct, and the status of 12 populations was unknown as of 2011.[1] Additionally, recent Hermes colonies have been exceedingly small or nonexistent in many of these sites. At sites where Hermes have been recently seen, the maximum number spotted is generally less than five.

THREATS:
Loss of habitat
Wildfires
Development

SCIENCE IGNORED

Scientists provided data that supported the listing of Hermes copper butterfly as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act as far back as 1991. With multiple petitions and a court order ignored, years of red tape have left the Hermes and its habitat unprotected.

In April 2016, FWS, *for the third time*, acknowledged that the species warrants a listing of threatened or endangered but declined to move the listing forward. According to the FWS, budget constraints and higher priority species are the reasons.[2]

Since most Hermes copper butterflies are found in the southern portion of San Diego County, ONE LARGE WILDFIRE COULD NEARLY WIPE OUT THE ENTIRE SPECIES. Wildfires in 2003 and 2007 already caused significant colony extinctions.

FEDERAL LISTING IS ESSENTIAL for the protection of the butterfly's habitat. This is the only way to CREATE THE FUNDING NECESSARY TO STOP SPECIES DECLINE, PROVIDE SANCTUARY LAND, AND ULTIMATELY EXPAND HERMES POPULATIONS.

Range
San Diego County, California, west of the Cuyamaca Mountains, and Northern Baja California, Mexico

Conservation Status
Listing found warranted, candidate species under the Endangered Species Act

Remaining Population
Extremely depleted; actual number unknown

photo©Brian Skerry

CETACEAN SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Wrong Way:

North Atlantic Right Whale
(Eubalaena glaciali)

> *North Atlantic right whales are critically endangered due to oil, gas, and wind energy development, pollution, and military sonar, but boat strikes and entanglement in fishing gear continue to be the primary threats to species recovery.*[1]

The most reliable population estimate of right whales was 451 in 2016.[2] *16 right whales were found dead between April and October 2017 from ship strikes and entanglement in fishing gear – an alarming, record number!*[3]

SCIENCE IGNORED

A major concern for the RIGHT WHALE is CONTINUED OR EXPANDED SEISMIC OIL AND GAS SURVEYS. These surveys stress right whales, directly affect their health, and cause slow reproduction.[4]

The Trump Administration is PUSHING EXPANDED OFFSHORE DRILLING FOR OIL AND GAS, AND PREVENTING NECESSARY MARINE SANCTUARIES THAT INCLUDE PRIME RIGHT WHALE HABITAT.

The administration's actions forced the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to reverse its January 2017 decision to cancel six offshore oil and gas leases in the Atlantic. Instead, the process has begun for a new 5-year plan that allows more energy exploration, leasing, and development of the entire Outer Continental Shelf.[5]

Ocean warming is changing where right whales travel and search for food, making it that much harder to reduce fishing net and ship strike deaths, reversing recovery efforts. Despite 40 years of protections and recovery plans, HUMAN ACTIONS CONTINUE TO PUSH THIS SPECIES TOWARD EXTINCTION.

THREATS:
Entanglement in fishing gear
Ship strikes
Seismic surveys, pollution, and military sonar

Current Range
North Atlantic Ocean

Conservation Status
Critically Endangered – Endangered Species Act

Remaining Population
Approximately
450

> Keystone species

photo©Steven Gnam

Wildlands
NETWORK

Climate Casualty:

North American Wolverine
(Gulo gulo)

> *The wolverine is one of the toughest animals in the world, custom-built for cold, snowy climates. The wolverine is one of only a few winter predators at high elevations and is also an important scavenger.*

Wolverines once ranged across much of the northern contiguous US before being driven to near-extinction here in the mid 20th century. Today, they've returned only to a few regions in the Northern Rocky and Cascade Mountains, from populations in Canada. In the US, wolverines also inhabit Alaska.

SCIENCE IGNORED

Habitat loss from climate change is its primary threat. The best available science shows that:

- In the lower 48, wolverines depend on alpine habitats that maintain deep snow cover late into the spring for denning, year-round use, and dispersal;
- Warming temperatures due to climate change are reducing spring snowpack in the West; and
- The loss of spring snowpack is likely to significantly reduce wolverine habitat and may increase vulnerability to trapping and to disturbance from recreational and industrial activities.

RESEARCH SUGGESTS THAT 31 PERCENT OF CURRENT WOLVERINE HABITAT WILL BE LOST DUE TO CLIMATE WARMING BY 2045; 63 PERCENT BY 2085.[4]

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) withdrew its proposal to list wolverines as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (the Act) in 2014. Conservation groups challenged that decision and a federal judge ordered the FWS to reconsider its decision. The FWS appealed to a higher court, and the case is still pending.

IDAHO, COLORADO, WYOMING, AND MONTANA, ALONG WITH A NUMBER OF INDUSTRY ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING SNOWMOBILING AND OIL AND GAS INTERESTS, HAVE OPPOSED LISTING THE WOLVERINE**,** arguing that state management is sufficient to protect the species and climate change science is inadequate to support listing.[5] As a result, there is pressure to keep the wolverine off the endangered species list. It would be tragic if one of the most iconic wild predators, having returned to the contiguous U.S. after decades of persecution, was again lost—this time for good.

THREATS:
Loss of habitat, disturbance, and exploitation due to climate change
Fragmented habitat
Recreational and incidental trapping

North American Range
Northern Cascades and Northern Rocky Mountains[1]

Conservation Status
Petitioned for listing under the ESA[2]

Remaining Population
Estimated
250-300
in the US[3]

Notes

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Pacific Leatherback Sea Turtle

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Mexican Wolf

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Greater Sage-Grouse

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