



# **A WILD SUCCESS**

The Endangered Species Act at 40

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# FOREWORD

How do we celebrate a law that has not only conserved wildlife, but also the soul of a nation? How do we recognize an Act that is providing the opportunity for our children to view bald eagles, sea turtles, and even gray wolves in the wild? And though we know that Americans are strongly supportive of the Endangered Species Act, how do we show that?

At the Endangered Species Coalition, we were confronted with those questions on the eve of the Endangered Species Act’s 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The Endangered Species Coalition is comprised of not just conservation organizations—we also work closely with ranchers, fishermen, hunters, farmers, scientists, veterans, business owners, teachers, and others to protect species. In fact, when I joined the organization more than a half a dozen years ago, I was impressed by how big our tent was—this community of people who care about endangered species. And when we did one of our first truly large petitions—with tens of thousands of people signing on for greater protections for the polar bear—I scanned the list, out of curiosity, just to see where these people were from. And I loved what I saw.

This wasn’t a list evenly divided between Seattle, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. This was a group of people who were spread across our entire nation. There were petition-signers from places such as Topeka, KS; Fargo, ND; Morgantown, WV; Lakewood, CO; Dallas, TX; Poughkeepsie, NY; and Seminole, FL. It was nothing short of thrilling to see that, though most of these individuals would likely never see a polar bear in the wild, they wanted to know that polar bears were out there, roaming free.

And so, as the Act is closing in on forty years, I thought, “We need to show who these Americans are, and we need to have them share their unique perspectives directly.” In these pages, you will find ranchers who are working to protect the California tiger salamanders on their land, a CEO of an investment management company who champions biodiversity, a rabbi who prayed to the sound of a humpback whale’s breathing as it passed by his campsite, and many more stories. You’ll also find some of the finest portraits of endangered species ever taken.

The Endangered Species Act is a symbol of the things that are good about Americans. We believe that problems are solvable.

And what could be bigger than solving human-driven extinction? We are full of compassion. Just as we race to help people after a hurricane or pour resources into supporting charities, we strive to rescue plants and animals from demise. Perhaps most importantly, we value our freedoms. And so we’ve dedicated ourselves to ensuring that not only humans, but also our wildlife, are free.

Few laws have done more to protect our wildlife and our wild lands. The Act, and all it represents, is a part of who we are. I invite you to read on and see the importance of protecting wildlife from the eyes of an architect, an astronaut, a chef, a congressman, a designer, a hunter, a scientist, a veteran, and more.



*Leda Huta*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
ENDANGERED  
SPECIES COALITION

**LEDA HUTA**

From the Alaskan tundra to the Florida Everglades, from the Pacific waters off the coast of California to the chilly Atlantic along the shores of Maine, it is safe to say that all who are Fellows of the International League of Conservation Photographers (ILCP) have documented, with incredible imagery, every state of our nation. It is also very likely that they have photographed every animal protected by the Endangered Species Act. As committed conservationists, our fellows have used these images to further the preservation and protection of these landscapes and their wildlife.

Our fellows stand firmly, individually and collectively, behind the important goals and aims of the Endangered Species Act, and also behind the missions of each organization belonging to the Endangered Species Coalition. On behalf of all of us at ILCP, it is our sincere pleasure to support the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Act with a digital exhibit. We hope these images will remind everyone that, when we humans can devise ways to live respectfully and in harmony with wildlife, we are ensuring that future generations will have the chance to experience, firsthand, the environmental richness that is so profoundly ingrained in our American consciousness, history, and culture.



A breathtaking diversity of animals and landscapes forms the cornerstone of our national heritage. We must do everything we can to protect and preserve it—for today's Americans, and tomorrow's, as well.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE OF  
CONSERVATION PHOTOGRAPHERS

**ALEXANDRA S. GARCIA**

The Endangered Species Act has the power to bring back species from the brink of extinction and allow them to rebuild to healthy levels. It has worked for the grizzly bear, gray wolf, and bald eagle, and we hope it will do the same for sea turtles, right whales, and, if they are listed, great white sharks, too. Without the protections of



the Endangered Species Act, we may lose these critically important species for good.

CEO, OCEANA

**ANDREW SHARPLESS**





Gray Wolf © Andrew Zuckerman

I've had the opportunity to photograph a number of rare and endangered species, and I think of the images I make as a kind of documentation of a world that's unfortunately—and rapidly—being depleted of its natural resources. I really do believe we're as accountable for protecting the environment against future

harm as we have been for depleting it.



PHOTOGRAPHER

**ANDREW  
ZUCKERMAN**

For most of us, providing nourishment is a natural instinct. It is packaged within our feelings of care and empathy for others. What drives many chefs, myself included, is the ability to be creative while also stoking that essential desire to nourish, to show we care.

So it is a perfectly natural fit for me to be both a pastry chef and a philanthropist. And the causes I work on are all about caring for those who are *most* vulnerable—from exploited children and young women to wildlife. So it's no wonder that, when it comes to nature, I worry most about endangered species.

Nature, like children, is incredibly resilient. Step in at the right time, and you can save a species from going extinct. There are so many worthy causes out there. But saving the life of a child, a seal pup, a baby sea turtle, or a polar bear cub is urgent, and the impacts last a lifetime.



I don't plan on slowing down any time soon. There is too much to do. And I'm a New Yorker, after all. I want everyone to join me and save the amazing plants and wildlife that share our earth.

PHILANTHROPIST AND PASTRY CHEF  
**ARDEN WOHL**

At the International Fund for Animal Welfare, we believe that a world where animals are respected and protected is a better world for both animals and people.

So many species today are in danger of extinction due to the actions of one species: humans. Yet this also means that we have the ability to solve this problem.

Often where we find intense animal suffering or population loss, we also find people who are struggling for their own survival. It's imperative that those concerned with wildlife protection also take the welfare of communities living in and around wildlife reserves seriously.

Creating safe environments for wildlife, while also ensuring the safety of the people living close by, will require resources far greater than any one country can provide. In fact, it will require large-scale cooperation among international organizations, national governments, and local communities.

First and foremost, however, it is a question of collective will. Nations must first agree that they want, as a people, to share the planet with animals, both large and small.

Wildlife is part of our shared global heritage. We derive quantifiable benefits from the ways in which animals help maintain healthy ecosystems and support tourism. And we derive difficult to quantify, but equally important social benefits from the joy that animals bring to our lives.

A world without wildlife and wild places would be a bleaker place for us all.

Animals have the ability to feel pain and fear, and to form relationships. While observing the Amboseli elephants in Kenya, I was struck by their family bonds—how they traveled together and responded, as a family, to protect their young. These are thinking and feeling beings, not just property like a house or car, and not just natural resources like trees or water. We have an obligation to protect animals from human-induced suffering, as well as to protect populations from extinction.

The Endangered Species Act not only protects endangered and threatened species nationally, it also plays an important role in protecting wildlife globally. More than 600 species not found in the United States are covered by the Endangered Species Act; this serves to ensure that the United States upholds its international treaty obligations to prevent international trade in protected species.

Many countries do not have sufficient laws in place to protect animals. As numerous species—including elephants, rhinos, sharks and polar bears, to name a few—face a crisis due to poaching and increasing pressures on their habitats, it's more important than ever for the United States to leverage its international influence to help turn the tide. And to do that credibly, we must make sure we are being true to our values at home. Now is the time to preserve – not dilute – the Endangered Species Act.

PRESIDENT  
AND CEO,  
INTERNATIONAL  
FUND FOR  
ANIMAL WELFARE  
**AZZEDINE  
DOWNES**





Increasingly, finance professionals are realizing the importance of protecting our world's biodiversity resources. Investors and companies, alike, rely on clear regulations such as the Endangered Species Act to protect the long-term health of environmental and financial systems, which are evermore interdependent. As the leading investment manager focused on creating shareholder value through the lens of sustainability, Calvert Investments incorporates biodiversity and environmental concerns into our investment criteria, our proxy voting, and in engagements with companies we hold. The end goal is always to both expose risks and identify opportunities.

In some industries—like agriculture and food production—the loss of a few key species could have significant economic impact. About a third of our food is grown with the help of pollinators, for example. As domesticated U.S. honeybees have declined by almost half in the past few years from colony collapse disorder, wild pollinators like bumble bees and butter-

flies have been helping support U.S. agricultural production. Wild pollinators are worth up to \$2.4 billion to California farmers alone, according to a 2011 study. Pollinators are part of an ecosystem, of course, and the survival of endangered pollinators like Monarch butterflies is entwined with the plants they pollinate. When a select species of plant disappears, the pollinator is also at risk, and the reverse is also true. The Endangered Species Act helps ensure that the most vulnerable elements of the whole system are protected.

Business leaders also see biodiversity as an opportunity, and respond to this opportunity by developing new concepts or products from renewable resources. The pharmaceutical industry benefits enormously from compounds found in nature that can be developed into novel drugs. Materials scientists study plants, insects, and animals for new product ideas, such as adhesives that mimic the shape of microscopic hairs found on gecko feet. These businesses rely on a rich diversity of species for research and product development.

As the environmental stresses on our planet intensify—with increasing population, climate change, and a growing global middle class that demands more goods and services—the business community looks to the public sector for partnership and long-term solutions. At forty years old, the Endangered Species Act hardly looks middle-aged. The Act supports both sustainable businesses and ecosystems, and that never gets old.

CHAIR, PRESIDENT, AND CEO,  
CALVERT INVESTMENTS

**BARBARA  
KRUMSIEK**



My adult life has been largely defined by one guiding principle: That the most fulfilling life is one dedicated to serving others. My work in Zambia as a missionary only served to drive this point home. It is what led me to public office, first as District Attorney and later as Governor of Colorado.

One of the most effective ways that America can better the lives of all of its citizens is by preserving the natural environment and our native species. My childhood roots in agriculture and my lifelong love of fishing have instilled me with a great appreciation for the value of maintaining a stable ecosystem. The Endangered Species Act has been critical in establishing and maintaining that balance.

Beyond the considerable economic benefits a healthy environment provides, I also consider the vast wealth of natural beauty that I—and my fellow citizens of Colorado—enjoy every day. This is why I pushed so hard to establish Colorado as a leader in clean energy, and this is why, after leaving public office, I founded the Center for the New Energy Economy at my alma mater, Colorado State University.

Whether it's the energy choices we make today or the species we will save tomorrow, our actions have consequences. Legislation like the Endangered Species Act places a premium on the preservation of species and their ecosystems, and it plays an integral role in ensuring the well-being of America's environment. For my children and their children, I'm proud of our country for passing the Endangered Species Act and ensuring the legacy of species diversity for generations to come.

GOVERNOR OF COLORADO 2007-2011

**BILL RITTER, JR.**



No one gave us a shot. Heck, I'm not even sure we gave us a shot. But we—nineteen swimmers and this crazy coach—knew something central to all significant human endeavors: We had assembled a team that was both talented and tough, we had prepared as well as we could, and we were going to have focused fun while letting it rip.

The venue was the Olympic swimming complex in scenic Coimbra, Portugal. The event was the 2011 World Deaf Swim Championships. The challenge was to end a multi-year drought for the United States' competitiveness in international deaf swimming. Just two years earlier, at the Deaflympics in Taiwan, the American swim team had brought home exactly one medal—a bronze.

At first blush, there is little if any relationship between a swim competition and the quest to prevent endangered and threatened species from plunging into extinction. We may argue about the rules, some might unfortunately cheat, yet in the end, we all inevitably acknowledge the importance of fair play in all forms of competition. Sports are a microcosm of our larger struggles. Respect for life and the concept of hope are fundamental tenets of our own species' condition.

Of course, the larger struggle of life is also the stuff of religion, fables, and fears. When you add in all the other spectacular life forms on this planet—bears and dolphins, ferns and flowers, bugs and birds, viruses and bacteria—the result is an incredible tapestry of seeming chaos. Beautiful but sometimes scary; tangible but still largely unknown.

This leads to a bottom line, namely that we are losing a species in the wild roughly *every twenty minutes*. Mind boggling! Species are disappearing at a rate thousands of times faster than at any other point in history, largely due to human activity. We have created a social structure that demands residential, industrial and agricultural development, but with that comes the price of habitat destruction. We spew pollutants into the air and water because we “must” grow and be prosperous.

Certainly we can do better. Certainly we can each spend twenty minutes a day contributing to a brighter future for imperiled animal and plant species. Write a letter. Make a call. Support a species petition. Go to a meeting and speak out. Think about our ecological footprints.

So here's how the 2011 U.S. Deaf Swim Team utilized their twenty minutes on the penultimate day of the World Championships, reinforcing the notion that *anything* is possible. The Americans and the Russians were locked in an epic battle for overall medal count and team victory. During the course of the meet, superstar Marcus Titus – who would be a finalist for the U.S. Olympic Team one year later – and a slew

of talented swimmers had been amassing medals and personal best times. What had started as a naïve journey in search for mere respectability had turned into a serious test of nerves and resolve. “Try your best, just be yourself, embrace the positive” was the maxim. The last event that evening was the grueling 4 x 200 relay, for both men and women.

The men were up first. Anchoring the U.S. relay was the herculean Titus, who entered the water ten seconds and almost a half-pool length behind the British anchorman, a distance virtually impossible to make up. With fifty meters to go, however, Titus made his move—he was inching forward as the crowd noisily rose to its feet. With about five meters to go, Titus finally passed his competitor, who then promptly re-passed Titus. Summoning an inner strength, Titus put his head down, dug hard, and out-touched his opponent by a minuscule 0.05 seconds. The crowd went nuts!

The pool was readied for the women's relay. The defending world champion team from Russia was seeded first, and the upstart American women were seeded third. Feeding off Titus' unbelievable performance, the U.S. squad led from start to finish. It was glorious—a gold medal and a new world record. The entire American team, with parents and friends in the audience, proudly waved flags and cried tears of joy.

In roughly twenty minutes, twenty modest Americans had made a pronouncement that the rest of the world could not deny. We felt like champions and acted that way. Such is the challenge of making a difference.

The Endangered Species Act makes champions of us all. As Americans, we lead the world in the lengths that we're willing to go to protect our imperiled wildlife, plants, fish, and birds. There is virtually no other nation in the world that has a law as sturdy and as enforceable as ours. And we need to keep our Act strong.

So, I ask you. How will you use *your* twenty minutes?

*Please visit [awildsuccess.org](http://awildsuccess.org) for Bill Snape's poem on endangered species.*

HEAD SWIM COACH,  
U.S. DEAF SWIMMING,  
2011 WORLD CHAMPIONS

**BILL “BISON” SNAPE**



## Endangered

It is so quiet on the shore of this motionless lake  
you can hear the slow recession of extinct animals  
as they leave through a door at the back of the world,  
disappearing like the verbs of a dead language:

the last troop of kangaroos hopping out of the picture,  
the ultimate paddling of ducks and pitying of turtledoves  
and, his bell tolling in the distance, the final goat.



© Juliet Van Orteren

POET LAUREATE OF THE  
UNITED STATES 2001-2003

**BILLY COLLINS**

*"Endangered" from Questions About Angels by Billy Collins © 1991.  
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Florida Panther © Joel Sartore, [www.photoark.com](http://www.photoark.com)

As a child, I thought nothing special of living on an island in the middle of California’s San Francisco Bay-Delta—a childhood enhanced by being able to catch dinner in the slough in front of my house, picking fresh fruit and veggies from the garden and orchard in the summer, having a sky full of waterfowl in the winter, cutting wild asparagus sprouting on the levee in the spring, and viewing 365 picture-perfect sunsets a year. As I grew and traveled throughout California, the greater United States, and internationally, I found myself returning home with both a deeper fondness of and respect for the environment in which I grew up.

As a farmer, your health, the health of your crops, and your ability to continually make a full and comfortable living from the land depend upon your ability to prudently and sustainably allocate resources. Doing so is imperative to maintaining the health of the ecosystem around you. Destroy that ecosystem, and you will lose the precious resources that flow from it. In farming there is a saying that goes, “It takes multiple generations to build it, but only one to break it.” The same could be said of the environment, and the health of the species living in it.

As I become increasingly aware of the interconnectedness of the land, water, and

wildlife in the place I call home, I feel public education is perhaps the most difficult and critical aspect of ongoing implementation of the Endangered Species Act.

My embedded beliefs, coupled with the complex and critical nature of particular environmental issues that I was aware of, are what lead me to study wildlife, fish, and conservation biology at the University of California, Davis (much to the chagrin of my father, whose conservative nature led him to believe that a major in business or economics would lead to greater success in my life). When I announced my selection, he remarked, “Oh no! You are going to become a tree-hugging hippie!” To which I responded, “Don’t worry Dad, I will always be a pear tree hugger!”

My favorite response—which I often hear after an engaging discussion about the Endangered Species Act and California water—is, “So... are you a Republican, or a Democrat?” The issues encompassed in the Act are far too complex and important to be rendered down to talking points and used as ammunition in partisan politics. The continued preservation of our global biodiversity has to start somewhere—and sometime. I believe the time is now, and the battle begins with you and me!

From either side of the lens, the Endangered Species Act is not perfect, but we have chosen to hold ourselves to these ideals for four decades, and continuing to improve and implement this law will require engagement and interaction from all sides. I think the spirit of the law, and the need for protection of the environmental health and quality in America, are things we can all identify with and agree on.

As many of the issues surrounding the preservation of species have become turbid and entangled in larger political debate, and even as these issues are used to broaden the partisan divide, it is critical to base our discussions on facts and shared principles. Conservation and preservation of our nation’s unparalleled natural beauty, wildlife, and resources will keep our country—and the planet—healthy for coming generations to enjoy, admire, and derive benefits from. We have to protect that which makes our world so special, and laws like the Endangered Species Act ensure that protection.



PEAR FARMER  
AND FISHERY  
BIOLOGIST

**BRETT  
BAKER**

I did not pay much attention to the proposed Endangered Species Act when it was proceeding through Congress in 1973. That was the year when I moved to Washington from Seattle to become the new director of the Sierra Club’s DC lobby office; my mandate was to elevate the lobby’s scope and influence to a level commensurate with the Club’s growing power on the national environmental scene.

So it was the other great issues of the times—the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, the “timber price crisis” (an effort to increase logging on all national forests), and the nation’s first energy crisis (after the Arab embargo in October, 1973), which occupied all my time. The Endangered Species Act seemed so—well—obvious, and needed. It was not controversial at all in 1973, so I never even bothered to read it. It passed the Senate 92-0, and the House 355-4.

“Ho hum,” I thought. “Totally noncontroversial. As it should be,” I also thought. The publicity and focus of all the scientific and laypersons’ testimonies that whole year had been on calling attention to the fact that a number of animal species which Americans had cherished but taken for granted – like the brown pelican, peregrine falcon, California condor, the alligator, and many others, large and small – were rapidly sliding towards extinction, along with many different and increasingly rare plant species.

Noncontroversial—of course!  
This seemed so obvious.

The larger, more controversial struggles of the times occupied my complete attention. Especially in retrospect, glorious years they were, in those heady times (1967-73), when the nation’s young seem to catch—be a part of—the rising tide of what became the American Environmental Movement.

It was not until I was named Executive Director of the Endangered Species Coalition, in 1997, that I first actually read the whole Endangered Species Act from beginning to end. As I did so, the enormity and power of this amazing law revealed itself; “This is the strongest law I have ever seen,” I thought to myself. Not only does it require that any species in danger must be placed upon the endangered list; it also requires protection of their habitats, and establishment of a recovery plan. And best of all, in these contentious times, it can be *enforced*, and by ordinary citizens, even when the concerned government agencies drag their feet.

Our Endangered Species Act is perhaps the most unique law of its kind in the entire world because it is so strong, comprehensive, and *enforceable*. Our country is blessed to have such a law, which *really, really* protects those other animals and plants in our national territory, who of course cannot speak for themselves.

But there is something else. By my count, since 1997, there have been well over 100 specific attempts in Congress or hostile administrations to either repeal or seriously weaken the Endangered Species Act. But all have failed; why is this so?

I believe it is because the Endangered Species Act is something more, much more, than just a wildlife protection statute—good as it is at functioning as that. It is also a *moral* law, and it makes a profoundly moral statement about how we Americans really feel about our land.



Think about it for a minute: In 1973, the legislators of a great nation got together and they said, almost unanimously, “*From now on and henceforth, we the American People, shall not permit any other living native plant or animal which shares the national territory with us, to become extinct...*”

Now if that isn’t a most noble testament to our love for our land, I don’t know what is.

*Please visit [awildsuccess.org](http://awildsuccess.org) for an unabridged version of this essay.*

PRESIDENT,  
ENDANGERED  
SPECIES  
COALITION

**BROCK  
EVANS**

The 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Endangered Species Act carries a special resonance for me as the President and CEO of the World Wildlife Fund. Our organization's founder and Chairman Emeritus, the late Russell Train, was a key architect of the Act in his roles as both Chairman of Environmental Quality and EPA Administrator in the Nixon White House. Russ was the embodiment of an American conservatism that held conservation at its core, and his impressive legacy reflects a time when conservation and environmental protection were seen as deeply held American values with broad, bipartisan support. His legacy is also one of success, and of bold,

pragmatic achievements on behalf of the American people. All of this can also be said of the Endangered Species Act.

PRESIDENT AND CEO,  
WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

**CARTER ROBERTS**



I remember being eight years old, in the second grade, and learning that Buffalo Bill Cody killed over 4,000 buffalo in eighteen months. Learning how in the 19<sup>th</sup> century we—humanity—drove an animal that once ruled this land to near extinction. Being a kid, feeling so small, I couldn't imagine how the human hand could so effectively eradicate such a powerful animal. My enchantment and respect for animals has only grown over the years, as has my understanding of the consequences of not protecting them.

The Endangered Species Act has been protecting our country's disappearing wildlife longer than I've been alive, and it has done an amazing job.

In 2007, on a trip to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, I saw gray wolves and learned extensively about them. After returning home to New York City—as far from the wilderness as you could be—I realized that gray

wolves wouldn't be roaming the Northern Rockies and points thereabout without the assistance of the Endangered Species Act.

Our nation nearly wiped out wolves in the mistaken belief that a world without them would be more hospitable. Fast-forward to today, and we've seen that when you remove a keystone species like the wolf, it has dramatic impacts on their former surroundings. Animals they preyed on increased beyond the capacity of their habitat, causing entire ecosystems to become imbalanced. Because of a brave reintroduction program and the protections of the Endangered Species Act, wolves are bouncing back in some areas of the country, but there's still a lot of work left.

In my work as a filmmaker, I sometimes travel to remote destinations and have developed an appreciation for our nation's unique place in the world. We've made

this brilliant commitment to protecting wilderness spaces—and the species that call them home—in a way that few other societies have. Through this commitment to protecting our wildlife and wild places, my son has been able to see some of those same creatures that I wondered about at his age. I appreciate the foresight that our leaders had in enacting the Endangered Species Act four decades ago, and look forward to celebrating its successes in the decades to come.

FILMMAKER  
**CASEY  
NEISTAT**







Lynx © Joel Sartore, www.photoark.com

The Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) is dedicated to the humane treatment of animals and the protection of threatened and endangered species. AWI worked for the successful adoption the Endangered Species Act and sound regulations in support of it, and we continue our efforts to ensure sufficient funds for enforcement and the much needed listing of additional species. On March 26, 1973, the organization’s founder, Christine Stevens, testified before Congress in support of a robust Act, emphasizing that “to turn the tide of extinction, a substantial edifice of rational protection has to be built. Each building block must be solid and strong.”

Today, one of many species in need of protection is the red wolf, which once roamed throughout the eastern and south central United States. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, intensive predator control programs, and the degradation and alteration of the species’ habitat, had greatly reduced red wolf numbers; in 1980, the species was declared extinct in the wild. Seven years later, an experimental population of red wolves—drawn from a remnant population captured in a desperate attempt to save the species—was reintroduced into eastern North Carolina under protection of the Endangered Species Act.

Without the Act, these shy, elusive animals would have disappeared from the face of the earth. Today, a hundred or so wild red wolves live in North Carolina—still the only place where they are found outside of captivity. While there are various threats to the reintroduced population, shooting is their leading cause of death; this is largely due to the similarity in appearance between red wolves and coyotes. It is through the power of the Endangered Species Act, however, that these threats can be addressed and effectively curtailed.



The Act has been instrumental in saving animals—like red wolves—that teeter on the brink of oblivion because of human activities. With prudent conservation efforts and solid protection under the Act, red wolves can make a comeback, and one day reclaim their rightful place in the ecosystem. AWI hopes that current and future generations will understand and appreciate this inspiring story of survival and recovery, and the critical role of the Endangered Species Act in keeping myriad species from going extinct.

PRESIDENT,  
ANIMAL WELFARE INSTITUTE  
**CATHY LISS**



I grew up in Florida surrounded by natural beauty. I swam in lakes with alligators, played in springs with manatees, and sat on the beach watching dolphins swim by. Unfortunately, I also watched unscrupulous developers rush in and destroy that natural beauty with destructive practices—literally paving paradise.

These experiences fostered in me a great respect for the Endangered Species Act. So much of the wildlife we love has been saved from going extinct through the protection of the Act. The law makes developers stop and consider the impacts of their actions at certain locations. It rarely completely halts development, but it does require developers to take a minute and think about what is at stake; maybe they are in an important habitat for a Florida scrub jay, or a nesting sea turtle, or a Key deer. Loss of habitat, climate change, and invasive species are taking a dramatic toll on our precious native wildlife, and the Endangered Species Act is what gives the government and ordinary people the ability to hold the line against extinction.

In Florida, the environment is our most important economic driver; it is why so many people visit year after year. The state's natural beauty is why so many people move to Florida to open businesses and raise families. The Endangered Species Act not only saves wildlife, but it is also good for business in Florida. Hopefully, thanks in large part to the Act, the next generation of Floridians will get to enjoy the same stunning wildlife that I did, growing up.



MARATHON RUNNER,  
WORLD TRAVELER, AND  
US CONGRESSIONAL  
CANDIDATE (FL-8<sup>TH</sup>)

**CORRY  
WESTBROOK**

Over our 20-year chocolate making history, the one thing that truly stands out is our customers' passion for the species featured on our chocolate bar wrappers. Drawn to the unique beauty of each animal, people's hearts resonate with our company's mission to support wildlife conservation. Thanks to the protections of the Endangered Species Act and the dedicated efforts of conservation groups, people can unite to safeguard the wildlife and wild places



that give our world integrity, stability, and beauty.

CEO, ENDANGERED  
SPECIES CHOCOLATE

**CURT VANDERMEER**

Coming upon the carcass of a poached elephant that I have known and followed for twenty or thirty years is the hardest part of being an elephant researcher. It is the immensity of that individual's death that is so distressing. He or she had a rich, complex life with family and friends. That life involved growing up and all that learning that elephants have to do—where to go, what to feed on, where the water is, how to interact with other elephants, and who and what is dangerous—all passed down from matriarch to matriarch, and from them to the family members. With each death, a bit of knowledge and experience is lost. For me, each death is a failure on my part to protect that individual from the hand of man. That is the pain I feel when an elephant is killed, and it never diminishes.

Please visit [awildsuccess.org](http://awildsuccess.org) for more stories about the illegal ivory trade and learn about the visit a group of conservationists made to an "ivory room" where confiscated elephant tusks are stored.



DIRECTOR,  
AMBOSELI TRUST FOR ELEPHANTS

**CYNTHIA MOSS**

I was five years old in 1973 when the Endangered Species Act was passed. At the time, one of my favorite shows was Mutual of Omaha's "Wild Kingdom." That's where I first heard about extinction. It was a devastating thought: That because of people (like me and my parents and brothers), certain animals were completely disappearing from the planet.



As an adult, I have been privileged to have a career in philanthropy and to support conservation and justice in the natural world. My first job in philanthropy brought me into close contact with Brock Evans and the Endangered Species Coalition (ESC). Without the Endangered Species Act and the work of ESC, the wild eagles that sometimes land in my yard near Seward Park in Seattle would have died out in the 1960s. California condors would only exist in captivity, as might the gray wolf, the black-footed ferret, the peregrine falcon, and a number of other endangered animals. I think the Endangered Species Act is one of the most important pieces of legislation ever passed. It helps us honor our responsibility as stewards of the planet, and keep wild places intact so that everyone can thrive.

PRINCIPAL AND CEO,  
CIVIS CONSULTING, LLC,  
STRATEGIC PHILANTHROPY  
**CYNTHIA RENFRO**

The Sweet Ranch was established in 1868, on land east of the San Francisco Bay Area. The Sweet family has since worked the land, raised beef cattle, and shared this important wildlife corridor with numerous mammals, the largest population of golden eagles on the continent, other raptors, amphibians, and native plant life. The ranch is especially valuable habitat for three endangered species: the California tiger salamander, the California red-legged frog, and the Western burrowing owl. It also provides year-round feeding grounds for many raptor species. Our cattle ranch is a non-invasive use of land in this rangeland ecosystem, and it is part of the last remaining habitat for endangered amphibians in the Bay Area.

The Sweet family has been stewarding important rangeland habitat for nearly 150 years. Caring for our natural resources, including wildlife and plant life, is not only necessary to protect



the ranch enterprise resources—it's the right thing to do. In recent years we have enjoyed learning more about the wildlife and their habitat needs, and we have made accommodations for them that haven't interfered with the cattle enterprise. Family members, from grandparents to grandchildren, enjoy seeing and photographing the frogs in the livestock ponds and hearing them in the ground squirrel burrows.

Our family worked with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Alameda County Resource Conservation District, and the California Coastal Conservancy to repair a livestock pond specifically to maintain habitat for tiger salamanders and red-legged frogs, which also benefit from cattle grazing. In addition, we worked with NRCS and the California Department of Transportation to create a mitigation pond for the amphibians, and once the pond held water, the amphibians moved in. The story of combined cattle ranching and wildlife stewardship is a common one throughout California, and is a compelling story to the media and conservation organizations. The Sweet Ranch often hosts visitors who learn about the importance of rangelands and rancher stewardship.

The Endangered Species Act was a catalyst to fund our livestock pond projects, and the Act highlights the need and opportunity for projects on private rangelands to benefit listed

species. Because this was important to us, we chose to voluntarily enhance and conserve habitat under the Act, even as doing so demanded increased resources, partnerships, and a significant investment of our time.

In California, the majority of endangered species call private lands their home, including rangelands. The Endangered Species Act can help protect millions of additional acres of private rangelands by directing significant mitigation project funding toward conservation and agriculture easements on private lands where ranchers care for the natural resources. We feel that this is a much more efficient and sustainable choice than the checkerboard purchasing of small plots of land for wildlife that we see today under habitat conservation plans. We highly encourage Endangered Species Act stakeholders to better understand and support private working rangeland and rancher-stewards as the long-term keys to ecosystem sustainability. Together, we can ensure survival for many endangered species across the West.

RANCHERS,  
DARREL SWEET  
LIVESTOCK

**DARREL  
& KAREN  
SWEET**

As an avid hiker, backpacker, and paddler, I venture into the wilderness every chance I get. The experience reinforces my faith by increasing both my appreciation for God's handiwork and my understanding of how everything in nature has its own unique purpose and value.

While exploring wild places, I have encountered my share of wildlife. The most memorable of these experiences have usually involved predators. Observing a bear, wolf, or mountain lion in the wild is awe-inspiring, and it heightens one's senses like few things can. For me, however, the true value of these experiences is more profound.

Sharing the landscape with wildlife, including predator species, has enhanced my appreciation of and respect for how healthy ecosystems are supposed to work. It has also forced me to approach activities in the wild with more knowledge and humility, and this carries over to other aspects of my life.

From the deliberate and cruel efforts to eradicate wolves and grizzly bears, to the more inadvertent actions that drove the bald eagle—our national symbol—to the brink of extinction, history is full of examples of humankind's intolerance of wildlife and ignorance of their needs. Too often, selfishness causes people to view wild animals merely as an inconvenience that can be displaced or destroyed, not as God's creatures that were put on earth for a purpose. To be good stewards of our natural heritage, respect the design of nature, and recognize that all wildlife species serve a necessary function is both moral and prudent.

The Endangered Species Act, which was passed by overwhelming bipartisan majorities in Congress and was signed into law by President Nixon, stands as testament to the fact that we can rise above our lesser instincts and be good stewards of what President Reagan called "this magical planet of ours."

What many people—on both the political right and left—may not recognize is that the Act is a very conservative law.

The fathers of traditional conservative thought—including British statesman Edmund Burke, American political theorist Russell Kirk, and conservative philosopher Richard Weaver—

emphasized that prudent forethought, humility, a spirit of piety, and responsible stewardship are core conservative principles.

Just a few years before the Endangered Species Act was signed into law, Kirk pointed out that "nothing is more conservative than conservation." Years earlier, Weaver lamented humankind's tendency to disregard nature in the name of progress. He warned that "Triumphs against the natural order of living exact unforeseen payments," and astutely pointed out:

"...man is not the lord of creation, with an omnipotent will, but a part of creation, with limitations, who ought to observe a decent humility in the face of the inscrutable."

The poet T.S. Eliot put it more succinctly when he observed that "a wrong attitude towards nature implies, somewhere, a wrong attitude towards God."

Conservatism, at its heart, is about humankind rising above its baser instincts and leaving the world a better place for future generations. The Endangered Species Act is one of the best examples of this that we have.

PRESIDENT,  
CONSERVAMERICA  
EDUCATION FUND

**DAVID JENKINS**



The Endangered Species Act literally holds the line between life and death. Bald eagle, California condor, whooping crane, peregrine falcon—and the list goes on—the most iconic symbols of our great natural heritage have been saved by this vital law. We've got to keep the law strong and able to perform its critically important tasks for

our planet, and for our children and grandchildren.



PRESIDENT AND CEO,  
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

**DAVID YARNOLD**

I am a Vietnam veteran, writer, and filmmaker who has spent good chunks of four decades in grizzly bear occupied country in Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho. In the course of travelling the high country, I was fortunate enough to spot wolverines and their tracks many times—about thirty wolverines in all. I witnessed a single wolverine death at a goat carcass, with the death delivered by a grizzly.

People who have spent a great deal of time with grizzly bears in the wild sometimes think they glimpse a flash of recognition, a sentience, in the eye of a wild bear, that some understanding passes between them. I have been guilty of such impressions—or illusions.

For those of us who have been lucky enough to catch sight of a wolverine close up, the thought of any human brotherhood with that totally feral face never comes up. This is a creature too wild; the gigantic Mustelidae lives far beyond our wildest anthropomorphic dream. The “little bear” is totally dependent on lingering spring snows, which will shrink back each year from the fickle ferocity of global warming. Bushwhack out of Many Glacier if you want to see one; there’s only about 250 left south of Canada.

The conservation of these wild, sometimes dangerous animals is of absolute importance to modern humans, to the survival of our own species, and to rational thought. The Endangered Species Act has been at the forefront of attempting to do just that—saving wildlife as best we can, species by species.

VIETNAM VETERAN, WRITER,  
FILMMAKER, OUTDOORSMAN  
**DOUG PEACOCK**



As we near the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Endangered Species Act, we would be wise to consider what has been accomplished since the law was passed, and where we would be without it.

So many plant and animal species are lost every year, owing to a variety of reasons, but had we not had the wisdom to enact this bold measure some four decades ago, things would be far worse.

We need to increase, not limit, the reach of this vital law; if we establish limits, we do so at our own peril.

Because even if you don’t revere the rich diversity that this planet still holds, you must consider—for your own survival—how many rivets can one lose from an airplane till it ceases to fly.

And make no mistake, the many plant and animal species are like so many rivets, keeping us aloft and alive.



Let the Endangered Species Act survive and thrive, and so shall we.

ACTOR  
**ED BEGLEY, JR.**

When you look into the eyes of nature, there is an undeniable and inherent sense of strength, beauty, knowledge, and skill.

Those same senses are clearly honored and expressed by artists in both contemporary and traditional Native American music initiatives. Originally born and inspired by the outdoors, Native American music carries a deep reverence of America's landscapes, where songs symbolize the spirit and beauty we live among. Native American song is integrally linked with our natural surroundings and various animal species, from the traditional Bird Singers to the Deer Song, Buffalo Dance, and Eagle Dance. Contemporary initiatives also tend to recreate and incorporate natural animal sounds such as wolves howling and eagles screeching.

Native Americans are closely connected to nature and all parts of the living world. Their conception of the world is not to dominate, but rather cooperate as creatures living in harmony with one another. Animals are honored and respected as our teachers, our companions, and our guardians. It is believed that different animal guides will accompany each person throughout

their life journey. Many of these same animals are, or were at one time, protected under the Endangered Species Act, including these:

The wolf has long been regarded as a teacher or pathfinder. Wolves are fiercely loyal to their mates and have a strong sense of family while maintaining individualism. They have friendly, social, and intelligent traits. Gray wolves once ranged across the entire North American continent. By the mid-20th century, only a few hundred of the species remained in the entire lower 48 states. The gray wolf received Endangered Species Act protection in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan in 1974, and was re-classed from endangered to threatened in 2003.

The deer, which represents compassion, subtlety, gracefulness, and gentleness, has two subspecies of the White-tailed deer currently on the Endangered Species List.

The bear is industrious, instinctive, sovereign, courageous, and strong. Within the lower 48 states, grizzly bear populations have been reduced to a mere 2 percent of their former range. The grizzly bear is listed as threatened.

The eagle is considered the Messenger of the Great Spirit. The eagle is divine, intelligent, fiercely protective, and powerful. After nearly disappearing from most of the United States decades ago, the bald eagle is now flourishing across the nation and no longer needs the protection of the Endangered Species Act.

Consistently fighting climate changes and environmental challenges, the Act has offered protection and preservation for America's most precious and beautiful wildlife. As humans, only we have the ability and power to protect our wildlife from facing extinction. Without the Endangered Species Act of 1973, many of our native species would have become extinct. Today, we commemorate this wonderful and needed law, now in effect for forty years. Let's continue to celebrate and embrace the Endangered Species Act!

PRESIDENT AND CEO,  
NATIVE AMERICAN MUSIC AWARDS

**ELLEN BELLO**



I was fortunate to grow up in rural California in the 1960s and 70s, where my family gave me an appreciation and love of the all creatures large and small. I spent my childhood exploring the outdoors—hiking in the mountains, trout fishing in crystal clear streams, and searching for our native wildlife like gopher and king snakes, yellow- and red-legged frogs, newts, pond turtles, and desert tortoises. California was a paradise in those halcyon days; little did I know that so many species that were common in my childhood would soon be rare only a few decades later. I will never forget the weeks my family spent in Santa Barbara, helping clean up the oil spill of 1969; it was then that we realized how fragile the earth and its inhabitants were. I grew up at a time when there was a huge trigger of environmental consciousness in the United States that led to Earth Day in 1970, the ban of DDT in 1972, the CITES treaty, and passing of the Endangered Species Act in 1973.

Today, there are 289 endangered plants and animals in my home state of California alone—sadly, more than any other state in the continental United States. One of the greatest aspects of the Endangered Species Act is the fact that it not only protects flagship species by protecting land—it also protects the rest of the biodiversity found in the area. Without the implementation of the Act in 1973, who knows how many more species would be endangered?

My organization, the Turtle Conservancy, works to save the most critically endangered turtles and tortoises—and their habitats—around the world. Working on the ground in many countries, I've seen, firsthand, the decimation of wildlife. I can't help but wonder what benefits an Endangered Species Act in other countries would have on local wildlife. Currently, we are facing a variety of environmental evils including climate change, habitat loss and degradation, and human exploitation of wildlife and natural resources. The Endangered Species Act serves as another line of defense in an increasingly changing world.



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FOUNDER OF THE TURTLE  
CONSERVANCY, CONSERVATIONIST,  
ARTIST, HOTELIER, AND  
RESTAURATEUR

**ERIC GOODE**



Ploughshare Tortoise © Turtle Conservancy



Alarm clocks, chain saws, car horns, jack hammers, sirens—we are filling our world with noises. And some of them aren't so glorious.

As a sound engineer for the film industry, I spend my days working with sound, bringing audio to life, so I'm aware of sound in ways that not everyone might be. I also notice the downside of the noise that we create. Noise pollution is a symbol of encroaching human development into nature. Excessive man-made noise in natural areas means we are no longer living in harmony with the life around us.

On a recent trip to Borneo, I sat in the jungle admiring the last of the critically endangered orangutans that live in the wild. But even there, in a jungle, it was challenging to get a clean recording—one without any man-made sounds—of the orangutan's long call.

I thrive on sound. And there are so many sounds of nature, including those of endangered species here in California: the excited barking of the San Joaquin kit fox, the scraping of the Shasta crayfish as it scrambles over a rocky river bed, the rasping call of the Mountain yellow-legged frog, the tinkly notes of the San

Clemente sage sparrow, the eerie songs of the humpback whales, and probably coolest of all—the foot-drumming of kangaroo rats. I may never even hear any of them in person, but I'm grateful to the Endangered Species Act for protecting these species, because these are the sounds that enrich our world.

OSCAR-WINNING  
SOUND EDITOR

**ETHAN  
VAN DER RYN**



A few years ago, I traveled above the Arctic Circle by boat. One day we saw polar bears cavorting on the ice, their yellowish fur smeared with red from a dinner of seal. But later we passed an island where a polar bear sat on the shore, stranded because the sea ice had receded so far from shore. This bear would not eat until the next winter—it simply couldn't hunt without ice. The climate scientists on the ship made it clear that, given the record-breaking melt of summer sea ice, this was just one of many endangered bears.

Climate change is rapidly undermining the natural systems so many animals depend upon. We must confront this crisis by reducing global warming pollution, but, at the same time, we must also protect vulnerable species and ensure they become as resilient as possible in the face of dramatic change. The Endangered Species Act can help us to do it.

This extraordinary law has given us the power to bring wildlife back from the brink. It has allowed us to revive and restore America's wild heritage, and, together with the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act, it has formed the foundation of environmental protection in our country. The Endangered Species Act has also been remarkably successful: 98 percent of the species protected under the law have avoided extinction.

This bedrock environmental law was passed long before scientists fully understood climate change, but its authors wisely focused on the values we want to preserve—the survival of species—instead of on the threats we want to avoid. The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) has relied on the Endangered Species Act to protect grizzly bears from habitat destruction in the Northern Rockies, and sperm whales from unchecked oil and gas exploration in the Gulf of Mexico. In 2008, we used it to identify polar bears as threatened by global warming, marking the first time the Endangered Species Act was deployed in the climate crisis.

NRDC has championed these creatures because they are keystone species—animals that create the conditions for other living things to survive. The presence of wolves, for instance, keeps elk from stripping riverbanks bare and coyote from eating all the rodents that eagles depend upon. The mighty whitebark pine tree lets plants flourish in its shadow and provides grizzly bears with the high-calorie pine nuts they need to make it through the winter. When we protect these keystone species, we help preserve many other plants and animals at the same time.

I hope that we can do the same for polar bears and the creatures they sustain, but the Endangered Species Act will only

help us safeguard species if it remains strong itself. This 40-year-old law is facing attack from lawmakers bent on eroding environmental protections. We cannot let the politics of the moment endanger the natural heritage we leave for future generations. We must protect this law, just as it has protected America's wildlife.

PRESIDENT,  
NATURAL  
RESOURCES  
DEFENSE COUNCIL

**FRANCES  
BEINECKE**





Bengal Tigers © Andrew Zuckerman

Great Gull Island, a research station of the American Museum of Natural History, hosts very large colonies of both Roseate and Common terns. In 1970, some chicks showed severe deformities such as crossed bills and extra limbs. The chicks were tested, as were the fish they ate, and sure enough, toxic chemicals from Long Island Sound had made their way into the fish and then into the terns. This provided a vital early warning of the harm to humans from pollutants in Long Island Sound. Although both species of terns were present and feeding in the same areas, only the Roseate terns developed the deformities. Thankfully, the Endangered



Species Act protects the Roseate tern so that it may flourish and perhaps warn us again in the future.

SCIENCE POLICY FELLOW,  
UNION OF CONCERNED SCIENTISTS

**FRANCESCA T. GRIFO, PH.D.**

I woke up today  
underneath the sea  
with my dolphin friends  
dolphin was with me

Everything as blue  
and red and gold and green  
didn't have much time  
wasn't feeling mean

My eyes were open wide  
and water in my bones  
everything's slow motion baby  
while I'm throwing stones

Didn't need no boat  
didn't need no sail  
thought I'd take a swim  
with my friend the whale

Everything is free  
everything is fine  
parting the Red Sea  
shouldn't take much time

If you were a fish  
which on would you be?  
royal, angel, mackeral  
or chicken of the sea?

Orca is my friend

JAZZ MUSICIAN

**HARLEY WHITE JR.  
/ BLAKE DAVIS**



Here on this 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Endangered Species Act, we've got to celebrate the deep and abiding respect that we, the American people, have for the biological diversity of the natural world. It's beyond politics and cultural differences; it's a fundamental awareness that we are a part of nature and not apart from nature—that we are embedded in the intricate web of life all around this tiny planet Earth.

And it is not just the big, charismatic animals that are endangered, it's also the little ones: insects and bees that pollinate our food and flowering plants, and the microscopic organisms in the soil that are indispensable to the whole interdependent living ecosystem that makes life thrive.

The greatest threats to these small creatures are all the chemical poisons, pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers of industrial agriculture that are invisibly killing the rich life of the earth's soil. And the genetically engineered crops, designed to tolerate more poisons, that are changing the basic building blocks of life—the DNA and RNA of wild plants—in unpredictable ways. All these advances of biotechnology are built on the assumption that human genius, in harnessing science and technology, can do evolution better than nature can. We may need new laws to reign in human arrogance.

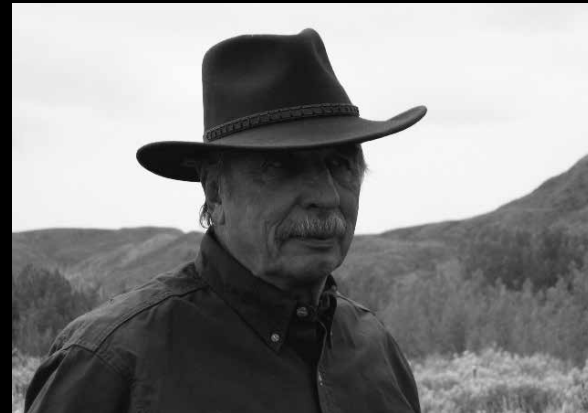
As we grapple with these dangers, what we need most is some kind of ethical compass to guide us through the technological application of modern science. Thankfully, the Endangered Species Act will provide the North Star of such a compass. The strongest and most powerful aspect of the Act is that it is more than just a wildlife protection statute; it is a moral law. Forty years ago, the legislators of a great nation gathered together and said that we, the American people, will not permit any of the living species of plants and animals who share this country with us, to go extinct. This is the North Star that we need to go forward.

MOUNTAIN CLIMBER  
AND JUNGIAN ANALYST  
**HARRIETT CROSBY**





It is important to me, as a rancher and farmer, that the landscape I live and work on be as healthy as possible. The Endangered Species Act is one of the critical tools that I depend on.



FARMER AND  
CATTLE RANCHER,  
COFFEE CREEK, MONTANA

**HUGO TURECK**



When skeptics of the Endangered Species Act ask me, as a professional biologist, what “good” is some obscure endangered mollusk, amphibian, or plant, I often think back on the great words of the 19<sup>th</sup> century poet, Ralph Waldo Emerson, who once said, “What is a weed? A plant whose virtues have never been discovered.” The virtues of those obscure species may not be well known or understood by humans, but that doesn’t mean that they shouldn’t exist and be preserved and protected.

While many species still remain a mystery, there are myriad others that are beloved and celebrated. Each winter, people gather in Sauk City, Wisconsin, during January to see the abundance of bald eagles that gather on the banks of the Mississippi River. The city is just one of hundreds nationwide that host festivals, tours, and more to watch expanding populations of our national bird. Off the coast of California, ecotourism guides lead wildlife lovers in search of sea otters at play in the ocean, and in Massachusetts, tourists head out in boats to watch whales migrating through the Atlantic waters. In Tennessee, biologists are working hard to recover freshwater mussels that help filter impurities out of streams and rivers. And scientists are continuously exploring the medicinal value of imperiled amphibians, plants, and other species.

What do these creatures all have in common? They have all been protected by the Endangered Species Act—a law that was put in motion December 28, 1973, and is soon to reach its fortieth anniversary.

President Richard Nixon signed the act into law stating, “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.” Thanks, Mr. President, I could not have said it better!

Protecting imperiled wildlife from extinction not only makes good biological sense, but economic sense, as well. Many endangered species contribute to the maintenance of vital ecological services such as clean water, balanced ecosystems, and abundant natural resources. Other protected species produce beneficial medicines and maintain booming wildlife-related recreation and tourism. And then there are listed species whose ecological or economic contributions are not yet fully appreciated or understood, but whose loss would be irretrievable, nonetheless.

With fewer than 1 percent of the species protected under the Endangered Species Act ever having been delisted due to extinction, the Act has been incredibly effective. Our country would look a lot different if we had not committed to the protections provided by this landmark legislation almost forty years ago. Bald eagles would no longer be numerous along our shorelines, peregrine falcons would likely have vanished, grizzly bears and wolves would be missing from western landscapes, bull trout would no longer be swimming in our streams, and black-footed ferrets would have vanished from the prairies.

The Endangered Species Act is the strongest federal environmental law on our books today. It has done more to conserve imperiled species, to transform the management of wildlife at the state level, and to modify federal agency behavior than any other national environmental law.

The Act provides a solid foundation not only for preventing extinction, but for steadily improving the conservation prospects for the seriously imperiled species it protects. The Act compels us to care about the future of our planet and provides a platform to ensure that we are mindful of our responsibilities to future generations.

But today, our wildlife and natural resources are up against some extreme challenges. Accelerating climate change, invasive species, habitat destruction, and booming development—along with intense pressures to increase energy production—are among emerging threats to imperiled species. But none of these threats are as great as the opposition to the law from extreme anti-environmental politicians. At times, the political fate and welfare of the Endangered Species Act seems as uncertain as that of some of the species it so effectively shields.

My son Carson once gave me a drawing of a polar bear that I hung in my office near my desk. He wrote at the top, “Please save the polar bears mom!” He meant it. It’s time for us to mean it, too. Carson and all of the other young people in this country are counting on us to ensure that the world we leave behind is as good—or better—as the one that my generation inherited. Let’s put politics aside, as they did forty years ago, and recommit to a strong and successful Endangered Species Act that saves this nation’s imperiled wildlife and plant heritage, once and for all.

*Please visit [awildsuccess.org](http://awildsuccess.org) for an unabridged version of this essay.*

PRESIDENT AND CEO,  
DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE

**JAMIE  
RAPPAPORT CLARK**



The Carrizo Plain in central California can seem rather absent of life on a hot summer day, but at night it becomes alive with nocturnal animals. If you are lucky, you may see the giant kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys ingens*) scurrying across the road. Better yet, take a walk across the grassy terrain and look for these rodents “dancing in the moonlight,” as they were once described by a biologist who studied them in the 1930s, when they were very abundant. More likely, you will see them stuffing seeds, their main food source, into their external cheek pouches and carrying the treasure into their burrows. Inside the burrow you may hear a strange thumping sound as the bipedal kangaroo rat drums its large hind feet to notify you that you are in its territory, where it stores and defends its seed larder. The foot drumming is an important part of their communication system, which they use to signal their identity and territorial ownership to other kangaroo rats, and to alert against predators—snakes and kit foxes.

Kangaroo rats are arid-adapted rodents inhabiting deserts and dry grasslands of the southwestern United States and northern Mexico. Of the twenty species in the genus *Dipodomys*, thirteen live in California, and six species are either threatened or endangered, mainly because of habitat loss to agricultural and urban development. The giant

kangaroo rat makes its last stand in the Carrizo Plain National Monument, where it is down to only 2 percent of its former population. The species is listed as endangered by both the California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These cute rodents are crucial for maintaining biological diversity. As a keystone species, they are food for the endangered San Joaquin kit fox and owls, and their extensive burrow systems provide a home for many other animals.

I celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Endangered Species Act because it has been important to the survival of kangaroo rats, but its job is not done. During over thirty years of studying the behavior and ecology of eight different species of kangaroo rats, I have observed the continued decline of their populations. New threats to survival consist of the installation of vast arrays of solar panels in their desert habitats and the threat of oil and gas development in Central California. Urban and agricultural development continues to endanger kangaroo rat species.

I invite you to go into the desert at night to see these beautiful little rodents in their natural habitat. You can look for them hopping along on their hind legs in the moonlight, and then go home and support the Endangered Species Act.

PROFESSOR  
EMERITUS,  
DEPARTMENT OF  
BIOLOGY,  
SAN FRANCISCO  
STATE UNIVERSITY

**JAN  
RANDALL,  
PH.D.**

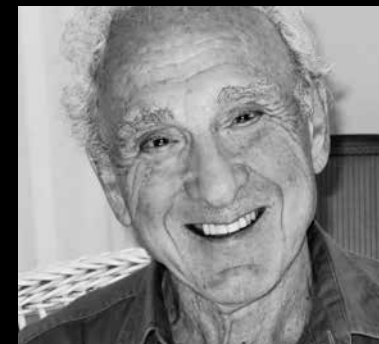


Arriving in Ann Arbor, Michigan, as an entering freshman at the University of Michigan in the fall of 1951, I was curious why the train from New York upon which I was riding was called “The Wolverine.” I soon discovered that this animal, the largest and most ferocious of the weasel family, was the official mascot of the University—based on its ability to survive and flourish in the harshest conditions and on its reputation for bringing down prey much larger than itself.

Of course it was no wonder that, unlike many other schools with mascots, the University of Michigan did not parade a captive wolverine around its immense football stadium (a venue with which I became quite familiar as the primary arranger of half-time shows for the Michigan Marching Band!). Nor did the University dress someone up to imitate a wolverine—it was too noble a creature for such buffoonery.

That is why it is so hard to believe that such a brave, powerful creature could in any way become threatened, but the march of civilization has already encroached upon the entire southern range of this animal, and the continuing loss of its habitat worldwide could ultimately lead to the wolverine’s extinction.

It is for this reason, and for the sake of all the creatures with whom we share our planet, that organizations dedicated to preserving the delicate balance of nature deserve our unflagging and enthusiastic support, and why we celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Endangered Species Act, which stands as a first and most important step in this critical cause.



It is my firm belief that caring for others—human and non-human—helps us to become more worthwhile inhabitants of this sphere we call home, and, by improving the quality of other lives, we improve the quality of our own.

FORMER PROFESSOR OF MUSIC,  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
**JERRY BILIK**

As an organization, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)—which represents accredited zoos and aquariums that annually bring over 180 million visitors up close to many threatened and endangered wildlife species—we are proud to recognize the incredible successes of the Endangered Species Act over the past forty years. However, we remain mindful that the role of AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums is only beginning,

as we continue to strive to save wild animals in wild places.

PRESIDENT AND CEO,  
ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS  
AND AQUARIUMS

**JIM MADDY**



With a *pish* and a whoop and a bang on the bole, Ryan Garrison clawed at the base of a 50-foot flattop pine, where a male bird had been spotted entering a nesting cavity on a wooded lot. He banged his field notebook against the tree. When the bird flew straight into the mesh of an extendable net he had just placed over the hole, Garrison reached in and gently grabbed it.

“What are y’all doing?” a woman yelled. She was standing on her deck, awash in a pink housecoat. Hammond walked over. “You’re not taking my woodpecker, are you?” He told her we were just banding it. We would place it back in a few minutes.

“Good,” she said, “Because I love having it around.”

“People with houses love woodpeckers,” Hammond said when he got back. “To a lot of owners, woodpeckers are Satan.”

Garrison blew on the feathers of the bird’s head, revealing a bright red cockade. He drew some blood, and spat some tobacco. The bird weighed 49 grams. He passed it to Hammond, who put two light green bands separated by a black-and-white one, the colors of Cluster 14, on the right leg. On the left went a dark blue band and an aluminum U.S. Geological Service tag. Wherever this bird flew, observers could now identify it with this tree.

“Hey, it could be worse,” Hammond said of their efforts to protect the woodpecker. “It could be a butterfly.” Butterflies were easy, I thought. I would soon go see a couple of clam species that the governor of Georgia had accused of endangering the lives of his state’s children.

Matteson laughed. “Woodpeckers are pretty, but mussels?” And so it goes.

Once it was banded, I was given the honor of letting the woodpecker go. Shaken up from the nest rattling, the bird-catcher’s net, and the several minutes under the pliers, it was still in my palm, light as a few thousand feathers. For a moment, it eyed me across the taxonomic divide.

The bird embodied the hope, the surprising boldness of the Endangered Species Act. Without it, this male—and many of the red-cockaded woodpeckers in Boiling Spring Lakes (and throughout the South)—would have been lost. It may be underfunded and at times mismanaged, but the Endangered Species Act is an unprecedented attempt to relegate human-caused extinction to the chapters of history we would rather not revisit: slave trade, the Indian Removal Act, the subjection of women, child labor, and segregation. The Endangered Species Act is a zero-tolerance law: no new extinctions. It keeps eyes on the ground with legal backing—the gun may be in the holster most of the time, but it’s available, if necessary, to keep species from disappearing. I discovered in my travels that a law protecting all animals and plants, indeed, all of nature, might be as revolutionary—and as American—as the Declaration of Independence.

As I opened my hand, the bird hesitated, then hopped to a nearby branch, with talons tight on the rough bark. The moment passed. Through the trees, out of sight, he flew.

AUTHOR AND FELLOW,  
GUND INSTITUTE FOR  
ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS,  
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

**JOE ROMAN, PH.D.**





What many people don't remember about the Endangered Species Act is that it was a *Republican* president, Richard Nixon, who called on a *Democratic* Congress to take action to protect our environment.

Four decades later, in this time of gridlock and partisanship, it would be helpful for both political parties to take a lesson from history and remember how this legislation—and the other environmental legislation passed during the 93<sup>rd</sup> Congress—came to be.

Yes, politics mattered, and the environmental movement pushed our leaders towards action. But both parties knew that, above all else, they were responsible to leave our children with a better life and a better world. Richard Nixon passed a moral test with his environmental record. I'm not sure how many of our leaders could pass it today.

Imagine how different our world would be if our broken politics of today operated in that golden era of environmental legislation. Would anything have been accomplished?

What species would no longer be free to roam, fly, or swim?

Which lands would we have destroyed, instead of preserving them as natural habitats?

Would the symbol of our national heritage, the bald eagle, be extinct?

Over the last forty years, our politics have become so polarized, so partisan, and so poll-tested, that our leaders can't even come together around something that, at its core, is a basic responsibility.

At the same time, this simple need to preserve and protect our world has not gone away—it has only become more important. And despite the progress of the Endangered Species Act, something as obvious and obligatory as protecting our environment has now become the victim of a broken and dysfunctional political system.

Combating the enormous threat of climate change (that virtually all scientists agree on) is somehow controversial in some political circles.

Too many of our leaders would rather sit on their hands than upset a fringe political movement that denies science. It has become politically easier to get lost in gridlock than take a stand for generations to come.

The challenge now for the environmental movement is to build a roadmap to turn the tide of history, yet again. And this time it's going to be a lot harder. We have plenty of environmental pioneers who are building on the spirit of the Rachel Carsons and Paul Ehrlichs from decades ago. But we need more Gaylord Nelsons and Republicans like the late Russell Train—and yes, even Richard Nixon.

So the job will rest with the people, with all of us: To build the biggest grassroots movement we can. We need to do the hard work, every single day, of coming together and talking with our friends and neighbors in our communities. We need to embrace new technology and find new tools for getting our message across. We need to share stories of what's working and what needs to change. We need to get our elected officials—from both parties—on record with their

proposals, and then make sure that they are held accountable for their words.

Together, we can grow this movement all across America until it is a force that is impossible for anyone to ignore. And through this all, we must never lose sight of why we are doing this: Our responsibility to protect not only ourselves, but the generations to come.

POLITICAL STRATEGIST

**JOE TRIPPI**



For more than twenty years now, I've been a contributing photographer for National Geographic Magazine. They've sent me to every continent, and I've worked on thirty-three photo essays so far. Most dealt with conservation issues.

But it has not been enough.

Every year I see more habitat lost, and more species consumed for food, medicine, or simply for decoration.

The Photo Ark was born out of desperation to halt, or at least slow, the loss of global biodiversity. Frankly, I didn't know what else to do.

I've started a twenty-year project to document the world's myriad species as studio portraits. I've been at it nearly seven years and have some 2,600 species to show for it. I'll go on as long as I can.

I photograph captive animals, mostly, at the world's zoos and aquariums. I visit well-run facilities where there is abundant attention and care. I like the educational aspect of zoos, and feel strongly that we need some live animal ambassadors to engage the masses if we're to have a real shot at moving public opinion.

Zoos and aquariums not only entertain millions of guests a year, but work to instill a conservation message that needs to be heard in the worst way these days: That we need to change substantially in how we treat Earth. In the end, will it be enough to stop our relentless march towards consuming everything on the face of the planet? I just don't know. Right now, the only thing I'm certain of is that future generations will really hate what we've done to the place.

They say that people will only save what they love. And they certainly can't love something if they don't know it exists. That's where these photos come in. By isolating animals on black and white backgrounds, we can look them directly in the eye and quickly see that these creatures contain beauty, grace and intelligence. Perhaps some even hold the key to our very salvation.

The plain truth is that when we save species, we're actually saving ourselves. In the grand scheme of things, healthy forests and oceans regulate our climate and provide us with food to eat. On a smaller scale, individual plants can provide us with chemical agents that we

can use for medicines. And animals teach us new things all the time about things as varied as communication (dolphins), hibernation (Arctic ground squirrels) and pollution (freshwater mussels).

Beyond all the self-serving reasons though, each and every species is a work of art, created over thousands or even millions of years, and is worth saving just because each is so unique and priceless.

Today, all too many of the creatures that I photograph for the Photo Ark exist only in captivity. And with each species that falls, I keep thinking that the world will finally wake up and pay attention.

So are things hopeless? Not at all, but we must think and act differently. The era we live in, today, is full of endless possibilities, but we must act now. By supporting conservation organizations, captive breeding efforts, and public awareness, we can work wonders.

And one more thing for those of you who still don't know what to do about all this: Know that every time you break out your purse or your wallet, you're saying to a retailer, "I approve of what this was made from and the distance it was

shipped to me, and I want you to do it again and again." The power of the dollar is real, and it moves mountains if enough people pay attention. What kind of wood is that new dining room set made of? Do you eat locally grown fruits and veggies in season? What's the packaging of the products you buy? Have you bought a smaller car, and do you drive it less?

No one person can save the world, but each of us certainly can have a real and meaningful impact. Many of the species that are featured in The Photo Ark can, indeed, be saved, but it will take people with passion, money, or both, to step up and get involved. A little attention is all some need, while other species range globally and will be harder to protect. Every bit of effort helps though, and awareness of the problem is the first step towards a solution.

The bottom line for me is this: At the end of my days, I'd like to be able to look in the mirror and smile, thinking that I made a real difference.

Now, how about you?

*Please visit [photoark.com](http://photoark.com) for more information about Joel Sartore's endangered species photodocumentation project*

AUTHOR, SPEAKER,  
CONSERVATIONIST,  
PHOTOJOURNALIST, AND  
FELLOW OF THE NATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

**JOEL SARTORE**





Bald Eagle © Joel Sartore, www.photoark.com

Protecting this Nation's wildlife and our public lands should never be a partisan or political issue; it should be about common sense. That's exactly why my good friend Pete McCloskey and I came together, one Democrat and one Republican, to create the Endangered Species Act and pass it as a good piece of bipartisan legislation that would do something to help this country. I've always said that no generation inherits this earth—we simply borrow it from future generations—and this common-sense policy helps to



embrace that fact and preserve our future. To this day, some forty years after the Act was signed into law, I still consider my work on the Endangered Species Act to be one of my proudest moments in Congress.

CONGRESSMAN 1955-PRESENT

**JOHN DINGELL**

I have been an advocate for protecting the Rio Grande and securing the river's rights to its own waters for nearly two decades. It has been a struggle, as we seek to overcome a cultural and legal paradigm that sees value only when a river's water is diverted to flood-irrigate alfalfa or make microchips instead of remaining as the lifeblood of a free-flowing river.

Throughout this struggle, the Endangered Species Act has been my near-constant companion, largely thanks to the sad plight of the Rio Grande silvery minnow and its terrestrial partner-in-peril, the Southwestern willow flycatcher. Both are stoic messengers of the dire straights of the Rio Grande; neither is charismatic nor has a natural constituency of advocates, like salmon or wolves do.

On occasion, I have sat awestruck through day-long meetings full of state and federal bureaucrats whose agencies have significant stakes in the Rio Grande's water. I'm awestruck by the fact that all these people are here, talking about a river's needs and the status of a little-known, three-inch fish. Given the resistance to change exhibited by most water users, I rarely have to remind myself that

we are here for one reason: the ethical clarity and legal fortitude of the Endangered Species Act. But for the Act, I have no doubt that one of America's greatest rivers would be left high and dry.

The reductionist thinking that plagues our modern times has sometimes led water users to think about the minnow as if its needs could somehow be met separately from and differently than the river's needs. But the silvery minnow—and the Act behind it—have pushed many water users to at least think about the river—and that is progress in my eyes. And for that small measure of progress, I am forever grateful for the Endangered Species Act and the courage and ethical clarity of its original framers.



I imagine they believed, as do I, that the only way to judge the evolutionary magic that manifests as a small, silvery fish in the Rio Grande is to believe in its—and all species—intrinsic worth.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

**JOHN HORNING**

As part of my career, I had the great fortune to be in private NASA audiences of astronauts at the National Air and Space Museum's IMAX theatre, where they would describe the films they shot on Shuttle missions just a few days earlier.

The most striking and pervasive observations made by both military aviators and pilots, as well as scientists, were about the incredible beauty and fragility of our planet and its thin, delicate atmosphere. Often they also described how ugly rain forest devastation looks, even from as far away as space.

These astronauts also revealed that, within just a few of their many ninety-minute orbits around Earth, they saw the planet as the global continuum it is—they saw the connectedness in everything in nature: the air, the water, the land. They said they felt this connectedness for all of life's precious and fragile environments, and how our actions—or inactions—here on Earth affect all of life, including our endangered species. These astronauts stated that they saw it was important to establish protections such as the Endangered Species Act, as the impacts of one's shortsightedness when on the ground was very evident when one has the long view, flying above Earth, where one sees it, all at once.

## SPACEFLIGHT HARDWARE INTEGRATION ENGINEER

### JOHN KAZEVA



In enacting the Endangered Species Act forty years ago, our federal government put in place a legal framework that would prove to be a fundamentally sound way of preventing extinction of the nation's at-risk species and putting them on the road to recovery. Today, we celebrate this law's critical role in safeguarding the Florida panther, whooping crane, black-footed ferret, and many other at-risk animal and plant species, and we commit ourselves to ensuring that this law remains strong so that our children and their children can enjoy the natural treasures we have enjoyed.

By itself, this conservation progress would be remarkable enough. But perhaps an equally important accomplishment is the Endangered Species Act's role in changing our society's understanding of its relationship to nature.

Before I was first introduced to the Endangered Species Act in law school in the early 1980s, my idea of wildlife protection law was that it had little to do with people. I assumed the focus was on helping animals, for the benefit of those animals. Over time, and especially after I began working at the National Wildlife Federation in the early 1990s to strengthen and defend the Endangered Species Act, I began participating in, and intently listening in on spirited public debates about how society should live with nature.

It turns out that the Endangered Species Act is provoking many of these debates. This is a classic case where a bit of conflict is healthy thing. Two core premises of the Act are informing these debates and improving their outcomes: That conservation of at-risk animals and plants is not mere altruism, but essential for human well-being, and that focusing on ecosystems is the only way to do conservation work effectively. Both of these ideas emphasize our deep interconnectedness with the other creatures that inhabit this planet, and they are central to my work.

## VICE PRESIDENT OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION, NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

### JOHN KOSTYACK



Founded in 1999, in the high country of Colorado on my ranch under the base of the majestic Eagles Nest Wilderness area, the Fishpond and Lilypond brands have become a worldwide platform of products designed and manufactured for the fishing and outdoors enthusiast. We created our company with the philosophy that innovation, design, and a responsibility towards the environment from which we draw our inspiration are critical to our success.

Our company depends on the health and sustainability of our watersheds and open lands, and we promote the shared connection we all have to our fragile ecosystem. It is vitally important for us, as an outdoor recreation company, to have critical public lands and protected species preserved in perpetuity through acts of Congress for wilderness designation, or through the Endangered Species Act.

At Fishpond, we believe in the power of purpose. Much of our success is directly attributable to the passion and love we have for the outdoors, and we encourage our consumers to engage in a cause that directly impacts their heart and passions. We call this the “ripple effect”—the collective impact of individuals performing in environmentally conscious ways that lead to lasting changes—in thinking, in deeds, and in results. Conservation of our natural world, including all water systems, is a shared responsibility. With each new ripple we create, we move closer to becoming a company that embodies a vision for a sustainable environment.

An example of our commitment to this vision is our 2014 line of fabrics for the Fishpond brand that are made entirely of reclaimed and recycled nylon from commercial fishing net that is typically either cut loose at sea or left on shore to entangle multiple species.

In addition, for our Lilypond brand of women’s handbags and accessories, 100 percent of our fabrics are made from recycled and discarded water bottles.

In an effort to protect this country’s phenomenal public lands and waters and reconnect Americans to the diversity of wildlife that lives in the places they love, we must create an outreach and policy plan based on a national dialogue with engaged citizens. By helping people become aware of their surroundings and by providing

encouragement to physically participate in outdoor activities, we hopefully will create a powerful movement that embraces the ideals of biodiversity.

As a friend of ecological balance, Fishpond encourages every person to engage in a cause that makes a difference. None of us can do everything, but each of us can do something.

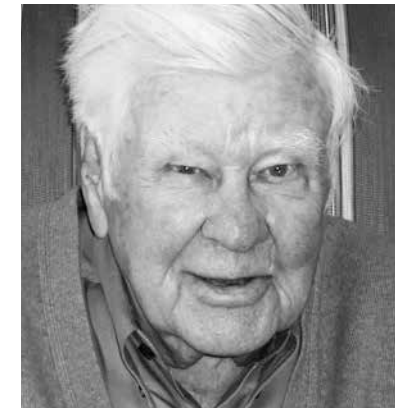
FOUNDER  
AND CEO,  
FISHPOND AND  
LILYPOND, INC.

**JOHN  
LAND LE COQ**



In 1973, while serving in the House, Congressman Melcher voted for passage of the Endangered Species Act, which cleared the House floor by a vote of 355-4.

To me, *endangered* means that if we are not protecting a species, there is a risk that it may be reduced in numbers, even to the extent that it could go extinct. It means that we should take steps to protect it; that is our responsibility. We need to make careful decisions how to protect endangered species so that their numbers will be adequate to preserve their ecological place in the world.



CONGRESSMAN 1969-1977,  
SENATOR 1977-1989

**JOHN MELCHER**



Humans are the result of millions of years of patient evolution. It seems now as though we may be among the planet's most endangered species, perhaps destined to be wiped away, even before many of the other species over which we thought we had dominion. Only if we quickly apply our



wonderful curiosity and improve our ability to mend, might we save the living things around us and, thus, ourselves.

CONGRESSMAN, 1979-1997

**JOHN PATRICK  
"PAT" WILLIAMS**

As a Vice President, Investment Officer with Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC, I see the benefits that come with having a sustainable business practice. A company that does not violate environmental rules will have less reputational and lawsuit risk. Most companies want to be seen as "good citizens" because it is helpful in developing, keeping, and growing a strong customer base.

In the past decade, we have seen record numbers of companies trying to meet socially responsible guidelines. In fact, some of the largest and most successful companies in the world have hired sustainability directors to get their companies on the right track.



I am proud to work at a company that takes its environmental commitment seriously. A business can be very profitable within the constraints of our nation's conservation laws. Having a strong Endangered Species Act is a gift that our country should cherish.

VICE PRESIDENT, INVESTMENT OFFICER,  
WELLS FARGO ADVISORS, LLC

**JON ELLENBOGEN**



When I was a young girl growing up in California in the early 1970s, my family often ate supper while the evening news delivered the day's events. Walter Cronkite's voice introduced me to the big issues of that era: the Vietnam War, Watergate, Roe v. Wade, the civil rights movement, and the Wounded Knee occupation, to name a few. Many times I was perplexed by what I heard, or even frightened, but always intrigued. One evening, I heard about endangered wildlife in the United States, and how human behavior was taking its toll on these animals and their habitats. This was the first I'd heard of it, and I was appalled. How could such a terrible thing be happening? We must not have known about it ahead of time—we just got caught off guard, my child's mind rationalized.

The year was 1973; I was eleven years old. I was relieved to learn, soon afterward, that President Nixon and Congress were aiming to protect these animals and their habitats through something called the Endangered Species Act. I admired my country's leaders and felt proud of them for taking such noble, inspiring action. I vowed, at that moment, to follow in their footsteps and work for environmental good. There was only one problem: My childlike take on the matter was that Endangered Species Act would solve all of our environmental problems, and there would be nothing more for someone like

me to do. As it turned out, the Arab oil embargo later that year gave me an opportunity to expand my thinking.

One Saturday afternoon, I waited for five hours at the gas station with my father for the chance to buy two gallons of gasoline—the limit that day. While we waited, my father and I talked about many things. I recall two conversations in particular. One was about the smog hanging over the Santa Clara Valley—where it came from, and how human behaviors helped create it. The other was about the animals that lived in the mountain ranges surrounding the Valley, and how the ability of all species to adapt when conditions change is fundamental to survival. My father explained that the key to survival is whether and how quickly a species can adapt within its habitat to changing conditions, or find new habitat. I'll never forget what he said next: he linked the two conversations by joking that with such air pollution in the Valley, we might one day need an Endangered Species Act for humans. I felt perplexed, a little frightened, and definitely intrigued. I sensed there would be plenty that I could do to help the environment.

Forty years later, I'm a "climate mitigation, adaptation, and community resilience" professional. The Endangered Species Act inspired my imagination as a child, taught me to ask a lot of questions, and influenced the choices I made as an adult in shaping my life's work. I believe that the Act is not just about loving and protecting wildlife and habitat. It also teaches us the imperative to love and protect our own species' most precious habitat—Earth, itself.

SENIOR MANAGER,  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
SUSTAINABILITY SOLUTIONS,  
HITACHI CONSULTING

**JULIA PHILPOTT**



It is sometimes easy to forget that no matter how much our lives depend on commerce and finance, in the end all of that depends, in turn, on the health of our planet. We are fond of the notion that human ingenuity can overcome all our challenges, but that's a proposition that we never really want to test, at least with respect to Earth's carrying capacity. I'd just as soon never find out if human ingenuity is up to the challenge of dealing with an Earth that can't support an abundance of life.

The Endangered Species Act put a canary in the mine of human existence. It is commonplace for people to think, as they convert natural habitat to some sort of productive capacity, that it's okay. After all, there's more of that somewhere else, and someone else will make sure that the species that need it will just find some other place. The Endangered Species Act is a reminder that that's not always the case. Sometimes our activities cross the line between sharing the planet and hogging it.

Most people probably will never go all misty-eyed over the fate of the Furbish lousewort, but we shouldn't have to rely on any species' charisma in order to assure that it can continue to live. Communities of place and interest often need, and too often do not have, hard stops that limit their ability to transform their surroundings. The human race has repeatedly shown, over its history, that we do not innately recognize when we're approaching a threshold, or crossing one we can never recross. I rely on the Endangered Species Act in my day job, and in the rest of my life, to maintain those limits.

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT  
FOR SUSTAINABLE INVESTING,  
PAX WORLD MANAGEMENT

**JULIE FOX GORTE**





American Alligator © Andrew Zuckerman

While staying on Cumberland Island, Georgia, in the late 1970s, I went on a night beach patrol and witnessed an extraordinary event: A loggerhead sea turtle lumbering up the beach, digging a precise chamber with her rear flippers, and patiently dropping over a hundred glistening eggs. Previously, I'd been more of a plant person, but after that night on the shore, wildlife issues began to draw me in. Loggerhead sea turtles were listed under the Endangered Species Act in 1978. Thirteen years later, I became a Commissioner of the Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission.

Florida's imperiled species don't stick to the wilderness. On our way to the grocery store, we often see wood storks in roadside ditches. Swallow-tailed kites skim the tree tops in our neighborhood, and least terns fish along the sea wall outside my office. These casual and affirming wildlife encounters are awesome, but they don't begin to reveal the decades of diligent recovery work conducted by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In Florida, we've seen success with the Florida panther, the whooping crane, and the Florida manatee. Thanks to construction of wildlife underpasses and introduction of female Texas pumas, the Florida panther's population has increased from a low of thirty individuals in 1990 to over one hundred in 2013.

Extirpated from Florida in the 1930s, whooping cranes were reestablished in the eastern United States by 2012, with nineteen non-migratory birds in central Florida and a population of 104 eastern migratory cranes. Manatees received protection from boat-induced physical trauma through restricted boat speeds, and may soon be down-listed from endangered to threatened.

As the Endangered Species Act turns forty, the future for each of these species is even brighter. Concern for endangered species has motivated Florida voters and legislators to acquire critical conservation lands, and the painstaking work of field biologists guides management decisions for these species and others, providing course corrections as recoveries progress. Education and outreach continue to teach people how to live with expanding populations of recovering species—countering claims that protected species are nuisances, and that people are the real endangered species.

These days, I spend more hours in meeting rooms talking about conservation than I spend in the woods. To keep myself grounded, once a year I ride with the night sea turtle patrol on a local beach. We see stakes with yellow flags marking nests laid earlier in the season, and the distinctive tracks of a false crawl. Then we spot a female digging a nest cavity and laying her eggs. And at the right moment, my companions measure and tag her, then

log her data as she covers her nest and turns back to the Gulf waters.

The next forty years will hold new challenges for sea turtles and the people who manage their recovery. Thankfully, both the Endangered Species Act and the practices and wisdom we've gained through our recovery work will be there to guide us.

ASSISTANT  
VICE PRESIDENT  
FOR ACADEMIC  
AFFAIRS,  
NEW COLLEGE  
OF FLORIDA

**JULIE  
MORRIS**



I was born in Missouri, home to the fat pocketbook and twenty-one other threatened and endangered species. I spent time traveling with my family and enjoying nature's beauty throughout the world.

I moved to New York City in 1986. Three years earlier, the fastest animal on the planet moved into this fast-paced city. Two endangered peregrine falcons—that can reach 200 mph in flight—made their home here. The falcons and I both thrived.

While Kate Spade New York expanded, so did the falcons, and now I share this city with thirty-two of these incredible birds.

As a fashion designer, I am immersed in beauty, color, and pattern. I have always been inspired by

the beauty in nature. Patterns, prints, colors, and textures have been a huge part of my designs since the beginning. Without certain species of wildlife, I can't imagine I would be able to create my designs.

I want to live in a world where beauty, color, and pattern flourish. Isn't the world a more beautiful place with blue whale blue, Pine Barrens tree frog green, Tennessee coneflower pink, and l'iwi bird



red? Don't we need ocelot spots, holiday darter stripes, staghorn coral curls, and California tiger salamander polka dots? I think so.

DESIGNER, KATE SPADE NEW YORK

**KATE SPADE**

In 1982, as a high school senior living on Cape Cod, I signed up to help save Plymouth red-bellied turtles that—though once found in ponds and waterways across much of eastern Massachusetts—were in serious trouble. To be honest, saving the turtles seemed like a bit of a long shot. Two years earlier, when Plymouth red-bellied turtles had been awarded Endangered Species Act protections, fewer than fifty remained in the wild. To help recover them, we raised inch-long hatchlings in captivity, feeding them lettuce and vitamins, then released them into the wild once they'd gained enough size to have a fighting chance against great blue herons, skunks, raccoons, and other predators.

At the time, the Endangered Species Act was only nine years old, and I could not have imagined the tremendous role it would play in saving hundreds of plants and animals, let alone the central role it would end up playing in my own life.

Now, on the 40th anniversary of the Act, every American should stop and celebrate the fact that the law known for preserving bald eagles, grizzlies, and wolves has saved a remarkable 99 percent of the more than 1,400 species entrusted to its care.

Years after my efforts to help save that struggling population of turtles, I co-founded the Center for Biological Diversity that has worked every day—for more than two decades now—to save hundreds of our nation's most imperiled plants, insects, and animals.

During our recent coast-to-coast analysis of more than one hundred species protected by the Endangered Species Act, I checked back in on the Plymouth red-bellied turtles and found that they, like hundreds of other species protected by the Act, are on the path toward recovery. Overall, our analysis revealed that 90 percent of protected species are recovering on pace to meet the goals set out by federal scientists, and some are even coming in ahead of schedule.

The California least tern, a shorebird that had dwindled to just 225 pairs when it was protected in 1970, today has more than 6,000 pairs.

The black-footed ferret, once thought extinct throughout its range in the middle of the country, went from zero animals in the wild in 1991, to more than 1,400 in 2010.

The Florida population of the Atlantic green sea turtle, listed as endangered in 1978, grew by 2,200 percent between 1989 and 2011.

And, yes, even populations of the Plymouth red-bellied turtle are looking hopeful: There are now as many as 600 breeding-age individuals in the wild in twenty ponds.

The widespread success of the Endangered Species Act over its first forty years is undeniable. And as we head into the Act's second forty years, it's clear we need the Act's power—now more than ever before—to combat the mounting pressures of climate change on a wide range of species.

The task is immense. But what we've learned over the past four decades is that the Endangered Species Act is up to the challenge, if we are.



EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR,  
CENTER FOR  
BIOLOGICAL  
DIVERSITY

**KIERAN  
SUCKLING**

At New Belgium Brewing, we try to be excellent and loving in everything we do, beginning with how we run our company. To be transparent and foster community, we have implemented many initiatives over the years, from open-book management and employee ownership to environmental stewardship. The idea of community forms a large part of our ideology at New Belgium, and the environment factors heavily into our idea of community.

Each species of flora and fauna plays a valuable role in local ecosystems, and when one disappears it throws the entire system into disarray. Legislation like the Endangered Species Act protects species, ensuring that the crops that we turn into beer have a stable ecosystem to grow in, which is important to New Belgium's long-term prosperity, too. We try to make the most environmentally-friendly choices possible at New Belgium, so that we are doing all that we can to help the Endangered Species Act protect the fragile ecosystems of this country, and so that we can continue to craft good beer.



FOUNDER AND CEO,  
NEW BELGIUM BREWERY

**KIM JORDAN**

A sweet piping calls the sun out of the Molokai Channel as a gaggle of nēnē geese (*Branta sandvicensis*) emerge from the dawn mists—a whistling parade of café au lait colored birds wearing red anklets from the State of Hawaii. They fly in to our lawn at Puu O Hoku Ranch for their morning grazing. A mile and a half east towards the Pacific, there are dozens more pairs nesting inside the State's enclosure, protected from the predators that brought this Hawaiian state bird to extinction on Molokai, and to near extinction in all the islands in the 1950s. Since Puu O Hoku Ranch pioneered a safe harbor agreement with the State of Hawaii in 2001, twenty-five nēnē were released on the ranch, and the number of breeding pairs has more than quadrupled here in twelve years.

We will never know the full loveliness of the Hawaiian Islands before the catastrophic invasion of *Homo sapiens*, as the songs of more than seventy species of birds are forever gone from our forests and grasslands, and countless endemic plants have vanished. But for those hundreds of species that hang on in remote crevices and remnant forest patches, those named as endangered such as the Molokai white hibiscus (*Kokia keokeo*), or the endemic gardenia (*Nau*)—and birds that we dare dream may still be hiding in the ohia trees on the mountain—may they flourish and spread as the nēnē has in our pastures, coming in faithfully every morning to call the sunrise, and to signal, perhaps, the necessary steps to a restoration ecology.



FILMMAKER AND PHILANTHROPIST

**LAVINIA CURRIER**

I was born in Toronto, which is on the north shore of Lake Ontario. The house I grew up in sits on a glacial till plain, a plain of soil deposited at the end of the last ice age. I used to go to summer camp about 150 miles north of Toronto, where the glacial till gives way to the igneous rocks of the Canadian Shield. At camp, I went on many canoe trips in Algonquin Provincial Park, where I saw beavers, otters, bears, raccoons, and moose. I walked portages, and paddled on lakes so pure you could drink the water at the shoreline.

Once I went on a wilderness-kayaking trip in Alaska's Tebenkof Bay, where I saw the great Sitka spruce trees, the humpback whales, bald eagles, sea lions, minks, Sitka deer, sea otters, hundreds of kinds of birds, and the running of the salmon. I meditated and prayed to the sound of a humpback whale's breathing as it passed by our island campsite. I have felt the ecstasy, awe, and terror of being in a kayak on the open ocean.

I now live in New Jersey. The rocks here are different, the result of different geological forces. But here there are fireflies and cicadas, and I have learned to love the sight and the sound of each of them. Since coming to New Jersey, I have also learned to love the ocean and the mountains of the northeastern United States. Every morning at sunrise, the birds begin to call; I often awake to their dawn chorus. They sing, signaling that they are alive and holding on to their particular territory: A song of life and hope.

As Jewish person of faith, I hold deep respect for the fundamental understanding that God, as Creator of the Universe, is the real Owner of all. It is also evident from the first chapter of

Genesis, and other biblical texts, that God creates, takes care of, and takes pleasure in the diversity of life in the world.

The rabbis once taught: "Even those things that you may regard as completely superfluous to Creation – such as fleas, gnats and flies—even they were included in Creation; and God's purpose is carried through everything—even through a snake, a scorpion, a gnat, a frog." (Midrash Bereshit Rabbah 10:7) We should never judge the value of a species through the narrow lens of human need.

Profoundly moving biblical passages illustrate the harmonious order of Creation, an order in which humans have no primacy of place and are not the dominant power. Instead, we are part of the earthly choir, which joins the heavenly choir of the planets, stars, and other celestial creatures in the glorification of God. The earthly community of worshippers includes animal life, the forces of the natural world, the landscape, and all of human society.

This 40th anniversary of the Endangered Species Act offers us a time to reflect on our relationship to non-human life. In addition to saving specific endangered species, this law has helped us to understand the interdependence of all life, and that every life holds intrinsic value—value that is not simply a resource for human exploitation. The great numbers of species in the world are the words in God's Book of Nature. If all these things went away, torn from the Book of Creation by our lack of

humility and responsibility, I would still be here, but I would no longer be who I am now. When we bring about the extinction of species, we are erasing pages from God's Book of Nature. Our response to Creation should instead be wonder, awe, love, and humility at its beauty, variety, and mystery.



ECO-THEOLOGIAN AND RELIGIOUS  
ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST

**RABBI LAWRENCE  
TROSTER**



I grew up in a family dedicated to endangered species conservation. My maternal grandfather was Dr. C. Hart Merriam, founder and first head of the Biological Survey, which became the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Hiking, camping, and pack trips in the wilderness—with the wonderful conservation and ecological insights and guidance of my parents—were an integral part of my early years.

On emerging from the U.S. Marine Corps in 1954, I was hired by the National Academy of Sciences to research African and Asian endangered species. This, in turn, led me to become the first staff ecologist of the Brussels-based International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), an organization highly concerned about endangered species.

In the 1950s, I had the good fortune to do field research on the status of species and develop corresponding conservation plans. I organized expeditions into many of the wildest places in the world to determine the status of species such as the Arabian oryx, Syrian wild ass, Asian lion, Kashmir stag, Arabian ostrich, and Javan, Sumatran, and Great Indian rhinos.

My first book, published in England in 1960, was entitled “A Look at Threatened Species”; many of my 300-some subsequent publications have addressed endangered species, either directly or in the context of broader conservation issues.

In 1961, my wife Marty Hayne and I helped organize the Conference on Conservation in Modern African States in Arusha, Tanganyika (now Tanzania). At Arusha, I organized a side meeting to discuss poaching of endangered species. The consensus was that demand from Europe and the United States motivated poachers, and that an international agreement was needed. Two years later, Wolfgang Burhenne (IUCN’s legal advisor and Law Commission chair) and I presented a proposal for IUCN action. It passed unanimously, and over the next years, IUCN developed the basis of what became the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

When Marty and I were with the Smithsonian Institution in the late 1960s, I also served as science advisor to the Joint Senate-House Committee on Environment. I felt that the Endangered Species Conservation Act of 1969 was inadequate to address the needs of the time, so early in 1970, when President Nixon asked me to help start the President’s Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), I saw an opportunity to place endangered species high on the nation’s agenda.

Russell Train, the first chairman of the CEQ, strongly supported my endeavors, and I listed the provisions I thought were needed in a new and much stronger Endangered Species Act. Later, in his 1972 Environmental Message, President Nixon said “I have asked for a new and more effective federal law to protect endangered species of wildlife—by covering species likely to become endangered as well as those more immediately threatened, and by imposing federal penalties for taking of such species.”

There were, of course, many zigs and zags in the route from concept to passage of legislation.

The U.S. Department of the Interior had the lead. Nathaniel Reed, Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks, was dedicated to conservation and was extraordinarily supportive and helpful; his office coordinated preparation of the legislation. I had given them my list of provisions, and they prepared their own proposal for a new Endangered Species Act, which subsequently cleared through the Executive Branch by the Office of Management and Budget.

Then we hit a snag. Some questioned why a revised Endangered Species Act was required and objected to it. However, the new CITES agreement required that each participating nation establish both scientific and management authorities to implement the convention. Consequently, new U.S. endangered species legislation was required to establish these authorities, and this provided a successful argument for the timing of the Endangered Species Act efforts.

The strengthened Endangered Species Act was then submitted to the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee of the House of Representatives. I still felt, though, that the proposed Endangered Species Act was weak. Representative John Dingell, chairman of the committee, was very concerned with conservation, and he and I had discussed a strengthened Endangered Species Act. His key aid Frank Potter and I went to work on the Endangered Species Act text. We added my provisions that had been dropped, and removed all the “weasel words.” For example, we changed “The Secretary may...” to “The Secretary will...,” and wherever a directive was followed by the words, “... in so far as practicable,” we simply deleted them. The result was one of the strongest pieces of legislation ever submitted to Congress. Representative Dingell presented the revised Endangered Species Act, which was passed by the House; a similar version was passed by the Senate. President Nixon signed the bill into law on December 28, 1973.

I have always been quietly satisfied in the knowledge of my role with CITES and Endangered Species Act.

*Please visit [awildsuccess.org](http://awildsuccess.org) for an unabridged version of this essay.*

PROFESSOR OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE,  
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS  
AND PUBLIC POLICY,  
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
**LEE M. TALBOT, PH.D.**



Spending my summers growing up in the New Jersey highlands, I always felt at home with nature and appreciated its beauty and serenity. Among my best memories are my outings with my father, who taught me to identify all of the plants and animals found there.

Now, as a professor at Georgetown University, I have fewer opportunities to spend my hours in the woods. But I have come to appreciate nature in a wholly different guise. Teaching courses based on an understanding of complexity, I have learned that intricate systems such as the economy, our cities, our brains, our cells, and YES, our environment, depend on diversity for their creativity and well-being.

When we lose a species, we, in turn, risk facing a major—perhaps life-threatening—loss for the human species. I am very happy that our country has a strong law like the Endangered Species Act, which can do much to prevent continuing losses of diversity in our natural world.



ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,  
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

**D. LINDA GARCIA, PH.D.**

Red Wolf © Joel Sartore, www.photoark.com



Here on our Virginia farm, we share the land with many animals—some that we see regularly, and some that we never see. Black bears, coyotes, bobcats, red and gray fox, wild turkeys, and all manner of birds and flora roam this land. There are also endangered species here—the smooth purple cone flower and the red-cockaded woodpecker—and they, too, are part of this community. I know they have their own reasons to be here that are equal to ours.

That the land and wildlife around us should be treated and cared for as a community came to me early in life, and stayed with me. My siblings and I grew up exploring the wild places in the West, often with our father as leader—down the Colorado, Salmon, Green, and San Juan rivers, and rambling around in national parks, wilderness areas, or any wild place we could find. I remember so many family evenings around the fire, with readings from Aldo Leopold, Loren Eiseley, and John Muir, reminding us of the uniqueness and mystery of each living thing.

One of my earliest memories of an endangered species was in the early 60s, seeing a bald eagle soaring above us on a trip down the Grand Canyon. They became endangered by the use of the chemical DDT, as did the peregrine falcon and brown pelicans, just as Rachel Carson cautioned us in her writings.

In February of 1967, my father issued the first endangered species list—even before the Endangered Species Act was signed into law. The list included the bald eagle and other significant American icons such as the whooping crane, ivory-billed woodpecker, grizzly bear, Florida panther, American alligator, timber wolf, and red wolf. Now, forty years later, we are successfully saving species from extinction and taking them off the list. The vast majority of species remaining on the list today are stabilizing or improving. And since the passage of the Act, we have lost very few species.

But one only has to look at the public excitement in 2005 and 2006, when some researchers

thought, for sure, that they had “rediscovered” the ivory-billed woodpecker. Countless articles and TV news stories across the country reflected the public’s exhilaration that maybe, after all, we could be absolved of one more fellow creature’s demise. The stories of ivory-billed sightings have reached mythical proportions, and some are still convinced of the woodpecker’s survival in the deep, old-growth forests. Whether or not one believes this survival story, it is a symbol for other creatures that is played out over and over again, every month, every year. Those ivory-billed stories called to me, saying that, in our heart of hearts, we all know that each loss is a break in the chain, a crack in the circle, a tragic beginning without end.



DAUGHTER  
OF FORMER  
SECRETARY  
OF INTERIOR  
STEWART UDALL  
AND PRESIDENT,  
MONTPELIER  
CONSULTING  
**LORI UDALL**

I come from the wilds of northern Wisconsin, where the rambling Chequamegon-Nicolette National Forest sprawls across the landscape. I spent my time watching the animals in that forest, obsessed with figuring out where they were, what they were doing, and the ‘why’ behind it all.

No matter how hard I looked, there were some species I rarely saw. Bobcats and fishers are common in those woods, but they resisted my attempts to intrude on their privacy. My failure to spot those species was a result of youthful impatience. But my failure to spot a single gray wolf was not my fault—Wisconsin’s top predator had been exterminated twenty-two years before I was born.

Two years ago, my family reported sighting a gray wolf trotting across the backyard of my childhood home. The story of how it—and nearly 800 others—returned to once again haunt the timbers of Wisconsin forests is an inspirational one, centered on the Endangered Species Act of 1973. Protected as an endangered species, the nation’s gray wolf population was pulled from the brink of collapse, and slowly moved back into the forests I once roamed.

Today, I work as an ecologist for Computational Ecology and Environmental Science group in Microsoft Research in Cambridge, UK. Our group is tasked with building predictive models of environmental systems. Microsoft

is committed to the principles underlying the Endangered Species Act, and we are the first and only corporate partner of the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s Red List—the most comprehensive and important dataset on threatened and endangered species around the world. Supporting endeavors like this is not just about corporate social responsibility; we are actively recognizing that intact and functioning ecosystems are good for all businesses.

It was Aldo Leopold—led partly by his experience with culling wolves—who wrote that “the key to intelligent tinkering is to keep every cog and wheel.” For the past forty years, the Endangered Species Act has ensured that we adhere to Leopold’s dictum. At Microsoft, we believe we should keep it that way.

ECOLOGIST,  
COMPUTATIONAL ECOLOGY  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
SCIENCE, MICROSOFT

**LUCAS JOPPA, PH.D.**



Conventional wisdom says that you do not know where you are going if you have no plan. You can as easily end up somewhere as well as nowhere. Certainly that was the case in 1989, when I opened Café Patachou, my first restaurant, in Indianapolis, Indiana.

I opened with the singular vision of having a neighborhood café that served the kind of food that I fed my children at home—food that was truly farm fresh and homemade—a radical food philosophy in the late 80s. Truth be known, I opened my first café never having worked in a restaurant—ever. I had no training as a chef or as a business executive; I had managed no one but myself and my young family. I am sure now, as I look back, that I was being managed more than I was doing the managing.



Nor did I know, on that special opening day, that I was pregnant with my third child. I could have as easily ended up going out of business quickly—the equivalent of nowhere. Instead, I ended up somewhere else—the equivalent of where I am, and the company is, today. The difference in those two very distinct results—being nowhere or somewhere—had more to do with having a clearly identifiable, communicated, and obtainable vision that was accompanied by an executable plan.

What was the plan? It was to do things *not* as they were being done in the restaurant industry at that time, but as I thought they *should* be done. My team and I sourced fruit and produce locally and seasonally; we served whole and organic products whenever possible; we supported small family farms and individual businesses. We made food from scratch, and we knew what our ingredients were and where they were from. We treated our staff, our vendors, and our community with respect. We instituted environmental initiatives that were both right for the greater good and good for the business. We grew slowly and strategically. We remained true to the original vision as we expanded, and adjusted the plan as needed. We just celebrated the opening of our twelfth restaurant and the creation of our foundation, The Patachou Foundation. We chose to go somewhere instead of nowhere.

The Endangered Species Act operates much the same way for our wildlife. It is our nation’s master plan. Since it was enacted in 1973, something special has, indeed, happened. We have an amazing endangered species program that protects the most fragile among us, allowing dozens of species to make their way back to a strong recovery after nearly a century of decline. In Indiana alone, the bald eagle population has been restored. Our own Indiana bat and more than half a dozen species of mussels have been protected due to the Endangered Species Act.

I believe that you can allow life to take its course and risk getting somewhere, or risk getting nowhere. I believe that creating plans allows for success, not random luck. We all have opportunities to plan where we want to end up. Clearly, Congress believed the same about our nation’s wildlife heritage. Instead of allowing for the decline of species to continue, Congress wisely stepped in and passed the Endangered Species Act—thus setting a course for recovery, a course for success.

RESTAURATEUR  
AND PRESIDENT,  
PATACHOU INC.

**MARTHA  
HOOVER**

## Humpbacks

There is, all around us,  
this country  
of original fire.

You know what I mean.

The sky, after all, stops at nothing, so something  
has to be holding  
our bodies  
in its rich and timeless stables or else  
we would fly away.

Off Stellwagen  
off the Cape,  
the humpbacks rise. Carrying their tonnage  
of barnacles and joy  
they leap through the water, they nuzzle back under it  
like children  
at play.

They sing, too.  
And not for any reason  
you can't imagine.

Three of them  
rise to the surface near the bow of the boat,  
then dive  
deeply, their huge scarred flukes  
tipped to the air.

We wait, not knowing  
just where it will happen; suddenly  
they smash through the surface, someone begins  
shouting for joy and you realize  
it is yourself as they surge  
upward and you see for the first time  
how huge they are, as they breach,  
and dive, and breach again

through the shining blue flowers  
of the split water and you see them  
for some unbelievable  
part of a moment against the sky—  
like nothing you've ever imagined—  
like the myth of the fifth morning galloping  
out of darkness, pouring  
heavenward, spinning; then

they crash back under those black silks  
and we all fall back  
together into that wet fire, you  
know what I mean.

I know a captain who has seen them  
playing with seaweed, swimming  
through the green islands, tossing  
the slippery branches into the air.

I know a whale that will come to the boat whenever  
she can, and nudge it gently along the bow  
with her long flipper.

I know several lives worth living.

Listen, whatever it is you try  
to do with your life, nothing will ever dazzle you  
like the dreams of your body,

its spirit  
longing to fly while the dead-weight bones

toss their dark mane and hurry  
back into the fields of glittering fire

where everything,  
even the great whale,  
throbs with song.

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## PULITZER PRIZE WINNING POET **MARY OLIVER**



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Ocelot © Joel Sartore, www.photoark.com

How to value a species—or the loss of one? Giant pandas, which are both endangered and adorable-looking, are surely at the high end of the scale. China will lend your national zoo a giant panda for up to \$1 million a year, and it spends far more than that in its attempts to protect the small population of giant pandas that still survive in the wild.

If we can prevent giant pandas from disappearing entirely, most people would consider that money well spent. But what of the thousands of species that don't have the panda's star power? Every ten minutes, another one vanishes forever. Although extinctions are a natural phenomenon on our ever-changing planet, the current rate is about 1,000 times the normal rate. It shows no sign of slowing, and it's no mystery who is responsible: We are.

Unfortunately, things are likely to get worse before they get better. Left unchecked, human-created climate disruption could threaten more than a third of all terrestrial species by 2050. In the United States, the first animal to be officially listed as threatened due to climate disruption was a distant cousin of the giant panda—the polar bear. It will not be the last.

Habitats are shifting and pressures on species are increasing. The scramble for scarce resources is intensifying. In such a world, protections like the Endangered Species Act have become more important than ever. The sound, science-based principles that give the Act its strength are exactly what we need to preserve our wild legacy and maintain biological diversity in the face of an uncertain future.

In 1973, the Endangered Species Act put into law what we knew was the right thing to do. Even when what's right is not what's

easiest, we must not allow greed or politics to cloud that vision. So far, the Endangered Species Act has been tremendously successful, but the work to protect species is far from finished. The jury is still out on how committed we are to helping all living things meet the environmental challenges to come.

To ask what a species is worth is really to ask what life itself is worth. In this sense, the Endangered Species Act is as great a landmark in American values as is the Declaration of Independence. Like that document, the Act states a “self-evident” truth: All life has value—value beyond reckoning. Or, as William Blake put it, “Everything that lives is holy.”

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
SIERRA CLUB

**MICHAEL BRUNE**





Since the passage of the historic Endangered Species Act of 1973, numerous species have avoided extinction because of effective protections issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The preservation of formerly endangered species—such as the bald eagle, a powerful symbol of national pride—demonstrates the widespread success of the Endangered Species Act. While keeping the Act’s successes in mind, it is essential that we continue to be vigilant in protecting species facing the threat of extinction. In order to maintain the effectiveness of this bipartisan legislation, our elected officials must support robust funding for renewed

conservation efforts. By working vigorously to save species facing extinction today, we will leave behind a more vibrant and diverse environment for tomorrow.



CONGRESSMAN  
2005-2007 AND 2010-PRESENT  
**MICHAEL FITZPATRICK**

I am a conservationist. I am also an outdoorsman—I hunt, hike, fish, watch birds, shoot guns, mountain bike, and, every now and again, climb on an off-road vehicle. I am concerned about the welfare of animals. As such, I am hardly unique, but instead representative of many of my generation who prefer to be outside. We fly in the face of the outdoors apathy that supposedly plagues our generation and those younger than us. We enjoy nature in our own fashion, which is often in many different fashions. We embrace a variety of ethics and perspectives.

I am unique, however, in that I am fortunate enough to serve as Conservation Director for the Izaak Walton League of America, a venerable institution founded in 1922 that is a keeper of the flame, of sorts, for conservation policy. And I can speak no more eloquently to the importance of all species, and having tools to maintain



them, than Izaak Walton League members have in their policies. League members—farmers, hunters and anglers, gun owners, outdoors men and women, many of whom are more conservative than not—have been pursuing and passing resolutions since the early 1900s. The resulting policy manual reads like a history of conservation in America—as if your grandparents, or perhaps Aldo Leopold himself, wrote down a blueprint for how they saved the country from ruin, and how we might, too, if we listen to the lessons of the past and improve upon, rather than ignore them.

“Since its inception, the Izaak Walton League has recognized that people are an integral part of the natural world. People are unique, however, due to the relative speed with which we can alter the biosphere and our ability to see the consequences of our actions. The League believes that people can and must play a stewardship role in conserving natural resources and systems at the local, national, and global levels.

Strenuous efforts should be made to prevent the extinction or local extermination of any fish, wildlife, or plant species. Where practical, fish and wildlife species—including predators—should be re-established in areas from which they have been driven by human activity.

The League has supported the passage and implementation of the federal Endangered Species Act, including the listing of plant and animal species,

the protection of habitat, the vigorous enforcement of regulations, and the funding required to carry out the Act.

Decisions to list a species under the Endangered Species Act should be made solely on biological—rather than economic—grounds. Representative examples of the full range of natural ecosystems should be protected. The League recognizes the intrinsic value of predatory species and their important ecological roles. Habitat critical to threatened or endangered species of fish, wildlife, or plants should not be destroyed or adversely modified.

Although Izaak Walton League members are some of America’s most active outdoor recreationists, the League’s policies recognize that conflicts involving wildlife and fisheries should place the highest priority on protecting habitat and sustaining the resource and give the lowest priority to accommodating the needs of the user.

The mission of wildlife conservation is to perpetuate natural habitats that will support abundant wildlife populations, not to preside over the allocation of a vanishing resource.”

CONSERVATION  
DIRECTOR, IZAAK  
WALTON LEAGUE  
OF AMERICA  
**MIKE LEAHY**

When service members deploy to other lands, they see the devastation wrought by governments who do not hold their land in stewardship for future generations. It gives those of us in uniform a unique perspective of the incredible beauty of our own land, and we know that, were it not for the protection of the Endangered Species Act, we would be no different from those countries

that have failed to respect their environment. For us, a country worth defending is a country worth preserving.

MAJOR GENERAL,  
U.S. MARINE CORPS (RETIRED)

**MIKE LEHNERT**



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Louisiana Black Bear © Joel Sartore, www.photoark.com



In a special message to a Democratic Congress in 1972, Republican President Richard Nixon called on the House and Senate to pass legislation protecting endangered species. A year later, Congress responded with the Endangered Species Act, which President Nixon signed into law.

For forty years, the Endangered Species Act has preserved habitat and protected plants, insects, and animals from extinction. However, the Act is only as good as the people enforcing the law.

In recent years, there have been attempts in Congress to roll back the gains made by the Endangered Species Act. One such effort involved a legislative assault that would have prevented the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service from using any funding to list new species under the Act.

Working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, we defeated this provision known as the Extinction Rider. If the Extinction Rider had been in effect four decades ago, the American bald eagle, our national bird, would be extinct. Had it passed this time around, the future existence of today's threatened and endangered species like the polar bear, American crocodile, and green sea turtle would be in jeopardy.

It is our responsibility to be good stewards of Earth and prevent the extinction of wildlife, fish, plants, and insects. The sad truth is that once we lose a species, we will never get it back. That is why we must do everything we can to protect and restore endangered species.

Throughout my career, I have worked on efforts to restore the habitats of endangered Coho and Chinook salmon, and steelhead trout. While in the California State Senate, I wrote the Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Act, which provided significant multi-year funding for projects dedicated to the restoration of salmon and steelhead watersheds and streams.

In 2002, after severely low water levels resulted in a massive fish die-off in the Klamath River, the Department of the Interior (DOI) still wouldn't release more water to allow the fish to spawn. To get their attention, I dropped off 500 pounds of dead salmon at DOI.

The protection of threatened and endangered salmon is still ongoing. Recovering our iconic salmon is critical for the environment, as well as for the fishing industry they support. This is why I am working with my colleagues in Congress to pass the Klamath Basin Economic Restoration Act. If enacted into law, the Act would enable

Coho salmon to reclaim 68 miles of historic habitat, steelhead would regain 420 miles of historic habitat, and commercially harvested Chinook salmon production would increase by more than 80 percent.

It was a spirit of bipartisanship that brought us the Endangered Species Act forty years ago. By working together in that same spirit, we can protect and recover our endangered and threatened species so our kids and grandkids can enjoy the same abundance of wildlife that we have today.

CONGRESSMAN  
1999-PRESENT

**MIKE THOMPSON**



It is easy to forget that the world is a small place. We aren't just citizens of our countries; we are citizens of the world. And one small action on our part can have consequences—even hundreds or thousands of miles away. As an ambassador, I see this in my work every day.

This is especially true in the natural world. We humans may recognize strict divides in our political boundaries, but our natural ecosystems and our wildlife don't distinguish between the different lines on a map. For instance, Ecuador shares the Amazon rainforest with Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru. Some of our whale species, such as the humpback whale, don't only cruise the waters of the Galapagos Islands; they're found throughout the entire world. And many of our birds grace us with their beauty only in the winter, moving on to the United States for the summer.

Some of these imperiled birds—such as the peregrine falcon, the brown pelican, and the piping plover—which travel between the United States and Ecuador, have become great success stories of the Endangered Species Act. We want all of our shared species to be similarly successful. Thanks to the passage of the

Endangered Species Act in the United States, success is likely.

But the Act doesn't just protect the species we share; it even protects the species that are found only in other countries. In Ecuador, a country which has an amazing number of species, we are particularly aware of the many dangers that plants and wildlife face. Sadly, Ecuador's plants and wildlife don't just fascinate scientists, but motivate unscrupulous collectors, as well. To protect imperiled plants and wildlife worldwide, the Endangered Species Act lists hundreds of foreign species that are imperiled in their home country, and are now banned from being imported into the United States. Ecuadorian species such as the Floreana tree finch, Goeldi's marmoset, giant otter, Galapagos tortoise, Galapagos petrel, Galapagos penguin, and Galapagos hawk are afforded extra protections, thanks to the Endangered Species Act.

Being an ambassador is all about seeing the other's point of view, and giving a voice to those you represent in order to protect their interests in the world. I do that for Ecuador. I am Ecuador's ambassador. But I believe we can all be wildlife ambassadors.

## AMBASSADOR OF ECUADOR

### NATHALIE CELY



When I moved to the United States in the late 1960s from Vienna, Austria, I was surprised and disappointed by the highly processed, chemically laden foods eaten here. In realizing the connection between the foods we eat and personal health—and the health of our environment—I made it my mission to promote healthy, wholesome, organic foods. Today, I'm proud to own Nora's, the first certified organic restaurant in the United States.

In the 1970s, I invested an enormous amount of time and effort to seek out organic and natural farmers in Virginia, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Establishing those connections jumpstarted the farm-to-table movement, and I introduced other local chefs to these farmers, whose businesses prospered. This success later inspired me to initiate FRESHFARM Markets, Washington, DC's first producer-only farmers' market.

I'd like to think that my supporting local organic farmers has made an impact. With the publication of books like *Silent Spring*, it became clear that indiscriminate pesticide use was harming America's wildlife. Among the hardest hit areas was the Chesapeake Bay, where species such as bald eagles and peregrine falcons declined, and sea turtles, amphibians, and fish also suffered the consequences of pesticide exposure.

As a chef, I find the threats to fish particularly disturbing. Through my work with SeaWeb, I've been active in spreading the word about pesticide impacts and the effects of overfishing on our oceans and its inhabitants.

While I was doing my part to protect nature, Congress passed the Endangered Species Act. Many of these imperiled species have made a comeback. For instance, I can now see bald eagles on the Potomac River, just a stone's throw from my restaurant.

Today at Restaurant Nora, I serve a variety of wild foods—Bristol Bay sockeye salmon, Rhode Island calamari, Maine Dayboat scallops, Chincoteague black bass, and foraged ramps and morels. This incredible bounty, and the certified organic produce and meats raised by our local farmers, is available because of our joint efforts to protect nature.

As a chef, my connection to nature is so clear, every day. I live, breathe, and eat it. You do too.

## CHEF

### NORA POUILLON



As an executive producer of documentaries and reality television shows, I pull back the curtain on the dark side of humanity. Crime, deception, greed—I’ve seen it all. It isn’t pretty. And I see it in the unfortunate chapter of our history with animals. We actually drove species to extinction.

But the amazing thing is that we took a look around and recognized that we couldn’t do that anymore. We, as a country, passed a law that said, “We can do better than this. We *are* better than this.”

And now we can see the most amazing wildlife right here in our own country. Through my work, I’ve had some unforgettable exposure to wildlife up close. I will never forget the grandeur of the grizzlies in Glacier National Park, or wolves running wild in the Grand Tetons. It’s at once humbling and inspiring to be in the presence of some of the most majestic creatures on the planet.

The Endangered Species Act may be an act to save wildlife, but it is also a celebration of the good in humanity. It is about our expression of hope, about our desire to make the world a more beautiful place. It is a law that expresses the best of our inner nature. And for that, I’m thankful.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, TELEVISION  
**PAMELA DEUTSCH**



Northwest Salmon are a Northwest icon. As Tim Egan famously said, “the Northwest is anywhere a salmon can get to.” But the iconic Northwest salmon are also in peril; thirteen species of Columbia and Snake River salmon and steelhead have been listed as endangered over the past twenty years.

Salmon are also an economic mainstay, unique among endangered species in the breadth and depth of their value. Estimates of Northwest salmon-dependent jobs range from 10,000 to 20,000—the cumulative tally of tribal, sport, and commercial fishing; tourism and outdoor recreation activities; and food businesses. Thus, the endangerment of salmon also endangers economies in five states along western rivers and coastlines. This creates a significant common interest among fishing, conservation, and business people, and other groups across the Northwest.

Political orientations differ from group to group, and cultural differences among us are sometimes profound, yet the decline of salmon—and the scope of changes required to safeguard them—have drawn many diverse people together. As we’ve tackled issues, we’ve had to learn how to put our differences aside to work for a greater good. We have learned that we have far greater power as a coalition than we do as individuals, or even as separate organizations.

We accomplished much, though not all, of this collaborative work through the Save Our Wild Salmon Coalition, where I worked for twenty-two years. We’ve made progress for salmon—not enough progress, yet, to restore any of the imperiled stocks—but enough to buy precious years for the most endangered of them, and enough to begin stabilizing some populations.

While many people have worked hard, despite their differences, to achieve this progress, I give the fundamental credit to the salmon themselves. The power of the connections they make—between land and water, river and ocean, tribal and non-tribal, economy and ecology, and upstream and downstream communities—is the source of the common ground we’ve found and the common power we’ve used on their behalf.



And the Endangered Species Act? Fishing and business people have learned that the Act can be a very effective tool for jobs and economies. Conservationists have learned it can—and I would say *must*—be a door through which we leave our comfort zones to partner with others whose help we need in order to protect these species. Many elected leaders and some of our early opponents have learned that, while the Act may sometimes be a force for disruptive change, it is also a force for social and economic progress.

For Northwest salmon, the Endangered Species Act has been and remains a tool for economic as well as ecological progress. But there’s also reciprocity: salmon, and the pattern of connections they make, have helped inform and deepen how we in the Northwest have learned to use the Act. And more: we have made significant strides to help people and their communities by effectively employing the Endangered Species Act to help salmon.

CO-FOUNDER  
AND FORMER  
EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR,  
SAVE OUR WILD  
SALMON  
**PAT FORD**

In 1988, fifteen years after passage of the Endangered Species Act, the Society for Conservation Biology (SCB) was formed to advance the same goal: Namely, conserving endangered species and the ecosystems on which species depend. Most of SCB's founders were professional ecologists, and our job was to understand how the natural world worked. For many of us, that meant documenting the decline of biodiversity—a most dismal form of science. The Endangered Species Act, and its requirement for science-based recovery plans, opened the door to the new, hopeful, and exciting science of improving how the natural world worked—the science of conservation biology.

I have served on the recovery teams for the ocelot and the jaguar, and I have helped implement the recovery plan for the Mexican spotted owl. I have had opportunities to design wildlife corridors for at-risk species including desert tortoises, kit foxes, and desert bighorn sheep. My career, like the careers of many conservation biologists, has included these wonderful opportunities precisely because of the Endangered Species Act. Even when we are not paid for some of these activities (such as serving on recovery teams), our lives and our science are enriched, and the world becomes a better place.

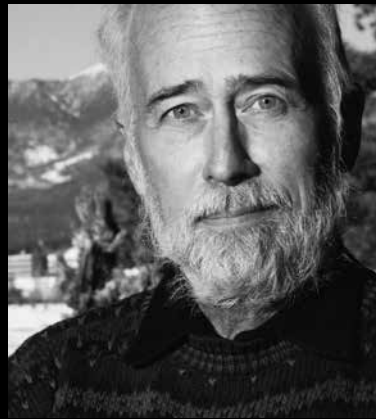
The Act also helped create a culture in which thousands of conservation scientists are comfortable with advocacy and are free from the petty obsession with pure objectivity that rules some scientific disciplines. Over our 25-year history, supermajorities of SCB members have consistently expressed support for activism and advocacy. Using science to recover species is simply helping the government obey the law—a form of advocacy easily embraced by scientists. To paraphrase former SCB President Reed Noss: *Wanting to help society solve a hard problem is advocacy, and it is nothing to be ashamed of.* A law mandating recovery plans helped us become the Society FOR (not “about”) Conservation Biology. By enshrining values into law, the Endangered Species Act helped us realize that

we do not develop credibility by quietly publishing results and letting the facts speak for themselves. Instead, we become credible when we devote time to public service, frankly articulate our values, and adhere to the scientific virtues of transparency, honesty, consideration of all evidence, and openness to alternative interpretations of evidence.

On behalf of thousands of professional conservation scientists, thank you, Endangered Species Act.

## PRESIDENT, SOCIETY FOR CONSERVATION BIOLOGY 2011-2013

### PAUL BEIER



Following the end of World War II in 1945, the United States experienced twenty-five years of overwhelming development. Priceless habitat and wilderness was lost in those prosperous years to bulldozing for new suburbs and urban sprawl.

The young people who celebrated the first Earth Day in 1970 changed all that—and the nation's attitude—when they defeated seven out of the twelve incumbent congressmen they named as “The Dirty Dozen.” When Congress convened in January, 1971, a healthy majority in both parties had become “environmentalists.”

The result was a period of four years of bipartisan cooperation between a Republican president and a Democratic Congress, and passage of legislation to ensure clean water and clean air. Among all of the environmental protection laws passed during those years, the Endangered Species Act stands as a landmark. This Act was intended primarily to preserve the habitat for endangered species, and it has worked well. Since 1973, the Act has kept millions of acres of natural landscape from being developed into wide-ranging housing and industrial tracts, and has retained open space for the benefit of our children and grandchildren. Most important, though, is that the Act serves its primary purpose: Protecting threatened and endangered species, including our once-endangered national symbol, the American bald eagle.

That Republicans in the House have now declared their intention to gut the Act is a tragedy. Hopefully, young Americans will again rise up, as they did forty-three years ago, to now tell Congress to retain the Endangered Species Act in full and effective force.



The key sponsor of the Act was John Dingell, Democrat of Michigan—then Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Fish and Wildlife, and now Dean of the House. I was his Ranking Republican, and of all my work in fifteen years in the House, I consider co-authorship of the Endangered Species Act as the greatest contribution I have made in my lifetime to welfare of this nation.

## CONGRESSMAN 1967-1983

### PETE McCLOSKEY



When, as young teenager, I stood in early spring on a windswept hillside above Baker Beach in San Francisco and discovered a single bush of a sprawling, nearly prostrate manzanita—I had no idea that I was looking at the only surviving individual of its kind. I enjoyed finding it, but failed to understand that it was one of many kinds of organisms on the brink of extinction. To me, plants and animals were where they were, farms were in their place, and cities were cities—that was that. There were about 11 million people living in California, 158 million in the United States, and 2.6 billion in the entire world. Now the corresponding figures are 38 million in California, 320 million in the United States, and 7.2 billion worldwide. Consumption levels have risen even more rapidly than population levels, and we are using our resources much faster than they can be replenished, thus driving species to extinction at an ever-increasing rate. The problem of extinction has become obvious to everyone who cares!

In the 1960s, the need for conservation started to rise in our collective consciousness, and we began to understand that we were dealing with a problem that would ultimately affect us all. By the early 1970s, this realization led to the enactment of basic environmental legislation by Congress, and its signing into law by President Nixon. Among these laws, the Endangered Species Act stands out as being of fundamental importance, providing a means for federal registration of species on the brink of extinction, and then mandating the formulation of plans to protect them. The Act remains unique globally.

Throughout the world, species are now disappearing at thousands of times the historical rate; as many as half of them may be gone by the year 2100. In the United States, however, the Endangered Species Act, along with our other fundamental environmental legislation, is helping to protect many species. We base our livelihood on biological species—obtaining all of our food, most of our medicines, our ecological services of incalculable value, and the beauty that enriches our lives—from the species that surround us. Throwing them away in exchange for an explosively growing population, impossibly high demands for consumption, and our continuing use of destructive technologies is not only morally indefensible, it is incredibly stupid.

Will our domestic conservation programs survive the pressures of the future? We do not know, but we do know that we will be able to continue to save only what we have already saved. Our strong support of the Endangered Species Act will allow children to continue to enjoy the personal wonder of their own discoveries in nature, and it will help us all survive so that we may enjoy the wonderful gifts that our civilization has produced in ways that can be maintained and improved forever.

*Please visit [footprintnetwork.org](http://footprintnetwork.org) for more information on consumption levels.*

PRESIDENT  
EMERITUS,  
MISSOURI  
BOTANICAL  
GARDEN,  
ST. LOUIS

**PETER H.  
RAVEN**



Wyoming Toad © Susan Middleton and David Liittschwager



More than half of us in the United States will fight cancer in our lifetime, and we rely on nature for cures. Since 60 percent of all new medicines—including many cancer treatments—come originally from nature, the human race cannot afford to drive species to extinction. Now is the time to strengthen and enforce the Endangered Species Act.

And while we work to save ourselves, we are called to think bigger than any one species. We are called to defend the most important ecosystems—the safety nets that enable all life to exist on this fragile Earth.

For instance, ancient forests have not only produced some of our most important medicines—including the cancer drug Taxol—they are also home to around two-thirds of all plant and animal species found on land. Furthermore, these forests support millions of people who depend on them for survival, and they are vitally important to the health of our planet as a whole, especially when it comes to regulating the climate.

Another important ecosystem is the Arctic Ocean—the world's last real frontier, and home to bowhead whales, polar bears, seals, and walruses. This ocean is getting a beating from climate change, and as climate change melts the Arctic's ice, we face a choice. Will we add insult to injury by allowing drilling, overfishing, and pollution to further threaten Arctic life?



It is clear that by saving species and their habitats, we are saving ourselves. We will rely on the Endangered Species Act—and you—in this fight. The time is now.

CEO, GREENPEACE

**PHIL RADFORD**

My family has a proud history in conservation and a particular passion for our oceans—the life support system of what my grandfather called “our water planet.” As a member of the third generation of Cousteaus who are carrying on the spirit of my family’s legacy, I have made it my mission to help people recognize their ability to change the world—through environmental advocacy, youth education, books, films, and even financial markets. I believe in the power of people to build a sustainable world, and laws like the Endangered Species Act have made my job easier.

President Nixon and the writers of the Act understood that protecting our nation’s native species is a vital part of preserving the fragile ecosystems that make up this great country. Part of preserving these species means ensuring that their habitats are maintained. It is this aspect of the law that speaks to me most strongly, and that most affects my work.

Given the growing impacts from climate change, that old phrase seems to ring true more than ever: *We are all in the same boat*. And, despite the climate events that have threatened our seas, I look to the words of my grandfather to guide me in my life: “If we were logical, the future would be bleak, indeed. But we are more than logical. We are human beings, and we have faith, and we have hope,

and we can work.” With the help of groundbreaking legislation like the Endangered Species Act, I believe that we can protect our environment today, and for generations to come.



EXPLORER, SOCIAL  
ENTREPRENEUR,  
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATE

**PHILIPPE  
COUSTEAU**

Statement on signing the Endangered Species Act: “I have today signed S. 1983, the Endangered Species Act of 1973. At a time when Americans are more concerned than ever with conserving our natural resources, this legislation provides the Federal Government with needed authority to protect an irreplaceable part of our national heritage—threatened wildlife.

This important measure grants the Government both the authority to make early identification of endangered species and the means to act quickly and thoroughly to save them from extinction. It also puts into effect the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora signed in Washington on March 3, 1973.



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. I congratulate the 93<sup>rd</sup> Congress for taking this important step toward protecting a heritage, which we hold in trust to countless future generations of our fellow citizens. Their lives will be richer, and America will be more beautiful in the years ahead, thanks to the measure that I have the pleasure of signing into law today.”

**PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON**

We Americans are too good not to be able to do two things at the same time: Have a vibrant economy and way of life, while preserving our natural world—our land, our water, our air, and all flora and fauna, both large and small. There are practical as well as ethical reasons for doing the latter. But at the highest level, conservation and preservation are deeply linked to our spiritual calling and duty: To protect and preserve creation,



and responsibly convey it, unharmed, to the generations that will follow us.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL, U.S. MARINE CORPS (RETIRED)

**RICK KELLY**

Consider America without the grizzly bear, gray wolf, ocelot, Florida manatee, woodland caribou. The bald eagle, whooping crane, peregrine falcon, brown pelican, piping plover, spotted owl, wood stork, white-faced ibis, roseate tern, snail kite, golden-cheeked warbler. The desert tortoise, California red-legged frog, and American crocodile. Four sturgeon and seven trout species, and several Chinook, coho, and sockeye salmon populations. A lengthening list of clams, snails, beetles, butterflies. Hine's emerald dragonfly, and the Nashville crayfish. Hundreds of wildflowers and other plants, including more than a dozen fern species. And so many, many more.

What are endangered species?

Endangered species are the warmth, joy, and glory of being alive amid the vast diversity of living things—big and small, delicate and mighty. They are the vital ingredients of landscapes whose resulting harmony is a welcome counterpoint to the chaos of modern human existence. They are the instruments that make the music of nature, producing a symphony delightful to the ears and soothing to stress-filled minds.

Endangered species are the memories of childhood, the stuff that carefree sunny afternoons were made of. They are the beetles and snails, the butterflies and dragonflies, endlessly pursued and carefully captured to be admired in mason jars with freshly picked grass and newly aerated lids.

Endangered species are the rhythm of the seasons. They are the migrating birds whose sweet songs announce each spring, the wildflowers that scent and color the summer meadow, the earth-toned leaves that fall on crisp autumn mornings, and the tracks of predator and prey acting out age-old dramas across the winter snow.

Endangered species are the inspiration for countless books, songs, poems, paintings, photographs, and sculptures that enrich our culture beyond measure. Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, Robert Service, John Muir, A.B. Guthrie, Emily Dickinson, Rachel Carson, Aldo Leopold, Wallace Stegner, John James Audubon, Ansel Adams, Frederic Remington, Charlie Russell, Aaron Copland, and many more, have created inspiring works that are tribute a to a natural world now at risk.

Endangered species are the essence of wild nature. They are the hunter and hunted, whose behavior has determined the characteristics of countless animals—making bison tough, antelope swift, and mountain goats nimble. They are the excitement and adventure that only wildness can offer.

Endangered species are the frontier challenges that shaped the unique American character. They are the at-risk survivors of the clash between ever-advancing civilization and constantly retreating nature, but also the salvation of that civilization which gains perspective, vitality, and balance from a world where ultimate freedom and independence still prevail.

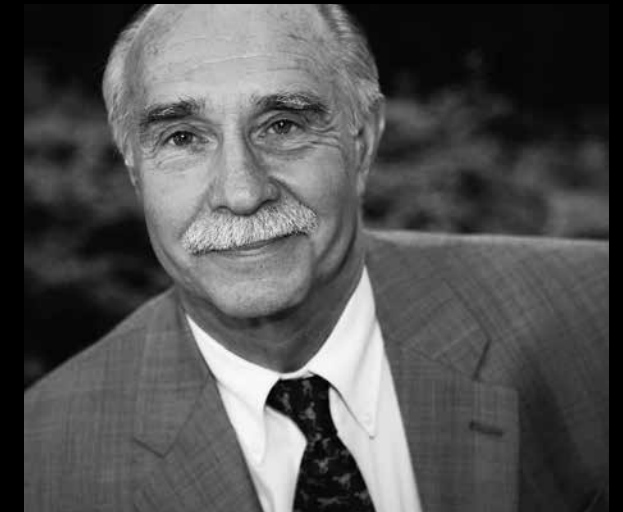
Endangered species are a warning that the margin between existence and extinction is narrowing, and that millions of years of evolutionary processes are being forever altered. They are a signal that the web of life of the future will be much less rich and complex, with uncertain consequences for all species, including our own.

Endangered species are a reminder that all living things are part of creation and have their own dignity and intrinsic worth, apart from any value that we might bestow. But they are also species threatened by a fate worse than death, now surviving only precariously in life's shadows, midway between being and not being—innocent victims of human actions at odds with true humanity.

That is what endangered species are today. Their tomorrow depends upon society's willingness to adopt a wiser, more compassionate, and morally superior view of progress. So does our own.

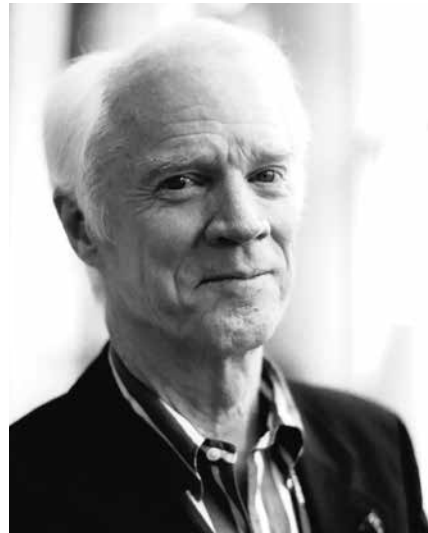
PRESIDENT EMERITUS OF  
DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE,  
CONSULTANT ON AFRICAN  
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

**RODGER  
SCHLICKEISEN**



Earth is still the only spot in the Universe we know that supports life. Not just life, but intelligent, self-aware life. Part of intelligence is recognizing that the only way we humans emerged from the explosion of life over time, and the only way we survive today, is by interacting with the great diversity of life in which we are immersed. Without that diversity, we would disappear. With intelligence and self-awareness comes responsibility. The impact and power of our species is obvious, looking back at our beautiful

Earth from space. The responsible exercise of our intelligence and power mandates that we control our behavior in order to preserve the diversity of life on which we clearly depend.



ASTRONAUT AND CHAIRMAN  
EMERITUS, B612 FOUNDATION

**RUSSELL L.  
SCHWEICKART**

As a young child growing up on a large wheat farm in rural southeastern Kansas, I often walked the short distance to the Missouri state line with my brother to explore the abandoned strip mines on the other side of the railroad track. We imagined that we were walking on the stark surface of another planet—the hills and the gravel pits with their grainy craters were in such sharp contrast to the lush, horizontal green of the nearby wheat fields cultivated by my family for four generations.

On our way toward the mines one day, we looked, out of habit, into a large drainage pipe and discovered a den of young wolf pups. Excited by this once-in-a-lifetime discovery, we rushed back to our farmhouse and told my great uncle, who promptly rounded up his friends and accompanied me back to the site. At the tender age of nine or ten, I had no idea that they wanted to do anything other than to share in my excitement, and I thought the guns they carried with them were for protection from the adult members of the pack.

The county had put a bounty on wolves that year, though, and my uncle and his companions promptly and unceremoniously fired directly into the culvert tunnel, killing the pups. The men dragged out the tiny bodies, cutting their ears off in front of me and exclaiming excitedly about how much

money the little bloody pieces of fur and cartilage represented—those pieces hacked off so callously from the small, limp creatures that were as innocent as I had been, prior to my watching this horrifying and life-changing massacre. I was left with a depth of guilt, too, that has informed my life-long concern for not just wolves, but for all species with whom we share this fragile planet.

Over the next ten years, wolves became non-existent in the Kansas countryside. The state eventually banned the shooting of hawks, which had been hunted to near-extinction during my later teenage years. By that time, the natural predators of rabbits became so scarce that the rabbit population burgeoned and became a nuisance to local farmers. As a young girl, I witnessed this microcosmic harbinger of the future, personally seeing how the destruction of wolves, and then hawks,



directly affected the balance, diversity, and stability of the entire ecosystem by allowing other species to proliferate without the natural checks and balances afforded by critical predators.

I often think back to that idyllic Kansas countryside in which I grew up, and I relive my young and sudden recognition that, in a more perfect world, the survival of one species should never be sacrificed in order for another to profit. That more perfect world was ushered in forty years ago when the Endangered Species Act became law. The Act has weathered many assaults over the years, and as it faces new challenges today, we must stand together to maintain and strengthen the Act. New generations of wolf pups should be entitled to thrive, as a vital and integral species within a much larger ecosystem, and it is only with our moral and ethical integrity—as expressed by the Endangered Species Act—that they will be able to do so.

ANIMAL RIGHTS  
ADVOCATE,  
EDITOR,  
RECORDING  
ARTIST

**SAVANA  
MOORE**



When we launched Honest Tea in 1998, the only assets we had were five thermoses, an empty Snapple bottle with a label pasted on it, and the name “Honest Tea” (though the thermoses were actually on loan). Our beginnings were modest, but our vision was bold: We wanted to create a delicious, healthier drink, produced with a corporate consciousness about the way the ingredients were grown. We always knew the enterprise would be about more than moving cases—we wanted “Honest” to stand for a different way of doing business—a brand that is what it says it is, and a company that

strives for authenticity in the way it treats its customers, its stakeholders, and the natural environment.

The most meaningful environmental commitment we’ve made has been converting our entire tea product line to qualify for USDA Organic certification; we made this commitment when we introduced the world’s first organic bottled tea in 1999. It took us six years to develop the supply chain so that we could make the rest of our bottled teas organic, but we knew it was a commitment that would resonate with our consumers. Since 2004,

when we converted our entire tea line to USDA organic certification, our sales have grown fifteen-fold. In 2012, we purchased 4.9 million pounds of organic ingredients, which is enough to cover 2,000 football fields (or 4,875 acres). Our mindfulness about the natural world has not held our business back at all. In fact, it’s one of the reasons we’ve thrived.

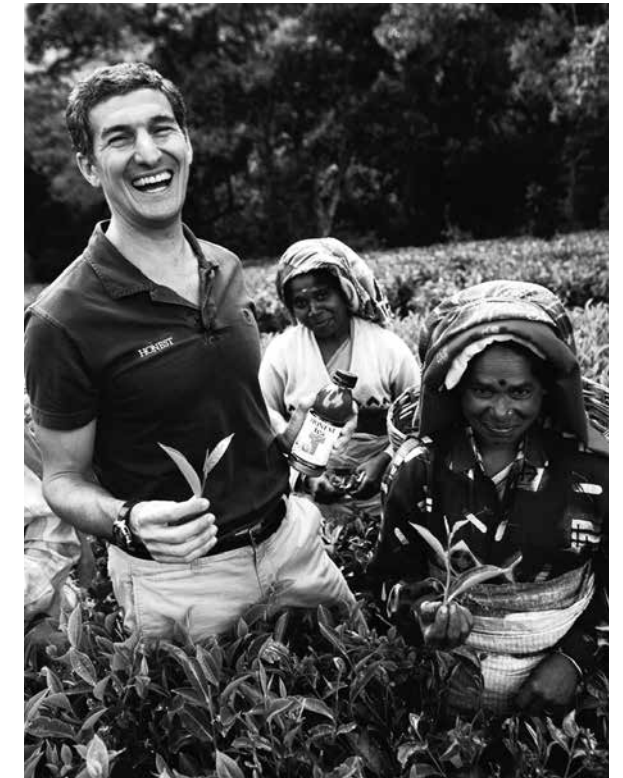
Tea leaves are grown all around the world in subtropical countries where the climate supports incredible wildlife biodiversity. As in many parts of the world, the wildlife in these areas is threatened or endangered

by habitat degradation, including pollution and urbanization. For instance, the Kaziranga National Park in Assam, India, is home to endangered species such as the Bengal tiger, Asian elephant and one-horned Indian rhinoceros. Following the deaths of elephants near non-organic tea estates bordering the wildlife sanctuary, officials and locals have called for a no-pesticide zone around the park.

By insisting on organic tea from our suppliers, we are doing our part to help keep these ecosystems free of synthetic pesticides, fertilizers, and other potential toxins. Our commitment to organics helps create a healthier, honest relationship with our customers and our planet.

CEO, HONEST TEA

**SETH GOLDMAN**



Carbon pollution is causing unprecedented ecological shifts, which are happening too quickly to allow life all over the planet to adapt. In the history of geologic time, there has never before been recorded such a rapid world-wide increase in atmospheric carbon and ocean acidity. That's why the Endangered Species Act is so important. For four decades, the Act has helped scientists and conservation agencies use our God-given talents and intelligence to protect God's creation. Today, those protections are more vital than ever. Forty years ago, we made a promise to do what we could to shield



Earth's animals, insects, and plants from extinction. It's up to all of us to live up to the promise of the Endangered Species Act.

SENATOR 2007-PRESENT

**SHELDON WHITEHOUSE**

An architect designs how you live, how you move in your house, and even how you connect with nature and with culture. Do you gossip with the neighbors on your front porch? Do you throw the windows open in spring? Do you have huge parties in your great room? Do you cook all summer long on your back deck?

The decisions an architect makes in designing your house impacts your behavior. And a good architect will consider how the living world works in making his or her design decisions. Instead of designing to dominate the environment, a good architect finds ways of mimicking natural processes and living in harmony with them. I call this *ecologic*.

Congress works the same way, except on a grand scale. With foresight, Congress can improve all of our lives—not just yours and mine, but the lives of the smallest creatures to the mega-charismatic animals. In 1973, Congress did just that. When it passed the Endangered Species Act, Congress decided that we, as Americans, wouldn't try to dominate species to the point where we would let them go extinct. Instead, we'd find ways of living in harmony.

In a sense, Congress broke down the barriers between humans and nature. Congress declared that it was no longer "us" against "them," but all of us sharing this incredible planet. And in so doing, Congress helped deepen the soul of our nation.

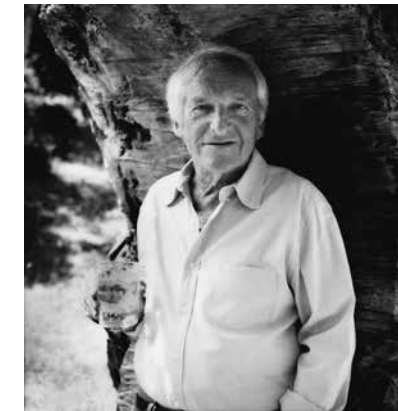
About the same time, I began a lifetime of breaking down the barriers between where we live and nature. Some call me the founder of eco-architecture and design. As the state architect for California in the 1970s, I introduced the concept of ecological design into major building projects. I showed that a truly beautiful building, a building with soul, was one that coexists with its surroundings.

As a Californian, I know the Endangered Species Act has been especially important to protecting our wildlife. With the second highest number of imperiled species in the country, we Californians must be particularly careful to consider imperiled wildlife before building. And for my clients, having an endangered species in the neighborhood does not diminish value; it enhances their experience.

Living as I do, not far from Point Reyes National Seashore, I can't think of anything greater than sharing my own neighborhood with leatherback sea turtles, Coho salmon, California red-legged frogs, salt marsh harvest mice, stellar sea lions, humpback whales, southern sea otters, and our endangered local oysters in Drake's Estero.

I view our Endangered Species Act as a testament to our continued ability to wonder at the natural world.

AUTHOR, ARCHITECT,  
TEACHER, AND VISIONARY  
**SIM VAN DER RYN**



Have you ever had the chance to stand on bluff of California’s Big Sur Coast and see a condor glide by? Have you been able to stand beside Oregon’s Columbia River and see the crimson salmon swim up to spawn? Have you seen the Hawaiian Koʻolua flower blooming in a forest? Have your friends, children, or grandchildren relayed, with excitement, how they saw free-tailed bats that launch in the evenings from Austin’s Congress Avenue Bridge?

While there are many scientific reasons—as well as a growing list of business arguments—to conserve, restore, and maintain biodiversity, perhaps the most compelling stem from another source. It is the images that we hold in our minds, the stories that we share after our forays into nature, as well as people’s individual, ethical sense of what is right. These more personal elements may be some of the most powerful wellsprings of action on biodiversity. They can be easily supported by rigorous scientific

studies, and increasingly by business cases for action.

For me, it is the feeling—in my heart and in my throat—when I stand at the edge of a wetland holding hands with my two young children and watch birds take flight. It is the total silence of my boys, and their enraptured gazes. It is magic. It is a key part of the essence of life, and sharing it with those whom I love.

What is this all about? It is about biodiversity, as well as conserving, restoring, and maintaining species and habitats—endangered and non-endangered alike. And ultimately, it is about holding in our minds, in our hearts, the bigger context of life and work. For all of us, life is about balance—of personal and professional, of intellectual and emotional—as much as it is about following the rules and making new rules.

When the Endangered Species Act was passed, it was a clear vote in the direction of creating new rules which

valued the diversity of nature, even as economic systems reflected little, if any, monetary value for nature. Passage of the Act signaled the importance of taking the long view, and considering national—as well as ecological and even personal—history.

We have come a long way over the past forty years, as leading businesses are now passing aspirational corporate goals to have net neutral, or even net positive, impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems. Business people are finding that these aspirational “man on the moon” type goals can focus attention within their companies and catalyze innovation. Corporate discussions suddenly have permission to expand beyond what is happening today to include what should be happening over time, and even the question: “What if we did things differently?” Embracing innovation in all aspects of business offers the potential for significant positive returns, particularly when linked to net positive biodiversity impacts.

The Endangered Species Act in many ways can be seen as a path breaker, showing what is needed and what is possible. Perhaps the best way to think about the last forty years of work under the Act is through the lens of the famous Mark Twain quote: “Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn’t do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails.” The Endangered Species Act has been a key element in beginning to change business as usual, and to protect that which we all rely upon. In many ways, the Act has offered up new sails to catch new winds.

Today, for politicians and businesspeople alike, the take-away is clear: Continue to support—in every way—policies and actions that foster conservation and restoration of well-functioning ecosystems that are rich in biodiversity. The path may not always be apparent, but the returns are likely to be significant in the forests, grasslands, deserts, and other ecosystems that we will be able to walk through, holding hands with those whom we love.

DIRECTOR, BIODIVERSITY  
AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES,  
BUSINESS FOR SOCIAL  
RESPONSIBILITY  
**SISSEL WAAGE**



“Think of the Northwest, and salmon soon come to mind.”  
Carl Safina, *The Soul Who Swims*

Here in the Pacific Northwest, we are blessed with some of the richest, most biodiverse forestlands and marine habitats in the world. These ecosystems have been the backbone of our local communities and economies for generations.

Two centuries ago, an estimated 16 million salmon and steelhead were returning to the Columbia River Basin every year, nourishing native peoples, hundreds of other species, and the very forests themselves. Today, catastrophic declines in salmon populations, largely due to industrial development, have caused over two dozen distinct populations of Pacific salmon to become endangered or threatened. Salmon need healthy ecosystems—from headwaters to blue water—and their listing under the Endangered Species Act has touched the full landscape of the Pacific Northwest.

At Ecotrust, we see urgency in building up an economy that restores nature and invests in people. The critical regulations that the Endangered Species Act put into place have been instrumental in creating an environment where restoration can take root and a more natural model of development can flourish.

Investing in habitat restoration not only delivers long-term social and environmental benefits, but real economic impact,



as well. According to a recent University of Oregon study, restoration activities create more new jobs than comparable investments in other sectors of our economy. In fact, in Oregon alone, over 6,000 jobs and \$900 million in economic output were generated by restoration activities between 2001 and 2010.

And we know that investing in natural capital pays off. Ecotrust Forest Management (EFM), a forestland investment management and advisory company, has acquired, with investor capital, over 15,000 acres of forestland across the Northwest in order to demonstrate this integrated approach. EFM considers all values inherent in a natural forest ecosystem, and integrates the production of timber with healthy ecosystem practices, ensuring clean water, carbon storage, and habitat for endangered species like the northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet. Conservation finance tools like carbon offsets, tax credits, and easements are critical components of this strategy, and allow EFM to generate long-term social, financial, and environmental value.

Economic innovations like this that restore nature and create more resilient, long-term value for our communities would not be possible without the Endangered Species Act and its protection of our rich natural heritage and the critical ecosystems we need to live well in the years to come.

FOUNDER AND CHAIR,  
ECOTRUST  
**SPENCER B. BEEBE**

PRESIDENT,  
ECOTRUST  
**ASTRID J. SCHOLZ**

California Condor © Susan Middleton and David Liittschwager



The Endangered Species Act turns forty this year, and for the past thirty years it has been my North Star, guiding my work as a photographer. Early on, I realized that most of the species on the endangered species list were unknown to me and, I suspected, to most people. This motivated my odyssey to make portraits of rare and endangered species, which continues to this day. During all my years photographing endangered species, one species stands out from all the others: the California condor.

I had to wait the longest time to gain permission to photograph this species, and once it was granted, I stayed with the condor longer than with any other species: Seven years and seven days. I first attempted to gain access in early 1987, just after the last wild bird was captured and placed with the remaining twenty-six condors in the breeding colony at the Los Angeles Zoo and San Diego Wild Animal Park. I was unable to visit the facility during this critical period, as unnecessary human contact was forbidden in an effort to encourage the birds to breed.

I resumed my efforts to photograph living condors in 1990, when I learned that the breeding program was showing signs of success. I was collaborating with David Liittschwager on a project to photograph one hundred North American endangered species. By this time, there were forty condors and eight chicks that had hatched in 1990, alone. Dr. Michael Wallace, director of the condor propagation program at the Los Angeles Zoo, responded cautiously but with some optimism, explaining that he thought it would be possible to admit us if we could be patient. Call again in a year, he advised; the situation is still too critical. No condors had yet been released back into the wild. Finally, in the summer of 1993, I was told that we could work with the condors. There were seventy-six birds, and eight that had been released, with five still surviving in the wild.

I was thrilled that the condors were gaining strength in their numbers and that I might finally see and photograph these magnificent birds. Packing the van with equipment, including

a thirteen foot by sixteen foot black velvet background, we set out from San Francisco to Los Angeles. Upon entering the compound, I was awestruck by my first glimpse of the condors. I could see two enormous birds sitting on ledges inside their flight cages with wings outstretched, spanning nearly nine feet!

We set up our photographic equipment and began what was to be a seven-day vigil, watching and occasionally photographing a pair of condors, Cayama and Cachuma. The birds were named by the Chumash tribe, who believe that condors are sacred. Both of these birds were wild-born and had been brought to the facility before they left their nest. They lived their lives inside a spacious flight enclosure approximately one hundred feet long and forty feet wide.

I was positioned in a blind attached to one end of the enclosure, which reminded me of a tree house. It was a small room about eight feet square and ten feet off the ground, painted black with darkened windows with round hatches cut for camera lenses. To avoid being detected by the birds, we kept our comings and goings to a minimum, moved quietly, and spoke in whispers. When I caught glimpses of the birds, they were usually looking back, and I always felt they were aware we were there.

Inside the enclosure are several perches, a nest box, and a pond for drinking and bathing. On only one of the perches were conditions right for making a photograph. Occasionally, the birds would glide from one end of the enclosure to the other, often landing on a ledge just outside the blind, where I could hear the whoosh of their wings and feel their weight shake the blind. Finally one of the condors landed on the right perch, and I was able to photograph. In the late afternoon sun, I could see the naked, pinkish-red head and neck, and the inset eyes that looked like rubies framed by a ring of yellow-orange skin. By the third day, I realized that when we arrived early in the morning, the condors appeared to be wearing feather hats and spiky plumed boas around their necks. The ability to pull

a feather cover over their heads and necks serves them well in cold weather, and the nights were uncommonly cool during our visit. I decided that this “morning look” was what I was after, so several early morning stakeouts were in order.

Seven days with a pair of condors is a memorable experience. It was a privilege to observe their daily habits; to see them fly, watch them feast on dead rats, bathe, and then spend hours—indeed most of their time—fastidiously preening and shaking themselves, followed by sunning, when they regally extended their wings.

The California condor has been a rare bird for a long time. One of the first recognized endangered species, condors were observed becoming scarce during the 1890s, and by the 1980s extinction seemed inevitable. The Endangered Species Act helped to galvanize the human will, hard work, and devotion necessary to revive this species. Human intervention was responsible for their demise, but it is only through human intervention that condors can be saved. Last fall I was on a camping trip at Big Sur, California, and I witnessed California condors soaring overhead, something I never thought I would experience. Instead of being emblematic of extinction, the California condor is a symbol of hope, and a success story of the Endangered Species Act.

Not all of the species on the Endangered Species list have fared as well as the condor. After the first forty years, we must protect the Endangered Species Act, so that it can continue to provide a tangible framework—a guiding light—for us to act on behalf of our endangered wildlife.

PHOTOGRAPHER,  
AUTHOR, PUBLIC SPEAKER,  
CONSERVATIONIST  
**SUSAN MIDDLETON**



“Who is the most powerful individual in the American West right now?” a journalist friend from Washington, DC, asked me.

“Sage grouse,” I answered.

“I’m serious.” He said.

“So am I,” I replied.

In the Interior West, where sagebrush covers the landscape like a sea-blue haze, sage grouse are driving the conversation around oil and gas development. The Bureau of Land Management projections show that nearly 96 thousand new oil and gas wells will be drilled over the next twenty years in six states: Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming. Oil wells could fragment 11.8 million acres of sagebrush, shrub, and grassland habitat, an area larger than the state of New Hampshire. Development, as planned, could affect the greater sage grouse populations by 19 percent.

Historic populations of sage grouse once numbered 16 million. Today, the population may be half a million, and many populations in the vicinity of oil fields are being drawn down to extinction. Fifty-four percent of the world’s remaining sage grouse reside in Wyoming. In 2008, former Wyoming Governor David Freudenthal issued an executive order on behalf of sage grouse that implemented a proactive “core area strategy” designed to both protect the bird and allow energy development. Quite simply, this state action was “aimed to protect the bird to prevent an Endangered Species listing while offering opportunities for resource development.” Over 14 million acres were mapped. The most sensitive grouse habitat areas were identified and set aside for the bird; oil companies were steered elsewhere.

Wyoming took the lead and inspired other states to follow. Necessity became the mother of invention, with sage grouse stimulating creative and collaborative solutions addressing

competing interests: Drilling for fossil fuels versus preserving the home ground of North America’s largest gallinaceous bird.

One male sage grouse standing his ground on his ancestral lek against Shell Oil is akin to the lone man facing down a tank in Tiananmen Square unless alternatives to destroying the bird’s habitat are found.

Sage grouse are among the most immediate bellwether species sounding the call for restraint on America’s public lands. Environmentalists are sitting down at the table with federal agencies, local elected officials, and oil and gas executives to locate common ground—ground that protects the birds and supports the nation’s vision for energy development in the West.

This is the totemic power of the sage grouse, which joins the ranks of other species that are changing the chemistry and power structure of communities—both human and wild—that they inhabit. Consider the spotted owl and salmon in the Pacific Northwest, who saved millions of acres of ancient forests from being felled. Add the timber wolf and the grizzly bear as species who are defining the Greater Yellowstone; the peregrine falcon who showed us the negative effects of DDT; the black-footed ferret and its role in vibrant grasslands; and the woundfin minnow as a measure of the health of the Colorado River—and so many more—animals who have all had an impact on how we understand the interconnectedness and integrity of fragile ecosystems.

And behind these heroic species—species that are holding us accountable—is the Mother Act whose gleaming teeth still have a moral and legal bite that puts legitimate fears in the heart of any developer, oil tycoon, corporation, or skank who dares to wage an attack against her threatened and vulnerable children, lest they be fined, jailed, and shamed for abusing the 1973 Endangered Species Act, the mother of all environmental legislation.

Bless this Act.

Bless those who authored it, championed it, and who continue to fight for its life.

And bless all of the species who have yet to gain full protection under the Mother Act—the sage grouse, Utah prairie dogs, yellow-billed loons—and myriad plants, animals, and insects whose lives and habitats remain threatened.

The beauty of the Endangered Species Act is that it is a federal act of empathy, put into writing and upheld by law. It is an elegant act of mind and heart that is both visionary and inclusive. It progresses from our Declaration of Independence and portends a Declaration of Interdependence. The Endangered Species Act creates a precedent for peace, allowing us, as a society, to exercise our conscience and consciousness on behalf of all species.

The great consequence of the Act, over time, is that it ensures that we, as a species, will not be alone. We will remain part of a living, breathing, thriving community of vibrant beings



with feathers, fins and fur; roots, petals and spines; and trunks, branches and leaves. It promises that creatures that walk with four legs or scurry on six or crawl with eight will move alongside us as we *Homo sapiens* continue to walk with two. Wild beauty will be maintained.

Each time I hear the driving drumbeat of the sage grouse’s ancient courtship dance among the aromatic splendor of sage, I remember that we are the heirs of the wonder that they hold—along with every other species on this beautiful, blue planet we call Earth. And with a strong Endangered Species Act in place, we can stand in awe and reverence among them.

What the plant and animal worlds ask of us is respect and restraint. What the Endangered Species Act designed forty years ago promises them is that we will try.

The Endangered Species Act is an evolved document from an evolving nation.

When my friend from Washington, DC asks me another question about where power resides in the American West, I will ask him to accompany me to Wyoming in the spring to smell the sweet fragrance of sage after rain. And in that moment of reverie, just maybe we will hear the drumbeat of the strutting grouse rising above the oil rigs on the horizon.

AUTHOR, NATURALIST,  
AND CONSERVATIONIST  
**TERRY TEMPEST  
WILLIAMS**





Polar Bear © Tim Greyhavens

When Wilburforce Foundation was started in 1991, there were no wolves in most of the western United States. Since then, thanks to the Endangered Species Act, wolves have made a remarkable comeback. Under the guidance of the Act, wolves were reintroduced in Yellowstone National Park in 1995, marking the first return of wolves to that area since 1926. I have a vivid memory of being in Yellowstone on a frigid June morning in 1997—just two years after the return of the wolves—looking out over the Lamar Valley with a small group of biologists and photographers. We were hoping to catch a glimpse of the Druid Peak pack, which was then still small and mostly elusive. On that particular morning, we were rewarded with the then-amazing sight of wild wolves running free on a distant hillside—something most people had not seen in that area for nearly seventy years.

Since then, I've been lucky enough to see and hear wolves many times, not just in Yellowstone, but in many other wild places in the West. To me, wolves represent the essence of effective conservation—a delicate balance of both the art and the science of humans trying to rectify the wildlife losses that, in most cases, humans have caused. It's doubtful that the framers of the Endangered Species Act could have envisioned the success of wolf reintroduction, but they were bold enough to set a course that made the reintroduction possible at a time when such things seemed nearly unthinkable. Even Richard Nixon, who was no fan of most environmental causes, recognized the importance of the Act because it protects a future that is important for all of us. He wrote this when he signed the Act into law:

*"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. I congratulate the 93rd Congress for taking this important step toward protecting a heritage which we hold in trust to countless future generations of our fellow citizens. Their lives will be richer, and America will be more beautiful in the years ahead, thanks to the measure that I have the pleasure of signing into law today."*

Here at Wilburforce Foundation, we partner with nonprofit organizations, scientists, agencies, tribes, and others to preserve the North American West's irreplaceable diversity of wildlife, lands, and water. We believe there are positive, achievable solutions to current challenges based on sound science, conservation policy, and community action. We also believe that conservation is powered by a hopeful vision in which wild places and wildlife thrive in harmony with human communities.

The Endangered Species Act is one of the most hopeful visions to be found, and it is successful in spite of many political efforts to prevent it from working. Out of more than 2,000 imperiled animals and plants that have been protected under the Act, only ten have actually gone extinct. With a success rate of more than 99 percent, the Endangered Species Act should be celebrated as one of our most successful environmental laws. It is, as former Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt said, "an affirmation of our kinship with all life and of our respect for Creation."

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
WILBURFORCE FOUNDATION

**TIM GREYHAVENS**



Details aside, the Endangered Species Act is based on the principle that all species should be conserved—a true landmark in the history of environment and conservation. This is the first time in the history of life on Earth that a single species has *knowingly* driven others to extinction and has *knowingly* dedicated itself to preventing that.

Sadly, as we know, this is not just a matter of a handful of species, but rather, the numbers of endangered and threatened species are soaring. This basically obviates any academic discussion of whether humans should prevent a species from going extinct naturally; the odds are a thousandfold to one that any particular endangered or threatened species owes that status to human activity.

In the 1940s, Ruth Patrick demonstrated that the numbers and kinds of species in a river or stream reflect not only the natural conditions



of the ecosystem but also the impacts of human activities in the watershed. In other words, biodiversity integrates all environmental problems and provides the single best measure of human impact. So if one wishes a single measure of environmental impact nationally (or internationally), the number of endangered species is exactly that.

The obligation to prevent extinction implicit in the Endangered Species Act is not just practical and utilitarian in terms of what we now call ecosystems and their goods and services. It is also very much an ethical obligation involving deep respect for all other forms of life, each one of which has a 4 billion-plus-years' history, going back to the origins of life on Earth. Beyond that it is quite wondrous.

The choice before us is whether generations to come will have an impoverished planet and future, or whether they will have one on which life flourishes in all its glory. The Endangered Species Act codifies the latter in perpetuity.

PROFESSOR OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
SCIENCE AND POLICY,  
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
**TOM LOVEJOY, PH.D.**



We go to other planets not because we screwed up this one and are looking for a new home.

We go to other planets to answer the two great questions: where do we come from, and are we alone?

Religion and science have been on a parallel course to answering these great questions of existence. By going to Mars, we are able to collect samples of soils and rocks, which we compare to the earth's geology. Science is a comparative act. This second sample is essential to a better understanding of the history of our planet.

By exploring other planets we learn how best to utilize our natural resources for the benefit of the planet and for all mankind. The Endangered Species Act protects the environment of endangered species in North America. Because the United States leads the world in technology, development, and ethics, it's important that we, as Americans, demonstrate our concern and respect for nature, and not to just use it to feed our petroleum addiction.

SCULPTOR  
**TOM SACHS**

I can't imagine what our country would be like without the Endangered Species Act, but I know we would be less of a people, and America would be less magnificent. The Act protects our fellow creatures, from the most famous and emblematic to the most humble and obscure. And the Act protects the landscapes and ecosystems they depend on, thus benefitting all the species that share those ecosystems. Among the most powerful and significant pieces of environmental legislation ever passed in the United States, the Act is our best bulwark against the global extinction crisis, and is key to protecting our natural heritage from the impacts of climate change.

The Endangered Species Act is a product of a time of tremendous environmental ferment in our country, when people were waking up to the horrors of industrial pollution and the devastation of landscapes for profit. Some of our iconic species had been hunted to extinction, and others were hanging on by only a thread. In 1969, Ohio's polluted Cuyahoga River caught fire, and an oil well blew out in the Santa Barbara channel, spewing 3 million gallons of crude onto southern California's beaches. The next year, 20 million Americans turned out for the first Earth Day, and they were ready for change. Practically overnight, we got the Environmental Protection Agency, the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act.



Earthjustice was also born of the ferment of those times, created by a small group of attorneys with a passionate belief that the power of the law could be used to preserve the environment. They helped establish the right of citizens to go to court to enforce environmental laws when the government couldn't or wouldn't. The new laws were the tools those attorneys needed to give teeth to environmental protection across the country—and they used them. Over the decades, we and our allies have enforced and strengthened the laws to stem the tide of environmental loss and build a different future for our country than the one it faced in 1969.

Using the Endangered Species Act, Earthjustice has protected Yellowstone's grizzly bears and helped restore and sustain populations of gray wolves in the northern Rockies. We're using it in the fight to save the West Coast's wild salmon runs and the fishing industry they support. And the Act allows us to challenge plans for destructive oil and gas development projects and other inappropriate uses of sensitive public lands that provide critical habitat for threatened species.

Despite relentless attempts to gut or weaken the Endangered Species Act, it's been remarkably successful. Very few of the species it has protected have gone extinct, and many have recovered to the point where they no longer need its protection. Equally important, millions of acres of forests, beaches, and wetlands that provide habitat for at-risk species have been protected from degradation and development.

Now, more than ever, we need a strong, fully funded, vigorously enforced Endangered Species Act to help our ecosystems withstand the worst impacts of climate change, and to help ensure that humans don't become one of the species headed toward extinction.

CEO, EARTHJUSTICE  
**TRIP VAN NOPPEN**

Who wants to live in a world without tigers? A world without rhinos? A world without polar bears? Not I, says the boy from New York City. Although we don't see these creatures roaming our streets (thankfully), a world without these majestic animals would be drab. I fill my life with them—they're on my walls, on my jewelry, on my fabrics. Not a day goes by when I don't see their beauty. I sit at my desk flanked by three bronze deer; to my right is a landscape photograph by Andrew Zuckerman of animals at watering hole in Kenya. On my desk roam tigers, zebras, owls, elephants, giraffes, and a lone rhino. It's a big desk.

Recently, fate and a jet plane took me to the bush of the Kalahari. I sat with a zebra, stared down a pride of lions, and watched a rhino mother protect her offspring. All in all, I came across thirty-seven species of wildlife. I learned that the rhino of Africa is at danger due to poachers, as is the great Bengal tiger of India, my motherland. To sit and do nothing just makes one an accomplice to extinction.

These animals and many of the world's most fascinating species are in danger. How can that be? How can we be using images of these incredible animals in our designs, our textiles, and our décor, and at the same time allowing the possibility that the real thing may be lost forever, never to be seen by future generations? Beyond their obvious extensive use as muses, each of these species has evolved over time to play a valuable role in the ecosystem.

The good news is that I don't have to continue on a hopeless rant forever. There is light on the horizon. The world has started to recognize its responsibilities. We have started to treat nature with care. And I believe that we'll succeed in protecting these unbelievable creatures. I do believe that love conquers all. The Endangered

Species Act translated that belief into action for a whole nation—and not just by protecting the species within the borders of the United States, but also extending that protection to hundreds of other species around the world.

The passage of the Act was an incredible first step. Decades later it is still working, and we are saving species. However, my friends, there is so much more to do. There is a Buddhist saying, "If we are facing in the right direction, all we have to do is keep walking."

DESIGNER AND  
ACTOR  
**WARIS  
AHLUWALIA**



© Christopher Way-McCann

Fashion and celebrity photographers are modern-day nomads, so I don't spend too much time in any one place. It is both a blessing and a curse. Though I don't get to settle down much, I've been to some of the most beautiful places on the planet as I've worked in the United States, Europe, and Africa.

Whenever I can, I spend time in my house on an island in the Mediterranean. I'm not the only nomad here. The loggerhead sea turtle, an endangered species, also lives in these waters and nests on these islands. (Some loggerheads travel as much as 7,500 miles from nesting beaches to feeding grounds.)

We chose this place, in part, because of how spectacular nature is here. I don't want to see it polluted or over-developed any more than the loggerhead does. It doesn't surprise me to know that when loggerheads face degraded habitat conditions, their populations decline. Who wants to live in a place like that?

We are all animals, after all. In the years that I've studied the human form, I know that. Some of us may have evolved more than others. My rat terrier has come a long way from his endangered wolf ancestor. But we're all animals with the same basic needs.

I may be a nomad, but I'm not the only one.

PHOTOGRAPHER  
**WAYNE MASER**



Throughout American history, we've seen an expansion of moral concern reflected in our laws and in social attitudes—from the abolition of slavery, to women's suffrage, to workplace safety, to civil rights for minorities and gays—and to progress for animals and nature. This progress has often been halting and uneven, but it's been unyielding. We are becoming, step by step, a more civil, inclusive, and compassionate society.

The late 1960s and early 1970s was a period of remarkable and rapid change, triggered, in part, by the awakening of social activism against the Vietnam War. Social movements are often born out of crisis—with acute exploitation or harm prompting action and reform. That was true for wildlife, with habitat destruction, the fur trade, and commercial and recreational hunting taking an extraordinary toll on wildlife and threatening the existence of species in the 1960s and in prior decades.

When it came to environmental activism and change, we held the first Earth Day and formed the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). We also witnessed enactment of powerful legislation: the National Environmental Protection Act, the Airborne Hunting Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and the Endangered Species Act. These landmark laws still resonate for the nation today.

The Endangered Species Act enshrined the notion espoused by Aldo Leopold that the first rule of intelligent tinkering is to keep all the parts—from wispy butterflies and small fish, to muscled, massive grizzly bears. The Act has placed the government in a position to check the actions of private citizens and corporations bent on killing wildlife for their selfish purposes or profits and robbing posterity of these cohabitants.

The Act is a statement that all species matter. It has been a particularly important tool in allowing us to re-examine our relationship with predators such as wolves, bears, and sharks. Throughout our nation's history, these and other species have been subjected to ruthless eradication campaigns, perhaps because these animals inspire some primal fear in us and, in the case of the terrestrial species, interfere with human designs for agricultural grazing and recreational hunting.



As some predator populations have reclaimed portions of their historical range—thanks largely to the Endangered Species Act—we've witnessed their beneficial impacts on ecosystems. In Yellowstone, wolves have checked the growth of elk and bison populations, and the effects of these reduced populations are being felt up and down the trophic system. Wolves have also drawn in tens of thousands of tourists, thus driving economic development and demonstrating that there are many more people interested in appreciating wildlife than exploiting it. In short, wolves have proven to be not just an ecological benefit, but an economic one, as well.

Public attitudes often follow the law, and in this case, the Endangered Species Act is guiding us toward a better understanding of the wildlife and our responsibilities to other species. I am particularly grateful for the role that the Act has played in predator protection, as we confront the challenges in building tolerance for other species that also range widely and lay their own claims to the planet.

PRESIDENT  
AND CEO,  
THE HUMANE  
SOCIETY OF THE  
UNITED STATES

**WAYNE  
PACELLE**

I'm staying in an old Victorian B&B in the Berkshires, and there's a little machine next to the bed that plays sounds to distract us from the sounds of each other. The options are rainforest, ocean, summer night, and waterfall. I was afraid waterfall would just make me want to pee, so I went with summer night, and sure enough, I got the crickets who have been lulling me to sleep for as many summers as I can remember. I set the timer for thirty minutes, and just as I was drifting off, the crickets abruptly stopped. Silence. It was haunting.

I live on the edge of wild things. I am fonder of some than others. While no love is lost on black flies and yellow jackets, I am fascinated by honeybees, and I thrill to owl serenades and that rowdy coyote cacophony that whips all the dogs into a frenzy.

Rattlesnakes have earned my respect, even after one killed a favorite dog.

The ants invade. The ants retreat.

I had two experiences with a mountain lion where we stared at each other for what seemed like an eternity. Gophers decimated numerous of my husband's gardens, and left only holes in their wake, but we keep on planting.

A mockingbird loves to perform his repertoire in a kind of demented loop every morning at the crack of dawn.

The ants invade. The ants retreat.

I recognize the dogs and cats and horses and donkeys are the links between.

If, in fact, we are all connected, and the vibrancy of this planet Earth is made up of all of us, woven inextricably together, then each time one of us is extinguished, no matter how great or small, the planet is a little duller.

I do not wish to live in a world without crickets.

Or mustangs.

Or elephants.

Or even ants.

## ACTRESS

### WENDIE MALICK



As a teacher, I've had the wonderful opportunity of leading classroom discussions about biodiversity and endangered species. I've seen firsthand how students develop a special appreciation for threatened and endangered species, and what we can do to help protect them and their precious habitats.

While students may be disheartened about the danger so many plant and animal species face, they are encouraged by the success stories of species recovery. They learn how the Endangered Species Act has had such a positive impact during the last four decades, and realize that, as individuals, they can make a contribution, as well. It is exciting to see them apply classroom lessons to real world actions. This emphasizes the importance of educating young



people about critical and timely issues, and providing them with the appropriate resources so that they can become the future stewards of our environment.

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE INSTRUCTOR,  
DANVILLE AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**WENDY BROWN, PH.D.**

Growing up spending so much time in the wilds of Kenya, surrounded by majestic lions, cheetahs, elephants, and rhinoceroses, inspired me to dedicate my life to protecting these iconic animals. My parents, actors Virginia McKenna and Bill Travers, fell in love with Africa during the filming of “Born Free” in the early 1960s, and from their compassionate artistry, the Born Free Foundation was created.

For three decades, I have witnessed wildlife exploitation—poaching, snaring, poisoning, and live trade—that threatens the well-being of individual animals and the long-term viability of entire species. The Endangered Species Act recognizes these threats and establishes a determined blueprint for protecting imperiled wildlife everywhere. The Act is, in my mind, America’s durable commitment to the protection of wild animals wherever they live, as well as a replicable example of the value of governmental support for wildlife conservation.

The work Born Free accomplishes in the field for wild animals, protecting species on the brink, is enhanced by the protection afforded to these species under the Act. And, as the Endangered Species Act implements the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), there is a continuing global, robust partnership that ensures CITES works effectively for the animals listed for protection under the treaty. I have attended every meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES since 1989, and my experience tells me that the success of such agreements depends on mutual collaboration and international cooperation to combat the trans-boundary threat of animal extinction.

The Endangered Species Act remains as powerful a platform today as it did forty years ago for the continued triumph of

conservation over extirpation. The indiscriminate slaughter, capture, trade, and sale of animals—including exotic and endangered species within the United States and abroad—brings forth both dire and complex conservation issues. Born Free will always remain on the front lines, working to combat these threats across the globe. We sincerely hope that the U.S. commitment to doing the same, through the Act, will remain as steadfast. Wildlife belongs in the wild. And with the Endangered Species Act—unweakened and fully enforced—each and every protected species can survive and thrive for years to come.

CEO, BORN FREE  
FOUNDATION  
AND BORN FREE USA

**WILL TRAVERS,  
O.B.E.**





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We deeply appreciate the dedication and talent of our designer, Jonathan Herman ([www.jonathanherman.com](http://www.jonathanherman.com)), who brought his understated yet glamorous perspective to the book.

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# THE ENDANGERED SPECIES COALITION

The Endangered Species Coalition is a national network of hundreds of conservation, scientific, education, religious, sporting, outdoor recreation, business, and community organizations working to protect our nation's disappearing wildlife and last remaining wild places.

Through education, outreach, and citizen involvement, we work to protect endangered species and the special places where they live. We specialize in grassroots organizing, mobilizing citizens to participate in the democratic political process. We believe grassroots power is the strongest political force that can compel decision makers to protect wildlife and wild lands.

Presidio Manzanita © Susan Middleton and David Liittschwager

