

CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Protecting endangered species and wild places of western North America



May 4, 2004

Ms. Gale Norton
Secretary of the Interior
Office of the Secretary
Department of the Interior
18th and C Street N.W.
Washington D.C., 20240

Dear Ms. Norton:

The Center for Biological Diversity, Dr. Jane Goodall, Dr. E.O. Wilson, Dr. Paul Ehrlich, Dr. John Terborgh, Dr. Niles Eldredge, Dr. Thomas Eisner, Dr. Robert Hass, Barbara Kingsolver, Charles Bowden, Martin Sheen, the Xerces Society, and the Biodiversity Conservation Alliance hereby petition to list 225 plants and animals endangered species pursuant to the Endangered Species Act (hereafter referred to as ESA), 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq. This petition is filed under 5 U.S.C. 553(e) and 50 CFR 424.14 (1990), which grants interested parties the right to petition for issue of a rule from the Secretary of the Interior.

Petitioners also request that critical habitat be designated for the 225 species pursuant to 50 CFR 424.12 and the Administrative Procedures Act (5 U.S.C. 553).

All of these species are currently on the federal candidate list. On average, they were first placed on the list 17 years ago. Seventy-nine percent (178) have been on the candidate for at least ten years, 38% percent (86) have waited at least 20 years, and 28% (64) have been waiting since 1975. Such listing delays are unacceptable and in the past have contributed to the extinction of many species. A recent report by the Center for Biological Diversity has shown that while Endangered Species Act protection has proven very effective at saving species from extinction, the delay in such protections contributed to the extinction of 83 species between 1974 and 1994.

In order to list these species in a timely manner and to protect their critical habitat, we also request that the administration fully fund the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at the level it has identified as necessary to do its job. The Service has stated that it needs \$153 million to list the backlog of candidate species and protect their critical habitats. Yet in 2003 the administration budgeted only \$9 million and refused a Congressional offer of additional funds. In 2004 it budgeted only \$12 million and for 2005 it has asked Congress for just \$17 million. Congress has

followed the president's leadership and fully funded all of its listing/critical habitat budget requests. Unfortunately, these requests are insufficient to allow the Fish and Wildlife Service to accomplish its mission. As a result, the annual rate of listing under the current administration is the lowest in the history of the Endangered Species Act: the Clinton administration placed 65 species per year on the endangered list, the Bush Sr. administration averaged 59, and the Reagan administration averaged 32. The current administration has averaged just 9 listings per year.

The Fish and Wildlife Service has an admirable record of protecting endangered species. It has clearly spelled out what it needs to continue that work. We request that you honor the agency's request.

Sincerely, on behalf of all the named petitioners,

Kieran Suckling
Executive Director
Center for Biological Diversity

The Center for Biological Diversity is committed to saving endangered species and the habitat they need to survive. Since the early 1980's, the Center has helped preserve 40 million acres of habitat and has ensured protections for more than 300 species through science, policy, education, and environmental law.

Jane Goodall is a renowned primatologist and the world's foremost authority on chimpanzees. She received her Ph.D. from Cambridge University in 1965 and she has been the Scientific Director of the Gombe Stream Research Center in Tanzania since 1967. The author of many books and scientific articles, Dr. Goodall has received the International Peace Award, the Global Environmental Citizens Award and in 2002 was Appointed U.N. Secretary of Peace by U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan.

E.O. Wilson is a research professor and museum curator at Harvard University, where he has taught for four decades. He has written 20 books, won two Pulitzer prizes, and discovered hundreds of new species. Dr. Wilson has been a leader in the fields of entomology, animal behavior, evolutionary psychology, island biogeography, biodiversity, environmental ethics, and the philosophy of knowledge and he has received many of the world's leading prizes for his research in science, his environmental activism, and his writing.

Paul Ehrlich is a professor of Population Studies at Stanford University. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the Board of Directors of the National Audubon Society. He has authored more than 600 scientific articles and 37 books, including "The Population Bomb," which influenced a generation of environmentalists and helped lead to population control movements. He has been a pioneer in alerting the public to the problems of overpopulation, and in raising issues of resources and the environment as

matters of public policy. He is a MacArthur Fellow and has received the Gold Medal Award of the World Wildlife Fund International.

John Terborgh is a professor of Environmental Science and is Co-Director of the Center for Tropical Conservation at Duke University. He is a member of the National Academy of Science, and for the past thirty-five years he has been actively involved in tropical ecology and conservation issues. An authority on avian and mammalian ecology in neotropical forests, Dr. Terborgh has published numerous articles and books on conservation themes. In 1996 he was awarded a National Academy of Science medal for his research and for his book "Diversity and the Tropical Rainforest." He serves on several boards and advisory committees related to conservation, including the Wildlands Project, Cultural Survival, The Nature Conservancy, and The World Wildlife Fund.

Michael Soulé is a research professor in Environmental Studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He was a founder of the Society for Conservation Biology and The Wildlands Project and has been the president of both. He has written and edited 9 books and more than 100 scientific articles on conservation biology, population genetics, environmental studies, biodiversity policy, nature conservation, and ethics and continues to do research on the social causes of the destruction of nature worldwide. He was elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, and is the sixth recipient of the Archie Carr Medal.

Niles Eldredge is Curator in the Department of Invertebrates at the American Museum of Natural History, and Adjunct Professor at the City University of New York. A specialist in mid-Paleozoic phacopid trilobites, his focus is on achieving a better "fit" between historical patterns of stasis and change in the fossil record and evolutionary theory. He has also analyzed the relationship between global extinctions of the geologic past and the present-day biodiversity crisis, as well as the general relationship between extinction and evolution. He is also the author of several books about the biodiversity crisis.

Thomas Eisner is a professor of chemical ecology at Cornell University and the director of the Cornell Institute for Research in Chemical Ecology. A recipient of the 1994 National Medal of Science, Dr. Eisner is a leading authority on animal behavior, ecology and evolution and is a pioneer in the field of chemical ecology. A field biologist with working experience on four continents, he is author or co-author of some 400 scientific articles and seven books. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences and the Royal Society. He is the current president of the Xerces Society, an organization devoted to the preservation of invertebrates. He recently served as chair of the Endangered Species Coalition and is currently on the Board of Directors of the Union of Concerned Scientists.

Robert Hass served as Poet Laureate of the United States from 1995 to 1997 and is currently a Chancellor of The Academy of American Poets. Hass has written, edited and translated several books of poetry. He frequently writes about nature and California's environment and is the founder of River of Words, an organization that promotes art and environmental education. He is also a board member of International Rivers Network. He was awarded the MacArthur

fellowship and twice the National Book Critics Circle Award. He is currently a professor of English at the University of California, Berkeley.

Barbara Kingsolver, a trained biologist and a former science journalist is one of the leading voices in contemporary American fiction. Her novels include “Animal Dreams,” winner of the Edward Abbey Ecofiction Award, “Pigs in Heaven,” winner of the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Fiction, and “The Poisonwood Bible,” a finalist for the PEN/Faulkner Award and the Pulitzer Prize.

Charles Bowden is a journalist whose work has appeared regularly in Harper's, Esquire, GQ, and other publications. He has published over a dozen books in the past twenty years is the author of several previous books of nonfiction. His acclaimed work on the American desert, border relations and environmental issues has been nominated for the Pulitzer Prize and has received a Harper's Award, a Lannan Literary award, and the Arizona Arts Award.

Martin Sheen is an award winning actor of stage and screen and a longtime activist for social and environmental causes. He is an Advisory Board Member of Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, a contributor to activist web site TrueMajority, and is one of the country's most prominent campaigners for social justice and peace.

Since its inception in 1971, the Xerces Society has been at the forefront of invertebrate conservation, harnessing the knowledge of scientists and the enthusiasm of local citizens to implement education and conservation programs. Past accomplishments include protecting overwintering habitat of monarch butterflies in California, working with local villagers in Costa Rica to conserve forests by establishing butterfly farms, and collaborating in biodiversity research and training that helped create the Masoala National Park in Madagascar. By harnessing the knowledge of scientists, the resources of our members and participating foundations, and the enthusiasm of concerned citizens, Xerces Society fights for invertebrates and their habitat.

Biodiversity Conservation Alliance is a Laramie, Wyoming-based nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to protecting and restoring native species of plants and animals throughout the Rocky Mountain Region and surrounding areas. Using outreach, education, science, comments, administrative appeals, and litigation, Biodiversity Conservation Alliance works to protect and restore biodiversity, prevent the loss of native species and their habitat, and raise the threshold of public knowledge and appreciation of biodiversity and ecological health.