

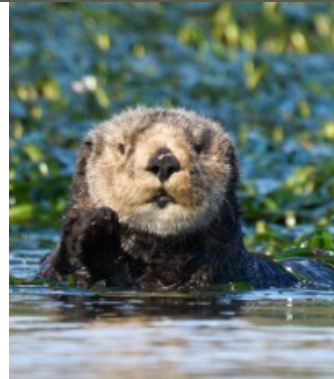


STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN

Blueprints for Conserving Our Nation's Fish, Wildlife, and Habitats

WHAT is a State Wildlife Action Plan?

State Wildlife Action Plans are the blueprints for conserving the nation's fish, wildlife, biodiversity, and their habitats. Development and implementation of these plans is led by each state and territorial fish and wildlife agency in collaboration with local, state, and federal agencies, tribes, universities, private landowners, and fish and wildlife enthusiasts. The plans are required by Congress, approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and are updated at least every 10 years with the best available science.



WHY are State Wildlife Action Plans Needed?

Effective conservation requires a plan. The actions identified in State Wildlife Action Plans are needed to restore habitat and conserve thousands of species of fish and wildlife, including federal/state endangered and threatened species and others that will likely face listing in the future without intervention. Improving the status of Species of Greatest Conservation Need will reduce regulatory costs and conflicts, help sustain and grow the \$564 billion outdoor recreation economy and safeguard our extraordinary fish and wildlife for current and future generations.

WHO uses State Wildlife Action Plans?

Local, state, tribal, and federal governments use State Wildlife Action Plans to guide their conservation work and avoid impacts to Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Private conservation organizations and resource management agencies use the plans to guide voluntary conservation efforts on private lands through targeted education, outreach and technical assistance programs, as a few examples. The plans have also led to creative partnerships between industry, states, and territories to proactively conserve species and habitats through voluntary measures. Since conservation partners may be involved in the development of State Wildlife Action Plans, they are invested in helping to put the plans into action.



HOW are State Wildlife Action Plans Funded?

Since 2000, the states and territories have received an average of ~\$1 million each in annual federal funding through the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program to develop and implement State Wildlife Action Plans. Although this funding has led to the recovery of or has helped preclude listing for dozens of species, current funding levels do not match the funding needed to cost-effectively conserve over 12,000 Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Sustained and predictable funding, through legislation, is needed today to proactively conserve at-risk fish and wildlife and their habitats.



California's South Coast Region Connectivity

The South Coast Region (SCR) has several connectivity datasets to help guide data-driven decision making for direct conservation efforts, such as acquisitions, in areas of highest need. Through a State Wildlife Grant, San Diego State University (SDSU) completed a Climate Resilient Connectivity project for the South Coast Ecoregion (SCR) of California in 2019. They used a unique approach to create GIS layers based on combined species habitat modeling, landscape modeling, species population dynamics, using different climate scenarios. Understanding how barriers affect wildlife is important to connectivity, especially in the SCR where over 17 million people reside. This data was used in a larger statewide effort that outlined wildlife crossing needs and priorities.



Protection Across Borders: Least Bell's Vireo

States' ecoregions extend beyond state borders; State conservation area boundaries and Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) ranges are larger than states. States must work regionally, nationally, and internationally to accomplish conservation objectives for many habitats and species. To prevent migratory species from becoming endangered, and recover those already endangered, we must understand and address the totality of threats facing the species throughout their full annual lifecycle. Least Bell's Vireo is a good example of a migratory bird that nests as far north as the Sacramento Valley in California and winters only in Baja California Sur, Mexico. California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, and American Bird Conservancy have been working cooperatively for the recovery of Least Bell's Vireo.



The Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act

Western Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia*) is an iconic species in California that is both ecologically and culturally important. Western Joshua trees occur across a large portion of California's desert. Yet, species distribution models suggest that by the end of the 21st century, much of the species' range may no longer be viable habitat. The draft Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act Conservation Plan provides a comprehensive set of management actions that complement those laid out in the 2025 SWAP. The management actions include guidance to avoid and minimize direct and indirect impacts to western Joshua trees, land conservation and management strategies, tribal co-management objectives, research and information gathering that will help inform future conservation, and an approach to provide public education and awareness on western Joshua tree conservation issues.



California Department of Fish and Wildlife SWAP Contact Information
More information available on California SWAP website
Email: SWAP@wildlife.ca.gov