



In New Hampshire, Thirty Years of Success

For more than 30 years, the Endangered Species Act has helped prevent the extinction of our national treasures. Because of the act, beloved symbols of America such as the bald eagle and the peregrine falcon are thriving and rare species such as the Karner blue butterfly and the pine marten are recovering in our grasslands and northern forests due to habitat conservation efforts.

Only nine of the 1,800 species protected by the act have been declared extinct since its passage in 1973. Such an astonishing success rate makes the act a true symbol of our nation's commitment to protecting our natural heritage for future generations. It is also an example of the progress that can be made when communities work together to conserve their local wildlife and habitat. With the participation of communities, business and government, less than one percent of development projects reviewed under the act have been halted, proving that we can conserve wildlife without sacrificing progress. With the creation of jobs from tourism and outdoor recreation related to endangered species, it can truly be said that people all over New Hampshire benefit from the act.

New Hampshire currently has 15 endangered and threatened species (12 animals and 3 plants).

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Bald Eagle

When Europeans first arrived in North America in the 1600s, an estimated 100,000 bald eagles called the continent home, but populations declined throughout the United States due to habitat destruction, illegal shooting and the deadly effects of pesticides such as DDT. By 1963, only 417 nesting pairs were found in the lower 48 states. In 1973, the bald eagle was listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act. However, due to the banning of DDT, success of reintroduction programs, habitat and nest protection measures and other efforts to restore bald eagle populations, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reclassified the bald eagle from endangered to threatened in the lower 48 states in 1995, and proposed to remove it from the threatened list in 1999.

The year 2004 was a record-setting year for bald eagles in New Hampshire. Bald eagles fledged 11



Karner blue butterfly

young, the most since the recovery effort began in the mid-1980s. Eight pairs arrived in New Hampshire in early spring and six of those nested successfully. One pair even raised three chicks to fledging age, a rare feat since most bald eagles raise just one or two chicks per season. Successful recovery efforts around the region greatly factor into New Hampshire's increase in eagle numbers.

Karner Blue Butterfly

The Karner blue is the state butterfly of New Hampshire. Although once found throughout the midwest and eastern United States, populations of the Karner blue are now far below their historic highs, due largely to human activities such as agriculture, urbanization and fire suppression. A plant called blue lupine is key to Karner blue survival. It is the only food that Karner blue caterpillars will eat, but habitat destruction has reduced the plant's availability, further jeopardizing the butterfly's future. Indeed, the Karner blue has declined to less than one percent of its previous population abundance of over 100 years ago, with most of the decline occurring in the last two to three decades. In 1992, Karner blue butterflies were listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act.

Fortunately, the 2005 Karner blue breeding season in New Hampshire was

extremely promising. During the first brood last May, biologists released about 200 butterflies. Before releasing them, they collected an additional 4,000 eggs that yielded another 1,200 butterflies for the second brood in July, an astounding increase considering that just a few years ago, the program struggled with fewer than 50 butterflies per season. In another first for the program, butterflies actually laid eggs on the wild blue lupine plants that school-children planted on a conservation easement abutting Concord airport. Biologists continue to bring Karner blue eggs from New York to Concord to increase genetic diversity and strength. The Army National Guard, which has a facility next to the airport easement, has also been an important partner in Karner blue protection. The Guard has improved habitat for Karner blues, provided a captive-rearing facility and raised restoration money through land-use mitigation agreements. With the success of the recent breeding season, New Hampshire's state butterfly appears to be on the road to recovery.

Economic Benefits of Protecting Wildlife and Habitat

Ecotourism represents a huge economic force in the country. Each year, millions of Americans travel and pay to view wildlife and take in all that nature has to offer. Much of this activity takes place on the hundreds of national wildlife refuges spread across the country. Nationwide, visits to wildlife refuges generated more than \$1.3 billion in income for local and state economies and an addition \$150 million in tax revenues. Indeed, national wildlife refuges received nearly twice as many visitors in 2004 than Grand Canyon, Yosemite, Yellowstone, Acadia, Grand Teton, and Statue of Liberty national parks combined. The vast majority of those visitors came from outside the area, further testament to the ability of these special places to draw people and dollars to a region.

For more information on the success of the Endangered Species Act, please visit www.saveesa.org.

What You Can Do

The Endangered Species Act works because of individuals like you who help make it a success. To assist Defenders of Wildlife in protecting the act and make it work better for all concerned, we urge you to:

- ✓ Communicate with your elected officials about the importance of the act.
- ✓ Work with your local media to educate the public about the act's accomplishments.
- ✓ Reach out to others in your community and urge them to get involved.

To learn more about the Endangered Species Act and ways you can help protect America's vulnerable species, please visit www.saveesa.org.



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