



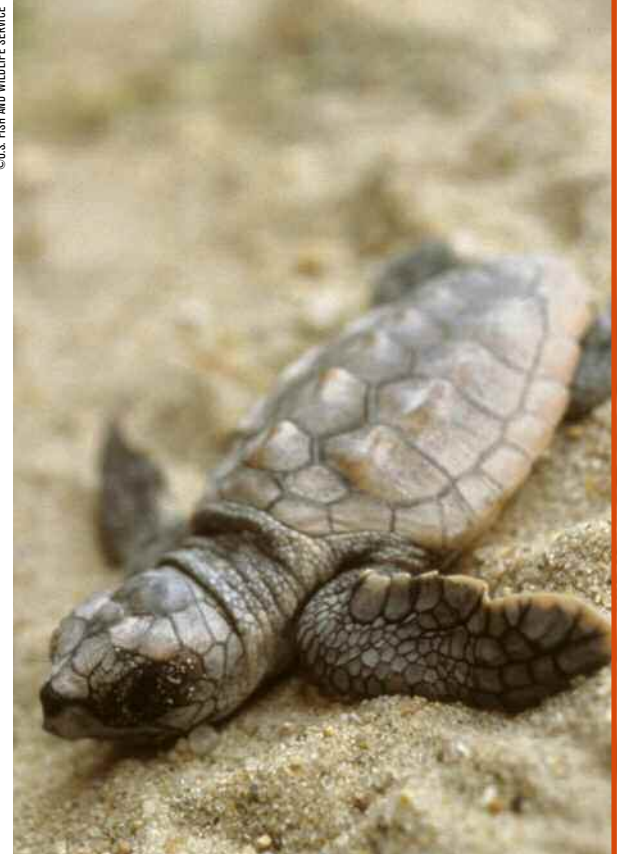
In Rhode Island, Thirty Years of Success

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 species native to Rhode Island such as the sea turtle and the piping plover are recovering 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 Rhode Island benefit from the act.

Rhode Island currently has 19 endangered and threatened species (16 animals and three plants).

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Loggerhead sea turtle hatchling

Sea Turtles

Since the 1970s, loggerheads, leatherbacks, Kemp's ridley and hawksbill sea turtles have been listed as threatened or endangered due to loss of habitat to beachfront housing developments, death by entanglement in fishing lines and nets, and poaching of sea turtles and their eggs.

In an effort to help these endangered creatures, the Rhode Island Sea Turtle Disentanglement Hotline was developed. The hotline is staffed 24/7 by experienced people trained to respond to turtle entanglement calls. The program is run by the Rhode Island Sea Grant Sustainable Fisheries Extension Program in partnership with the National Marine Fisheries Service. The immediate goal is to rescue entangled turtles, but the program also educates the public to prevent entanglements and collects information to aid sea turtle recovery in Rhode Island and elsewhere.



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Piping plover

Piping Plover

Only 10 nesting pairs of plovers lived in Rhode Island in 1986, when the U.S. government designated the small sandpiper-like migratory shore bird threatened under the Endangered Species Act. To protect fragile nesting areas, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began roping off the upper dunes of popular Moonstone Beach and other areas during the summer beach season. Although controversial, this move helped stabilize the plover population and thanks to this aggressive restoration program, 58 nesting pairs were documented in Rhode Island in 2003.

Because only 25 percent of Rhode Island plovers nest on federal land, restoration efforts also include private lands. With funding from a settlement for resource damages from a 1996 oil spill, the Department of Environmental Management, the Friends of the National Wildlife Refuges of Rhode Island, and the Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex are working closely with landowners to protect Rhode Island's piping plovers.

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 additional \$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. And 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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