Endangered earth

SUMMER 2012

A LEAP FORWARD

One Year After Landmark Deal, 100s of Species Closer to Protection

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

by Kierán Suckling

New Center Report:
An Enviable Record of Success for the Endangered Species Act

A new Center study of 110 species protected by the Endangered Species Act finds that 90 percent are recovering on pace to meet federal recovery goals.

No matter where you live in the United States, there's an animal or plant nearby that's been saved by the Endangered Species Act.

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 1,410 last year.

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

The list goes on and on. In fact, a study by the Center for Biological Diversity — released just in time for Endangered Species Day in May — found that of 110 protected species we studied, 90 percent are right on track to meet recovery goals set by federal scientists.

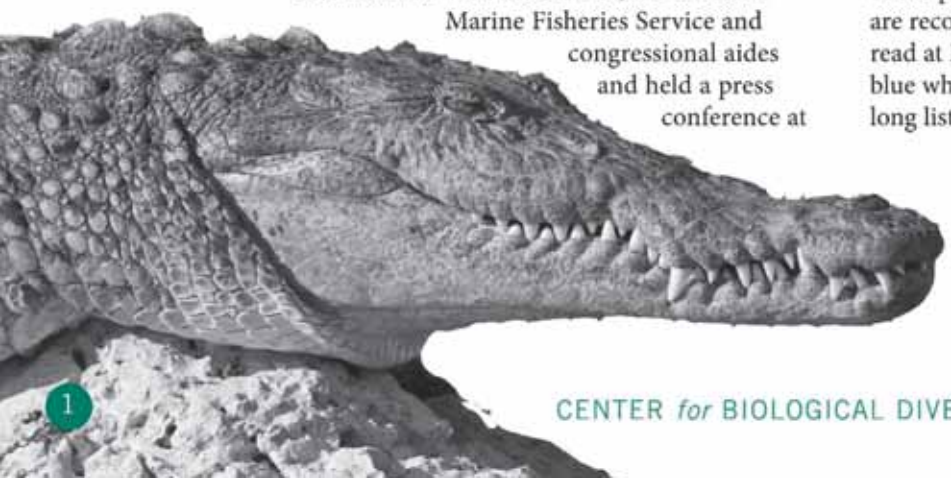
Our report, *On Time, On Target: How the Endangered Species Act Is Saving America's Wildlife*, provides fresh evidence about the remarkable success of the Act and the importance of protecting it from political meddling.

To release the study's results, we sent a team from the Center — including Media Specialist Andy Parker, Endangered Species Act Organizer Liz Nysson, Senior Counsel Bill Snape and me — to Washington, D.C. While we were there, we briefed top staffers at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service and congressional aides and held a press conference at the National Press Club.

We went to D.C. for a reason: Members of Congress like Rep. Doc Hastings (R-Wash.) continue to criticize the Endangered Species Act and call for new hearings on how it's carried out. Hastings has said that the Act is "failing badly" because just 1 percent of species have recovered to the point where they can be taken off the endangered list. But the claim simply doesn't meet the smell test — for the simple reason that most species protected by the Act that haven't recovered yet were never expected to have recovered yet.

Specifically, our study found that 80 percent of species have not been listed long enough to reach their projected delisting date. In fact, on average, the species we studied were projected to be delisted in 46 years, but have only been protected for 32 years.

But it's amazing to see the scope and breadth of the plants and animals from all 50 states that are recovering. Our report — which you can read at ESAsuccess.org — details the return of blue whales, manatees, brown pelicans and a long list of lesser-known species like Key deer in



There were 200 to 400 American crocodiles in Florida when they were listed as endangered in 1975, and just 10 to 20 breeding females by 1975. The population grew to about 2,085 as of 2005.

On the Web: *To read the full report and find out about recovering species near your home, visit us at* **ESAsuccess.org**

Florida, Mojave tui chub in California, shortnose sturgeon in New York and Alaska's Aleutian Canada geese.

The Endangered Species Act turns 40 next year, and there's a lot to celebrate: It has saved 99 percent of the 1,482 native species under its care from disappearing forever.

But the Act isn't just about avoiding extinction. It's about setting these species on a path to recovery.

Our study analyzed 110 species that had available population data and recovery plans. We looked at the year each was placed on the endangered species list through 2011. Each specie's actual population trend and trajectory was compared to the timeline for its recovery set out in government plans. Nearly all the animals and plants are recovering on time to meet federal goals.

In Massachusetts, the foot-long Plymouth red-bellied turtle had dwindled to just 50 individuals in the wild when it was protected by the Endangered Species Act in 1980. Today, there are 400 to 600 turtles.

It's a similar story for gray wolves and grizzly bears in the northern Rocky Mountains. Both were common predators — and vital cogs in the wild places they lived — before being nearly wiped out. Today there are around 1,500 gray wolves in the northern Rockies and about 600 grizzly bears.

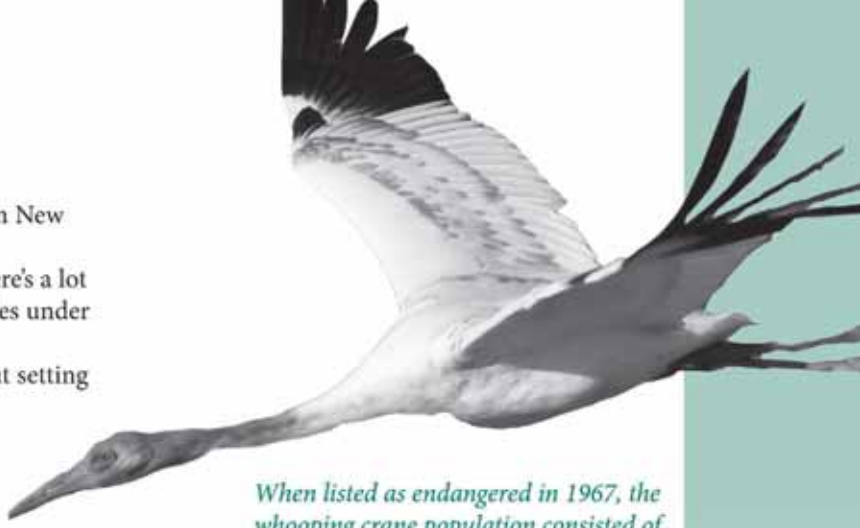
In Texas a two-inch fish called the Big Bend gambusia, historically found only in the clear, spring-fed waters of what is today Big Bend National Park, was virtually extirpated in the 1950s by reduced spring flows and the introduction of nonnative western mosquitofish. In 1967 it was listed as endangered. In the following years improvements were made to the artificial refugia at the national park, and the fish thrived, reaching a population of approximately 50,000 fish in 2005.

While many species are near or above the population goal set by their recovery plan and will likely be taken off the endangered species list in the next 10 to 15 years, others have strong recovery trends but will not be delisted for many decades because their recovery plans require that much time to fully secure their fate.

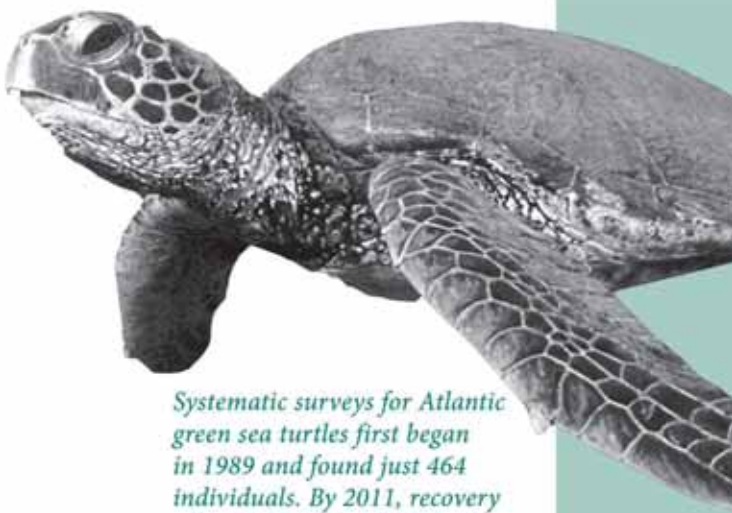
The findings are similar to the Center's 2006 analysis of all federally protected species in the Northeast, which found 93 percent were stabilized or improving since being put on the endangered species list and 82 percent were on pace to meet recovery goals.

There are certainly plenty of battles ahead over the fate of imperiled species around the country but I hope you'll take a moment to celebrate the success of species protected under the Act — including those in your own backyard.

Kierán Suckling is executive director at the Center for Biological Diversity.



When listed as endangered in 1967, the whooping crane population consisted of 43 wild and 7 captive birds. By 2011, it had grown to 437 wild and 162 captive birds.



Systematic surveys for Atlantic green sea turtles first began in 1989 and found just 464 individuals. By 2011, recovery efforts had helped propel the population to 10,701.

There may have been as many as 5.6 million black-footed ferrets in the late 1800s. Though the animals were nearly extinct in the wild by 1991, reintroduction efforts have increased wild populations to more than 1,400.

PHOTO CREDITS, PG. 1, CROCODILE COURTESY OF NATIONAL PARK SERVICE; PG. 2, CRANE COURTESY OF USFWS; TURTLE BY GONCALO VEIGA/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS; BLACK-FOOTED FERRET BY DEAN BIGGINS/USGS

by Collette L. Adkins Giese

Help for Vanishing Frogs, Turtles, Lizards



Amphibians and reptiles are among the most imperiled species on Earth. This summer the Center will petition to protect about 50 of the most vulnerable.

Amphibians and reptiles — the herpetofauna or "herps" of the world — are some of the most rapidly disappearing species on the planet. Toxins, global warming, nonnative predators, overcollection, habitat destruction and disease are key factors leading to their demise.

This summer, the Center for Biological Diversity will petition to protect more about 50 reptiles and amphibians around the country under the Endangered Species Act.

Globally, 664 species of reptiles, or more than 20 percent, are endangered or vulnerable to extinction, according to the 2011 Red List, a report put out by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. The situation is worse for amphibians. More than 1,900 species of frogs, toads and salamanders — fully 30 percent of the world's amphibians — are at risk of dying out.

Making matters worse, scientists lack sufficient information to assess the status of nearly 25 percent of the world's herps. These species are slipping away faster than scientists can study them.

Endangered Species Act protection is the surest way to save these animals. Yet reptiles and amphibians make up just 58 of the 1,400 species protected under the Act — meaning scores of these animals need to be listed under the Act but aren't. In fact, a study published this year found that 82 percent of amphibians that need help aren't protected by the Endangered Species Act. The story is much the same for reptiles.

To confront this crisis head on, we're working to secure Endangered Species Act protection for dozens of the country's most imperiled amphibians and reptiles. Scientists at the Center conducted a coast-to-coast investigation to find the country's most vulnerable but least protected frogs, toads, salamanders, turtles, lizards and snakes.

By using these findings and collaborating with wildlife experts, the Center will file a petition this summer that will hopefully provide these species with the protection they need to survive and ultimately thrive and recover.

The herps that stand to benefit from our 400-plus page petition are an amazingly diverse group of creatures. Consider the alligator snapping turtle — the largest freshwater turtle in North America, sometimes reaching 250 pounds — with its strongly hooked jaws and dragon-like appearance. Or the tiny Illinois chorus frog, just over an inch long, which uses its unusually strong forelegs to dig its sandy burrows with a breast-stroke motion.

Such diversity is vital to functioning ecosystems. Some herps are predators that serve to keep their prey in check (think of snakes that eat mice and other rodents). Other herps are crucial prey, like the frogs who feed many species of birds, fish, mammals and reptiles.

Just as importantly, these animals deserve protection for their own sake and because their existence enriches our world in ways we can't monetize — the gold flecks in frogs' eyes, the stubby toads with their miniature arms and potbellies, the graceful, sinuous movement of a snake disappearing into the grass. That's who we're working for.

Collette Adkins Giese, staff attorney in the Endangered Species program in Minneapolis, Minn., is dedicated to protecting rare amphibians and reptiles across the country.

PHOTO CREDITS, PG. 3, FLORIDA SCRUB LIZARD BY TODD PIERSON/FLICKR; WESTERN SPADEFOOT BY JAMES BETTASO/USFWS; WOOD TURTLE BY DIANE BAEDEKER PETIT/US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE; PG. 4, POLAR BEAR BY ANSGAR WALK/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

by Kassie Siegel

Confronting Obama's Polar Bear Extinction Plan

Polar bears are drowning and starving as their sea-ice habitat melts away. Without swift action, more than two-thirds of the planet's polar bears will likely be gone by 2050, pushed toward extinction by shrinking sea ice.

Yet the Obama administration recently announced plans to reissue a Bush-era regulation sharply limiting Endangered Species Act protections for the bears.

The Center for Biological Diversity is speaking out against this proposed "special rule," which fails to address the biggest threat to polar bears: the greenhouse gas pollution warming and melting the Arctic. The proposal also reduces protections bears would normally receive from oil-industry activity in their Alaska habitat.

If polar bears are going to survive, they need the full protection of the Endangered Species Act. The Obama administration's proposed special rule is a terrible blow to these amazing animals. A conservation rule that blocks the very actions needed to save the polar bears is no conservation rule at all; it's an extinction plan.

Last year, sea ice covering the Arctic Ocean declined to the second-lowest extent on record, according to NASA satellite data. Bears need that ice for hunting and mating. Some female bears also dig maternity dens in snow drifts on sea ice.

Researchers have tracked a female bear swimming for nine days without rest through the Beaufort Sea before she found a sea-ice platform. She survived, but her cub drowned.

In 2008, polar bears became the first species added to the threatened species list solely because of threats from global warming. That designation resulted from a legal petition and several lawsuits from the Center and allies.

But the Bush administration simultaneously issued a special rule under section 4(d) of the Endangered Species Act that gave the polar bear fewer protections than other species. The rule specifically exempted greenhouse gas emissions from programs that would have helped reduce them.

A similar rule was finalized in December 2008 and defended in court by the Obama administration. Last year, a federal judge struck the rule down because of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's failure to conduct an environmental review of its impacts.

Now the special rule is back. Unless the public speaks out forcefully, the regulation will go into effect — and that could be the last straw for this magnificent species.

But there is hope. The United States has the technology to reduce greenhouse gas pollution and the strong, successful laws that can help make it happen.

Public outrage could still convince the Fish and Wildlife Service to drop this misguided extinction plan for polar bears and replace it with a rule that provides for real conservation. The rule is scheduled for finalization by the end of 2012.

On the Web: *To help save polar bears visit us at* **SaveThePolarBear.org**

Kassie Siegel is senior counsel and director of the Center's Climate Law Institute.

by Noah Greenwald

One Year Later:

Historic Settlement Moves Hundreds Toward Endangered Species Act Protection

In 2011, the Center for Biological Diversity reached a historic agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requiring the agency to make protection decisions for a whopping 757 species over the next five years.

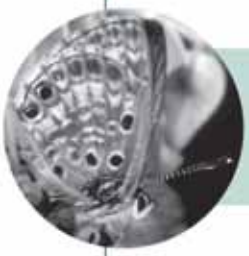
The agreement is the culmination of more than a decade of Center work to break a logjam in the Endangered Species Act's listing program that had left hundreds of deserving species without desperately needed protection. During that time we filed multiple petitions to protect animals and plants under the Act — including one for 225 "candidate" species, filed in 2004 — and carried out extensive research, policy advocacy and litigation to bring protection to these species, along with high-profile media outreach to educate the public about the government's failure to do so. With the agreement in place for just over a year now, we're seeing tremendous results: Hundreds of plants and animals are already closer to the help they need to survive.

So far, under our agreement, the Fish and Wildlife Service has made protection decisions for 533 species (note that several decisions are required for each species along the path to listing). Of these 533, a total of 494 received positive decisions, for a success rate of 93 percent so far — meaning the agency, by and large, is deciding in species' favor. Seventeen species, including Miami blue butterflies, Ozark hellbenders, Altamaha spinymussels and parachute beardtongues, were taken across the finish line and are now fully protected as threatened or endangered species, many with designated critical habitat that's protected.

Another 34 species were proposed for that protection, meaning they need and deserve it and will be granted it within a year. Proposed "candidate" species include 23 species from Oahu, Hawaii — among others, the crimson Hawaiian damselfly, Oahu prickly-ash and Takeuch's lip fern — eight southeastern freshwater mussels with colorful names like "fuzzy pigtoe" and "Alabama pearlshell," and two springsnails from Arizona, along with a dime-sized frog from Puerto Rico called the coquí llanero.

Finally, an astounding 440 species for which the Center either petitioned or sued received initial positive decisions and

DECISION TIMELINE



2011

Miami blue butterfly, Oklahoma grass pink orchid, plains bison, longfin smelt and 567 other species

2012

Mexican wolf, San Bernardino flying squirrel, Gunnison sage grouse and 178 other species

2013

Yellow-billed cuckoo, American wolverine, Oregon spotted frog, Dakota skipper and 108 other species

2014

Pacific fisher, Rio Grande cutthroat trout, Kittlitz's murrelet, Yosemite toad and 21 other species

2015

Greater sage grouse, Montana grayling, Tucson shovel-nosed snake and 48 other species

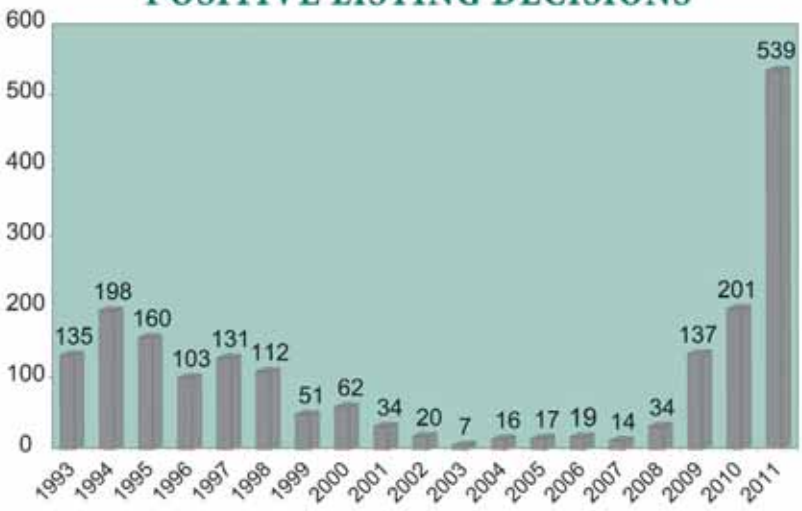
2016

'I'iwi, yellow-billed loon, relict leopard frog, Tahoe yellow cress, roundtail and headwater chubs, and 39 other species

2017

Pacific walrus

POSITIVE LISTING DECISIONS



In 2011, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service made 539 "positive" decisions that a species warranted protection or needed more review. The vast majority of decisions were part of the Center's agreement on 757 species.

will now receive full status reviews. These decisions included the biggest single finding of its kind, which covered 374 species and came in response to our petition to protect 404 southeastern aquatic and wetland species. We filed the petition in recognition of the tremendous biodiversity in the Southeast's rivers, which is rapidly being lost to forces like urban sprawl, pollution and dams. With so many species in the hopper for protection, the region will have no choice but to recognize, and try to reduce, the tremendous impact its growing population is having on its life-giving waters.

During the rest of 2012, many more species will see protection; we expect good news on the Jollyville Plateau salamander and three other endemic salamanders from Texas that are stressed by urban sprawl and pumping of groundwater from the Edwards Aquifer, as well as 12 species dependent on the vanishing prairies of the Puget Sound and Willamette Valley (such as Taylor's checkerspot butterflies, Mardon skippers, eight subspecies of Mazama pocket gophers and streaked horned larks).

With this historic settlement agreement and its far-reaching results for animals and plants around the country, the Center is bringing the tragedy of the extinction crisis into sharper focus and expanding our work to safeguard as much as we can of the forests, rivers, deserts, grasslands and oceans our native species need to weather the changes facing the planet.

Noah Greenwald is the Center's Endangered Species program director in Portland, Ore.

Your support saves species great and small.

The Center for Biological Diversity's landmark 2011 settlement to move 757 species closer to protection was a momentous conclusion to our decade-long campaign. Already, positive government rulings are vindicating years of hard work by the Center on behalf of these species, every one of which we worked hard to protect before achieving our historic agreement — well-known species like the Pacific fisher and American wolverine, and more unassuming ones too, like the Rosemont talus snail and least chub. Extinction doesn't discriminate, and neither do we.

For nearly 40 years, the Endangered Species Act has protected almost 1,400 species from extinction, with a 99 percent success rate — but of course it can only save, and then recover, those species lucky enough to be listed. Now, thanks to the strong backing of our members and the hard work and expertise of Center staff, the number of species protected under the Endangered Species Act is on track to increase by as much as 50 percent. As you celebrate this extraordinary victory, know that your unwavering support is what made it possible.

But there's no time to waste. Even now, climate change, overpopulation and shortsighted decision-making continue to threaten species with extinction, while special interests and antigovernment politicians seek to undermine the Act — along with other laws that protect our natural heritage and life-support systems. We're not only fighting to protect individual animals and plants, after all; we're fighting for the principle of protection itself — and therefore for the future of life on Earth. Industry groups and the right-wing politicians who represent them are attacking not only the laws that protect wildlife and human health but, in fact, the fundamental idea of those laws. And we're fighting hard to stop them.

With your steadfast support, we'll aggressively defend the Endangered Species Act and other crucial safety nets, as well as the specific creatures they protect. Stay with us in the fight by mailing a gift to the Center in the enclosed envelope. You can also give online at donate.biologicaldiversity.org or call us toll-free at (866) 357-3349. Your donation will help us save not only individual species but the basic building blocks of wildlife protection. Thank you. •

YOUR GENEROUS GIFT CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

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by Miyoko Sakashita

The Fight to Save Sea Life

Campaign Takes National Action to Curb Ocean Acidification

Splayed out on ice at Seattle's Pike Place Market, the ocean's bounty looked less than tempting to me. Even the salmon flying through the air to catch customers' attention didn't call out my name. Yet there I was, about to give a lecture at the University of Washington on the importance of protecting fisheries. In particular, I was there to talk about the risk to the planet's oceans from acidification.

Although I've never acquired a taste for seafood, I'm deeply saddened that society is on a path that could destroy our oceans' biodiversity, including the fish billions of people depend on. As the oceans absorb carbon dioxide pollution from factories and cars, seawater is becoming more acidic. Before the end of the century, 75 percent of the ocean will be corrosive to marine life — making it difficult for many of the ocean's creatures to build the shells and skeletons they need to survive. The effects will ripple from there to fish, marine mammals and eventually us.

That's why the Center for Biological Diversity has started a new campaign called Endangered Oceans, urging President Obama and the Environmental Protection Agency to develop a bold plan to address ocean acidification. And we're asking them to make it a national priority. Decisive action can save sea life as we know it — but we need the public behind us, pressing our leaders to take that action now, before it's too late.

The Puget Sound is ground zero for the real-life impacts of ocean acidification. Shellfish hatcheries along its inlets have suffered massive oyster die-offs for the past six years, with collapses of 80 percent of oyster production in some years. Noting the vulnerability of the Pacific Northwest to ocean acidification, in 2009, the Center for Biological Diversity filed the first — and to date only — lawsuit over ocean acidification, challenging the EPA's failure to address the problem in the state of Washington. In settling that case, the agency acknowledged that states have to assess their waters for ocean acidification under the Clean Water Act; after some prompting from us in 2011, the state added Puget Sound to a list of "waters of concern" under threat from ocean acidification. Studies of the sound confirmed unusually high acidity in the waters, a significant portion of which results from CO^2 .

From the moment I arrived at the university, my day was packed meeting with faculty, students and government scientists who impressed me by how much they knew about ocean acidification. At the nation's premier lab studying the effects of ocean acidification, I watched buckets bubble with CO^2 as doomed sea animals were bathed in waters mimicking our future oceans.

As the auditorium filled with scientists for my presentation, it became clear to me that my role there was to create a link between science and policy. On the national and international stage, that bridge is the single-most important key to addressing the acidification crisis. Ocean science must inform policy responses. Marine scientists, like the fishmongers throwing fish to catch attention, are warning us clearly that acidification is taking us on the path of ecological collapse for our oceans. They've said it in the plainest of terms: Our oceans are more acidic than they have ever been; the last time ocean acidity changed so rapidly, 55 million years ago, 96 percent of marine species went extinct; our coral reefs will be destroyed within decades; our fisheries and shellfish have an uncertain future.

The oceans will fundamentally change, and many things we care about, such as fish, corals and shellfish, are in trouble. But if we take prompt action to reduce CO^2 pollution, we can still save much of the ocean's wildlife.

Read about our new campaign, sign our petition, and learn more about what's at stake from ocean acidification at **EndangeredOceans.org.**

Miyoko Sakashita, senior attorney, directs the Center's Oceans program from San Francisco.

West Coast: A New Frontier for Wolf Recovery

The mysterious and faraway howls of wolves, absent for so long from the American West, are beginning to be heard again in the wilds of the interior. But in the coastal states, they've made little headway — until now. Thanks to the work of the Center for Biological Diversity and a new coalition of more than 20 allies, wolves are slowly returning to their ancestral homelands up and down the West Coast.

In Oregon, a small but growing population of wolves — including the pioneering Imnaha pack emigrants that crossed the Snake River from Idaho in 2008 — has been successfully breeding for several years. The Center has fought long and hard to keep the highest levels of protection for the seminal Rocky Mountain population, the source of Oregon's wolves. The Oregon population — the first wolves to successfully reside in the state in 60 years — is now officially up to 29 wolves, and with this winter's wolf pups may be even higher.

Sadly, some Oregon ranchers have been pressuring the state to exterminate wolves. Last fall, with federal Endangered Species Act protection lifted — and after state officials had shot several wolves — the Center had to step in and file an emergency suit. With Oregon Fish and Wildlife officials closing in, we used the Oregon Endangered Species Act to stop the killing the very day we filed. Oregon wolves have been protected, if only temporarily, ever since. The state agency is itching to resume the killing, but with the leverage of our lawsuit, negotiations are ensuring that the triggers don't get pulled.

With a better wolf plan and wolves entering the state from both Idaho in the east and Canada in the north, the several dozen wolves in Washington are probably faring best among coastal states. But the big story of the year is definitely the world-famous wandering wolf, OR-7, of the Imnaha pack, who became the first and only wolf documented to cross the state line into California since 1924. This thousand-plus-mile traveler started in northeastern Oregon, a scion of a pack targeted for destruction. Latest reports have him staking out northeastern California, probably harboring hopes that a mate will soon follow his scent to the Golden State.

Whether or not OR-7 begins a family in California, the Center is already working to make the state's wildest places safe for wolves. Thanks to generous member support, we recently filed a petition to list wolves as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act and have called on wildlife managers to work with ranchers to use non-lethal means to avoid conflicts with wolves before they start.

SHAWN KINCADE/FLICKR

The Center successfully halted state wolf kills in Oregon and has petitioned for wolf protection in California — following the trailblazing of wolf OR-7 — preparing for the return of wild howls to the state.

The latest science confirms what we've long suspected: Through complex ecological interactions, bringing wolves back to an ecosystem changes everything, from wildflowers to wetlands, for the better. With wolves roaming the northern Rockies again, the Center and its members will continue the fight to make sure that the wolf's howl is soon heard on the West Coast too.

WOLF TRACKS IN CALIFORNIA

On Dec. 28, 2011, a former Imnaha pack male, collared and named OR-7 by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, wandered alone into Northern California, the first wolf recorded in the state since 1924. How much longer before California wolf packs roam the wild?

COURTESY OF CALIFORNIA DFG

Six-inch wolf track found in California.

Tim Ream is a staff attorney with the Center's Endangered Species program in San Francisco.

JIM ROSABAUGH/USFWS

In March, following years of advocacy from the Center, the Chiricahua leopard frog recieved 10,346 acres of protected critical habitat. This is a crucial victory for a species that needs permanent water for reproduction. Southwest riparian areas are often destroyed by livestock grazing, groundwater pumping, water diversion and dams. Meanwhile, nonnative predators like bullfrogs, fishes and crayfish feast on the frog, and fungal disease and global forces — from elevated ultraviolet radiation to pesticides to climate change — pose significant threats.

Critical habitat protected for sea turtles, rare fish, desert frog

Saving endangered animals and plants means saving the places they live. And already this year, the Center for Biological Diversity's efforts to protect species' critical habitat have resulted in the protection of millions of acres.

In late January, the National Marine Fisheries Service finalized protection of 40,000 square miles of protected critical ocean habitat off the shores of Washington, Oregon and California for endangered Pacific leatherback sea turtles. Coming in response to our 2007 coalition lawsuit, the decision is the first permanent safe haven for leatherbacks in continental U.S. waters and the largest area ever set aside to protect sea turtles in the United States.

The Chiricahua leopard frog, which the Center has fought for more than a decade to save, recieved 10,346 acres of protected critical habitat in March. The new protections in Arizona and New Mexico will safeguard the permanent water sources the frog needs to rebound from severe population decline. The threatened leopard frog was once common in the Southwest but today occupies less than 20 percent of its historic range.

Also in the Southwest, 700 river miles were protected as habitat for the spikedace and loach minnow, two Southwestern fish that have disappeared from more than 80 percent of their historic ranges. In addition, two tiny Southwest springsnails and 19 acres of critical habitat were recently protected under the Endangered Species Act. The Threeforks springsnail and San Bernardino springsnail are found in only a handful of springs in Arizona and New Mexico.

The protection of these areas will have tangible, positive effects for the animals and plants that call them home — studies show that species with protected habitat are twice as likely to recover as those without it.

Center supporters fight Keystone XL pipeline and Arctic drilling

When the Center asked supporters to take action over two important issues — a new push in Congress to permit the Keystone XL pipeline and an application by Shell Oil to drill in Alaska's Arctic waters — the response was immediate and overwhelming. Time and again Center supporters have shown themselves to be activists dedicated to confronting environmental catastrophes before they happen.

In February more than 793,000 messages were sent from around the country with a powerful message to Congress: Don't build the Keystone XL. The massive bundle of signed petitions, gathered in less than 24 hours, followed earlier mass protests. Last summer more than 1,000 anti-pipeline protesters

were arrested at demonstrations in D.C., and some 12,000 people encircled the White House later in the fall.

Widespread and passionate public opposition to the pipeline is a crucial component to defeating a project that would transport up to 35 million gallons of dirty tar-sands oil from Canada across 1,700 miles, six states and hundreds of water bodies, posing a huge risk of oil spills.

In May, Center supporters also joined more than 1 million people to call on President Barack Obama to stop Shell Oil from drilling in Alaska this summer. Shell's ships are already on the way and the Obama administration has shown troubling signs of allowing the company to drill exploratory wells in the Chukchi and Beaufort seas off Alaska. The million-plus petitions were delivered to the White House, where people gathered to protest offshore oil exploration in the country's Arctic.

Since then, the Center and our allies have been sued by Shell Oil — but they won't silence us or the many other Americans who want to save the Arctic and its irreplaceable wildlife from drillships.

© JOHN MORAN

Increased fossil fuel use and offshore drilling affect a number of Arctic species, including the ringed seal.

Major U.S. cities join Clean Air Cities campaign

There's a growing chorus of cities in the United States calling for urgent action on climate change.

So far this year, some of the largest cities in the U.S. — Las Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, and Tampa Bay — have joined the Center's Clean Air Cities campaign by passing an important resolution in support of the Clean Air Act calling for a reduction of the carbon pollution that's driving global warming.

With national leaders failing to address the climate crisis, cities around the country are providing a powerful voice for action. Launched in September 2011, the Center's campaign relies on volunteers from coast to coast to urge their local elected officials to pass resolutions in support of the Environmental Protection Agency using the Clean Air Act to reduce carbon in our atmosphere to no more than 350 parts per million — the level scientists say is needed to avoid catastrophic climate change.

Already city councils in 28 cities — representing more than 9 million people — have signed onto the campaign.

The fact is the Clean Air Act works. For four decades the Act has delivered cleaner air while providing economic benefits that have exceeded costs by at least 30 times. Used to its fullest potential, the Clean Air Act can play a significant role in achieving the deep cuts in carbon pollution needed to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

Other cities on board include Albany, N.Y.; Berkeley, Santa Monica, Arcata, Oxnard, Santa Cruz and Richmond, Calif.; Seattle, Wash.; Tucson, Ariz.; Boone, N.C.; Cambridge, Mass; Oberlin, Ohio; Santa Fe, N.M., Kansas City, Mo., Northampton, Mass., and Pinecrest, Fla.

Find out how to make your city next by visiting **CleanAirCities.org**.

GRATTACIELI/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Chicago became the 25th city to join the Center's Clean Air Cities campaign, May 9, 2012.

Stay up to date with each week's Center news online

Our work on these and dozens of other campaigns unfolds at a fast and furious pace throughout the year. Fortunately, there's a way you can get the most up-to-date news on our most recent wins for wildlife and opportunities to take action, delivered straight to your inbox: Join the ranks of more than a quarter-million readers who subscribe to *Endangered Earth Online*, the Center's weekly e-newsletter, at **www.Join.BiologicalDiversity.org**.

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Scan the QR barcode with your smart phone to read breaking news on Center campaigns.

Signs of Success

From the Director

Kierán Suckling

The first half of 2012 has changed the landscape for imperlied wildlife in the U.S.

In May we released a report called *On Time, On Target: How the Endangered Species Act Is Saving America's Wildlife.* It studied 110 protected plants and animals to see how far they'd come since being listed under the Act. Our analysis found that 90 percent were recovering on pace to meet federal recovery goals — by any measure an impressive success rate.

And it's far more than just numbers on a page. We're seeing real, lifesaving results from the Act on the ground: The number of blue whales, Aleutian Canada geese and Puerto Rican parrots, to name but a few, has dramatically risen. They aren't recovered yet, but they're getting there.

We took these success stories — you can read them at ESAsuccess.org — to Washington, D.C to defend the Act from right-wingers in Congress who complain that the Act is failing and needs "reform."

Meanwhile, in the year since our historic agreement to speed protection decisions for 757 plants and animals, we've seen positive decisions on nearly 500 species, and 17 have gotten final Endangered Species Act protection, including the Ozark hellbender salamander and Miami blue butterfly.

We plan to file a huge petition to protect about 50 of the country's rarest and least protected frogs, turtles, snakes, lizards and other reptiles and amphibians. These "herpetofauna" are among the most endangered species on Earth.

Meanwhile our new Clean Air Cities campaign has already mobilized more than two dozen cities calling for groundbreaking national action on the climate crisis. Las Angeles, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Minneapolis, Salt Lake City and others have all passed resolutions asking national leaders to use the Clean Air Act to curb global warming.

Thank you for being a part of all we do.

FRONT COVER IMAGE: OREGON SPOTTED FROG BY KELLY MCALLISTER/WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE. BACK COVER FROG BY KELLY MCALLISTER/WASHINGTON DFW

Endangered earth is the membership newsletter of the Center for Biological Diversity. With the support of more than 375,000 members and online activists, the Center works through science, law and creative media to secure a future for all species, great or small, hovering on the brink of extinction. *Endangered Earth* is published three times yearly in January, July and October and printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper with solvent-free vegetable-based inks.

To become a member or give a gift membership, contact us at (866) 357-3349 x. 316 or membership@biologicaldiversity.org; send a check to Center for Biological Diversity, Membership, P.O. Box 710, Tucson, AZ, 85702-0710; or visit the "Support" page on our secure server: **www.BiologicalDiversity.org.** Contributions are tax deductible. Our tax ID # is 27-3943866

Sign up to join our E-list at Join.BiologicalDiversity.org to recieve the latestest endangered species news, find out how to become a biodiversity activist and plug into the Center's campaigns.

CENTER for BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Because life is good.