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# Organizing to Save the Endangered Species Act

Claudia Eyzaguirre

Audubon California 2006





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# Campaign Plan

## **Background:**

- As you may know, Rep. Richard Pombo (CA-16) passed a bill, HR 3824 - the “Extinction Bill”, in the House of Representatives that would gut the Endangered Species Act. Now that bill has passed to the Senate. Unfortunately, any bill passed the Senate will conference with Pombo’s bill and the result will be a compromise we cannot stand by. The decision is in the hands of the Senate. Senator Boxer we can count on to stand strong on the ESA. However, we must apply pressure to Senator Diane Feinstein to stand up for protection of endangered species and to oppose any changes to the ESA or compromises with Richard Pombo.
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# Objective:

- First: to secure Senator Feinstein's position on endangered species protection and critical habitat.
  - Second: to raise Audubon's profile as lead voices in species and habitat protection through a coordinated statewide Audubon effort.
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# Strategy:

- To shift the dialogue of ESA to the successes of protection of bird and other species, and to show strong statewide support for the ESA through earned media to Audubon Society birds walks, letters, and calls to Senator Feinstein's office culminating with a lobby visit to her DC office.
  - To identify key individuals who have access to Feinstein, especially business leaders and ranchers/landowners who support the ESA.
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# Tactics:

- *Grassroots:* 10+ Endangered Species Field Trips: Chapters lead a **field trip/birding outing** dedicated to observing endangered species and critical habitat in January. Use the trip as a sound board for a pro- ESA message. Chapters invite local reporters to the trips to receive media coverage. Chapters also invite local Representatives and key scientists.
  - *Lobby:* Glenn Olson and 2-6 chapter leaders meet with Senator Feinstein in late winter in DC bringing **50 chapter endorsement letters** and representing an Audubon position.
  - *Grasstips:* Identify individuals among our board and donor base that have high-level access to Senator Feinstein. These individuals deliver our message to the Senator.
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**Message:**

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## **Taking Action: Endangered Species Field Trip**

- Audubon California chapters lead one field trip in January dedicated to the viewing of endangered species and their habitat. The trip can focus on endangered species or on Critical Habitat (for a non-avian species) that has benefited many species under the ESA.
  - Action organizers will invite local reporters and media to the event as well as scientists and supportive politicians. The ESA is a hot issue in the news and a newsworthy event like this will attract reporters.
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# HOW TO:

- Audubon chapter leaders are experienced field trip organizers so each chapter can choose a good location and date (or re-bill an existing trip). The best times for inviting reporters are weekdays in the late morning. However that may not coincide with best birding/participant turn-out times.
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- Invite a local scientist who specializes on a endangered specie. This will increase turnout, media attention and Feinstein listens to scientists. Same for a local politician.
  - Publicize the trip in local print calendars, on local radio stations and with other enviro groups and school groups.
  - Send a press advisory to your local newspapers, radio stations and TV. [Claudia will provide a template.]
  - Call local outdoor, environment and political reporters and invite them to the event.
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# Endangered Species Field Trip:

- Have event, tell the ESA success story and ask participants to call or write Feinstein (ask them to call her right then on their cell phones!)
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- Follow up on media by sending a press release to the newspapers. They often print these word for word! [Template provided]
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# Tips to get good media coverage:

- Focus the story on a local angle (...longtime resident and birder has been watching and counting brown pelicans for 3 decades first with her dad and now with her grandchildren and seen their improvement under the ESA...)
  - Call reporters in the mornings. Tell them about this newsworthy event. Ask them if they saw the press advisory.
  - Use the talking points to get the message out.
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## 5 Chapters Held ESA field trip events

- Buena Vista Audubon
  - Santa Clara Audubon
  - Wintu Audubon
  - San Mateo Audubon
  - La Purisima Audubon
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# Great Success!

**Record Searchlight** TUESDAY  
January 24, 2006  
Reading, California  
\$7 news  
rodding.com



**MASTER OF ITS DOMAIN:**  
A young bald eagle perches on a limb overlooking the Battle Creek State Wildlife Area east of Anderson on Monday. The wildlife area is home to a healthy bald eagle population because of salmon-rich Battle Creek, which feeds the birds through much of the year.

**Eagles' future a hot topic**

Lucia Malley / Record Searchlight



# OPINION

## Endangered Species Act helps us all

ANDY MAURO

Why is the Endangered Species Act under attack? The 1973 law, passed under a Republican administration with full bipartisan support, is considered the cornerstone of the modern conservation movement. It's described as one of the world's most significant environmental laws.

The ESA has been wildly successful in preventing the extinction of endangered wildlife in America. It has accomplished this by making it illegal to kill listed species and by establishing recovery plans which set aside critical habitat. Approximately 1,300 species have been listed for protection over the last 30 years, and over 99 percent are still with us today. That success story includes such well-known species as the grizzly bear, timber wolf, bald eagle, American alligator, peregrine falcon and California condor.

Despite its success, some in Washington want to drastically change the ESA. Backers of current efforts to amend it seem to assign no social value to preserving America's plants and animals as a legacy for future generations. Their version of a new Endangered Species

Act would have political appointees evaluating the threat of extinction for a species, instead of trained biologists. In essence, their new ESA would make complying with the law a voluntary

decision by landowners, requiring the government to pay those who choose not to kill our endangered species.

The proposed changes would effectively eliminate wildlife conservation from the American agenda.

The Endangered Species Act is important to San Diego County. We have more endangered and threatened species than any other county in the continental United States. As an alternative to enacting numerous individual species recovery plans, San Diego County is using a new approach to wildlife conservation — the creation of Multiple Habitat Conservation Plans. A MHCP preserves the large connected parcels of habitat needed for the survival of numerous sensitive species. At the same time it also ensures landowners receive fair returns on their holdings, including guaranteed development rights on portions of their property. Large parcels of quality wildlife habitat are being set

aside, while lands more suitable for development are being identified for expedited permitting. Everyone wins.

We're blessed in North County to have several ecological reserves which offer a protected home to many sensitive species of wildlife. As many as 10 different species of critically endangered or threatened birds can be found at the San Elijo Lagoon.

The Buena Vista Audubon Society and San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy will be co-hosting an "Endangered Species Hunt" at San Elijo Lagoon on Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon. All are welcome to join in the walk. We'll meet at the trail head at the north end of Rios Avenue in Solana Beach. Call the conservancy office at (760) 436-3944, or visit [www.bvaudubon.org](http://www.bvaudubon.org) for more information.

It's not just our native wildlife that benefits from the Endangered Species Act. As we protect the last remaining nesting sites of the gnatcatcher, we also preserve large swaths of natural open space, enhancing our own quality of life. When we help nature, we help ourselves.

Andy Mauro is conservation chairman of the Buena Vista Audubon Society.

COMMUNITY FORUM

## REP. POMBO'S PLAN WOULD REMOVE KEY PART OF ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT



### ENDANGERED

#### San Joaquin kit fox

listed as endangered in 1967.

Habitat: Contra Costa, Alameda, Santa Clara counties.

Hundreds of foxes were killed by strychnine-poisoned bait used to kill coyotes. Fumigants, used to kill burrowing rodents, and rodenticides can be fatal to the foxes, which weigh about 5 pounds.



### THREATENED

#### Western snowy plover

listed as threatened in 1993.

Habitat: All coastal counties.

Organochlorines such as endosulfan and the banned DDT reduce egg production and damage embryos of the small shorebirds.



### THREATENED

#### Alameda whipsnake

listed as threatened in 1997.

Habitat: Alameda, Santa Clara counties.

The fast-moving slender black snake with yellow-orange racing stripes can be harmed by rodenticides, herbicides and insecticides consumed by their prey. They live in grassland and chaparral.



### ENDANGERED

#### California freshwater shrimp

listed as endangered in 1988.

Habitat: Marin, Sonoma, Napa counties.

Organophosphates such as chlorpyrifos, diazinon and diazinon have run off farms and households into creeks and pools, where they can poison the shrimp.

Source: Center for Biological Diversity  
Illustrations by JOHN BUCKWOLD/The Chronicle



### ENDANGERED

#### Lange's metalmark butterfly

listed as endangered in 1976.

Habitat: Contra Costa County.

The only remaining butterflies live in the Antioch Dunes National Wildlife Refuge. Pesticides drifting onto the refuge harm them and the insects that pollinate their food plant, the naked-stemmed buckwheat.



### THREATENED

#### California tiger salamander

listed as threatened in 2004.

Habitat: Sonoma, Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda, Santa Clara counties.

Toxic agricultural and landscaping chemicals, including endosulfan, can paralyze, delay metamorphosis of and kill the sensitive amphibian, particularly vulnerable because of permeable skin.

# A move to ease pesticide laws

CURRENT RULES FOR PESTICIDES

By Iane Kay

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has an opportunity to



### County to consider 33-year-old Endangered Species Act

**By Michelle D'Amico**  
SMDAILYJOURNAL.COM

San Mateo County supervisors will consider passing a resolution Tuesday endorsing the Endangered Species Act, a 33-year-old bill that may be jeopardized itself by pending federal legislation authored by a California representative.

Supervisor Jerry Hill will ask the board to pass a resolution expressing support of the act and opposing the authority to keep it silent. The act is particularly important to San Mateo County, according to Hill's proposal, because more than 330 species of endangered animals reside in the Bay Area.

"Many of those residing in San Mateo County include such as Marbled Murrelets, Ridgway's Pipit, San Diego Redwings and the western Goshawk, Swift and Barn Swallow to name the Elementary School in San Bruno, an officially designated species of concern and have been listed as threatened or endangered," Hill stated in a memo on the resolution.

Hill proposed passage of the endangered species bill, including the San Mateo Chapter, according to county data. The park, also known as Endangered, has a long history.

San ACT, Page 43

THE RIGHT HOUR | INJURED? | YOUNG MEN OF THE YEAR

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And more chapters to come?

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## **Ways I can help:**

- Help with “newsy” write up of the trip
  - Letters to the editor (LTE) sample
  - Provide talking points
  - Finding the right reporters to call
  - Making reporter calls
  - Provide Press Advisory and Release
  - General Consulting
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