



## POSITION STATEMENT:

# Endangered Species Act

## ICWP RECOMMENDS:

1. Congress needs to adequately fund the ESA recovery programs within the budgets of the responsible federal agencies.
2. Any ESA reauthorization legislation should include and encourage the elements described in the “Policy Considerations” section of this statement and make it possible for the responsible federal agencies to concentrate on ESA recovery efforts, rather than those driven by the petition process and litigation.
3. An integrated, river basin approach needs to be applied by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service in their listing, consultation and recovery efforts under the ESA. Existing interstate river basin commissions and organizations can provide an effective structure for addressing habitat needs on a watershed basis.
4. Recovery efforts should be accomplished through river basin scale, multi-species recovery implementation programs. Avenues for participation by impacted stakeholders need to be included as a part of these recovery implementation programs.
1. Adaptive management is an important concept to recovery efforts. As new science related to the recovery of the species is completed, changes should be made to the recovery efforts integrating the new scientific information.

## POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

ICWP is supportive of the overall goals of the Endangered Species Act as established in 1973. A healthy, diverse biological community is important and should be maintained or enhanced when possible. However, the application of the ESA must be carefully implemented in conjunction with the need to sustain healthy economies across the country.

ICWP supports multi-party, multi-state recovery programs and encourages the Congress and the federal agencies to direct adequate resources toward these programs. River basins should be used as the planning units rather than arbitrary political state/regional boundaries. In river basins where existing interstate river basin commissions or organizations are in place, the federal agencies are encouraged to seek out these interstate groups and utilize their expertise and capabilities.

ICWP is supportive of the use of adaptive management strategies in making mid-course corrections in recovery efforts, provided the affected parties are involved in the adaptive management decision making process, including states, tribes and landowners.

ICWP is supportive of the use of the multi-species approach for the management and recovery of endangered species. The piecemeal approach to listing and recovery has not been efficient and too many species' populations continue to decline. More effort needs to be directed toward species with decreasing populations to get the trend turned around before listing is necessary.

The role of states in the listing, recovery and delisting process needs to be continued and more fully utilized by the responsible federal agencies. In many cases, the state agencies and other local resource management agencies have the most accurate and complete population and habitat information. The states, tribes and general public need to have greater access to the information gathered, analyzed and ultimately used by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service in making their listing, habitat, consultation or other

decisions under the ESA. The federal agencies need to work more cooperatively with state agencies as they make their listing, recovery planning and delisting decisions.

The Section 7 consultation process needs to be open to those who could be impacted by the consultation to participate. This applies particularly to private landowners who may be providing habitat for the species of concern.

ICWP is supportive of the use of Habitat Conservation Plans and encourages the Services to expand their use, and to speed up the process of getting an HCP approved and in place.

ICWP supports strong incentives for private landowners like the Safe Harbor and No Surprises policies, giving private landowners additional incentives and surety if endangered species are found on their lands. Landowners should be rewarded for having preserved the type of habitat necessary for the species.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This position statement was initially adopted by the ICWP Board of Directors in 2002 and was subsequently reviewed by the ICWP Legislation & Policy Committee and the ICWP Board of Directors and updated by a vote of the ICWP Membership on October 29, 2008 and on December 1, 2010. It will continue in effect until December 2013 unless revised or archived at an earlier time by the Board of Directors or by the Membership.