



## **State Wildlife Grants: The Nation's Core Program for Preventing Wildlife from Becoming Endangered**

### ***What Are State Wildlife Grants?***

The State Wildlife Grants program provides federal dollars to every state and territory to support cost-effective conservation aimed at preventing wildlife from becoming endangered. Congress created the program in 2001 as part of the Conservation Trust Fund. Funds appropriated under the State Wildlife Grants program are allocated to the states according to a formula that takes into account each state's size and population.

### ***America's Wildlife at Stake***

United States laws and policies place the primary responsibility for wildlife management in the hands of the 50 states. State fish and wildlife agencies have a lengthy success record of conserving game species, thanks to the contributions of hunter and angler license fees and federal excise taxes.

But 90 percent of our nation's wildlife is not hunted or fished for. The result? There is a serious gap in wildlife conservation funding, and thousands of species are falling through the cracks. More than 1,000 species are already listed as federally threatened and endangered, with many more under consideration.

### ***Funding for On-The-Ground Wildlife Conservation***

State Wildlife Grants support projects that prevent wildlife from declining to the point of being endangered. The goal of the program is to *keep common species common*. Projects supported by State Wildlife Grants restore degraded habitat, reintroduce native wildlife, develop partnerships with private landowners, educate the public, and collect data to find out more about declining species. Statewide strategic plans, currently being developed by each state, will ensure that funds are spent wisely and effectively on actions to restore and enhance wildlife populations and habitat.

### ***Fiscally Responsible Conservation***

State Wildlife Grants save taxpayers millions of dollars. Taking action to conserve wildlife before it becomes endangered is environmentally sound and fiscally responsible. Once a species drops to the point of potential extinction, recovery efforts become risky and expensive. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. A non-federal match requirement assures local ownership and leverages funds to support conservation. For each federal dollar appropriated, double or more funds are generated from other sources.

### ***Broad and Bipartisan Support***

A boost in funding for 2004 to \$70 million (from \$65 million in 2003) demonstrates the high level of bipartisan backing in Congress during lean economic times. The Teaming With Wildlife coalition – made up of more than 3,000 groups, including hunters and anglers, environmentalists, and tourism and other nature-related businesses – is united to support a bright future for America's wildlife.