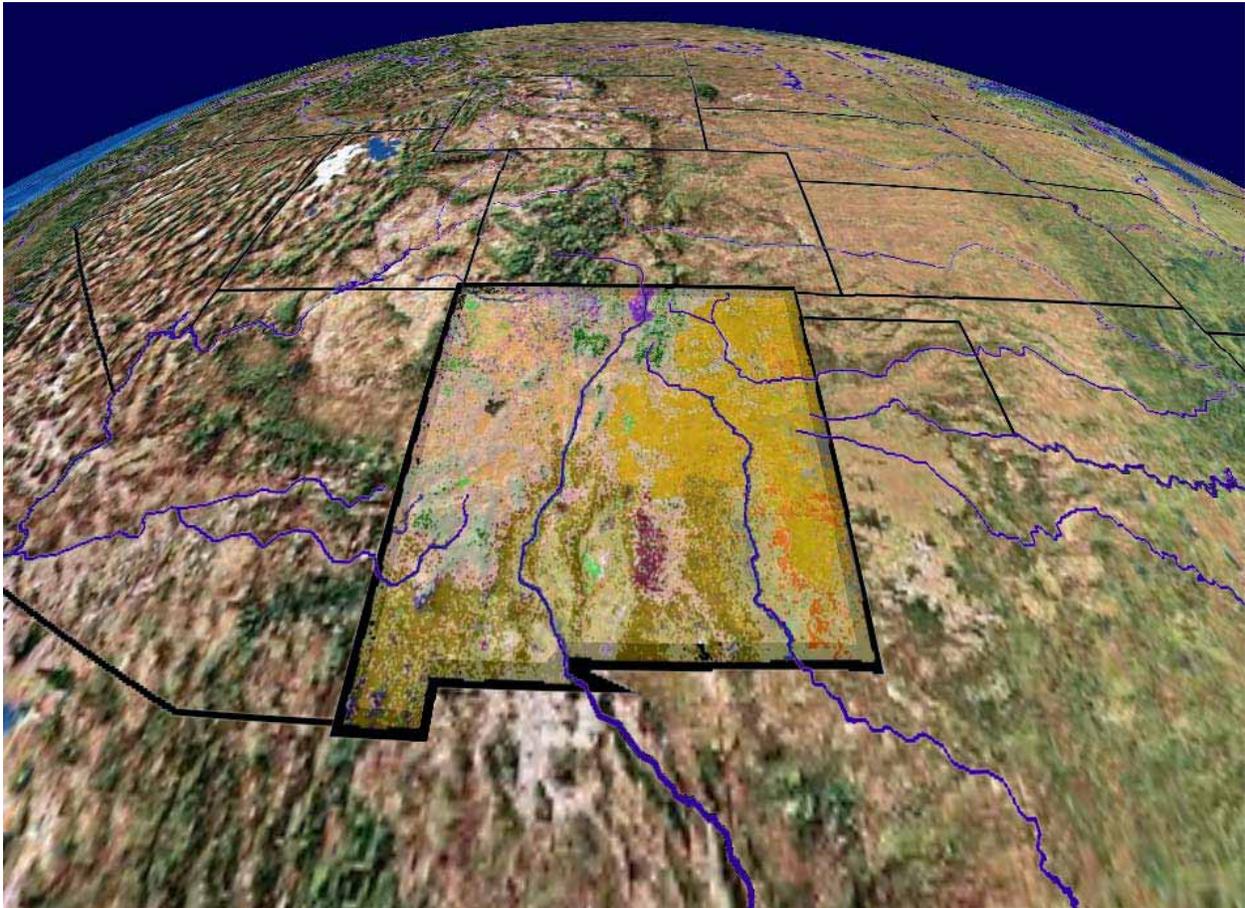


Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy For New Mexico



Prepared by:

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

In cooperation with:

Over 170 public agencies, conservation organizations, commodity interests, municipalities, private partners, and tribal representatives.

February 14, 2006

Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy

For New Mexico

Recommended Citation:

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New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
P.O. Box 25112
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

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State of New Mexico
Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

September 26, 2005

National Acceptance Advisory Team
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Arlington, VA

Dear Acceptance Team:

I am pleased to submit New Mexico's draft Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for your review and acceptance.

This Strategy demonstrates our concern for wildlife and habitat resources here and across the nation. It is our job to keep our wildlife populations healthy and sustainable, and we take that responsibility seriously. The approaches to conservation expressed in the Strategy are substantial and sensible. An important consideration is that we have listened to many people and interests in the preparation of this Strategy. The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, as facilitator of this Strategy, has contacted more than 400 public, private, and tribal interests; specific contributions from more than 125 of those interests are represented in the Strategy.

The Strategy fully addresses the eight essential elements established by Congress for the Strategy documents nationally. We have focused on strategic actions that are intended to keep common species common and work to prevent wildlife from becoming endangered. We have consulted rigorous science as available, and we have acknowledged where more information is needed. Importantly, we have constructed an ecological framework for identifying the species of greatest conservation need, the habitat treatments necessary to sustain them and other members of their ecological communities, and the periodic review process necessary to ensure citizen involvement and acceptance. This perspective is presented with responsible regard for the wide array of economic and social values that also are important to maintain on our landscape.

As shown by our policy progress in the past 30 months, I am a "conservation Governor." This Strategy, maintaining a strong place for New Mexico in the State Wildlife Grants program, is a significant part of that commitment. Thank you for your consideration of our contribution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Richardson".

Bill Richardson
Governor of New Mexico

Guy Riordan
Chairman, State Game Commission

PREFACE

This Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for New Mexico is a product of the people and represents both a culmination and a springboard.

The Strategy is a culmination of 2 years of efforts on the part of resource professionals, conservation organizations, commodity interests, private individuals, tribal interests, municipal governments, and others to construct a better wildlife conservation overview for New Mexico. Those efforts have been directed by a national initiative for accomplishing such a perspective through Congressional interest in the State Wildlife Grants program. The need for comprehensive strategies has been recognized for many years and led to establishment of the October 2005 deadline for states to present strategies that address local and state-level conservation needs and which promote an ability to advise regional and national perspectives on wildlife conservation at landscape scales.

Importantly, this draft Strategy is the springboard to an important conservation future for wildlife in New Mexico and the Southwest. In addressing the eight essential elements prescribed by Congress for strategy construction, New Mexico has *consolidated* important insight about long-term needs of wildlife in the state, *articulated* an ecologically based approach to strategic actions that reverse declines and maintain beneficial population levels, and *formulated* the public engagement processes necessary to ensure involvement in, and acceptance and implementation of conservation strategies for years to come.

This Strategy is dedicated to expressing sensible approaches to conserving biological diversity in New Mexico in context with surrounding areas. We identify focus points on species and habitats warranting conservation actions. Further, we organize existing information and recognize where important information gaps remain. From that foundation, we identify cooperative and collaborative approaches to addressing the most important wildlife and habitat conservation needs in time and cost effective ways. The potential of this Strategy can only be realized through a broad array of natural resource agencies, other public programs, and private interests, all accepting this approach, being guided by it in operational planning, and pulling together to implement the actions.

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish has appreciated its role and responsibility in facilitating the compilation and construction of this Strategy. But, we acknowledge the greater contribution of many public, private, municipal, tribal, and other participants that kept us cognizant of all factors necessary to describe conservation actions that embrace the functional balance of wildlife and human interests. We are indebted to all who have participated to this point and all who will help this springboard to reaching fullest benefits for wildlife.

Bruce Thompson
Director, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
September 2005