



Recovery and Sustainment Partnership

Recovering Species, Sustaining Our Mission



What is the RASP?

The Recovery and Sustainment Partnership Initiative (RASP) builds on years of collaboration and innovation under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) between the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of the Interior (DOI).

The partnership was established in 2018 to develop and promote species conservation while increasing flexibility for military mission activities. The RASP has achieved real world successes for both military readiness and species conservation, and continues to demonstrate how collaborative partnerships can enhance our agencies' missions.

To meet ever-changing needs to defend the nation, the military requires the flexibility to use its lands to develop and test new technologies and effectively train its Armed Forces. DOD conducts these readiness activities while meeting its stewardship responsibilities and sustaining our nation's natural heritage. DOD, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and partners are working together to better address the dynamic relationship between species needs and readiness activities to accomplish both species conservation and DOD's mission.

The RASP utilizes the following strategies to achieve its goals:

- Develop innovative regulatory approaches and tools for achieving the intent of the ESA in a manner consistent with both the USFWS and military mission needs and objectives.
- Develop collaborative conservation initiatives to enhance species conservation, advance species recovery, and preclude the need to list additional species.
- Recognize and respond to the current and projected impacts of climate change on ecosystems and watersheds, and on the species within those ecosystems and watersheds.
- Recognize successes in support of conservation goals and targets.

RECOGNIZING SUCCESS

In 2023, six species were declared recovered and no longer need protection under the ESA

due to conservation efforts by DOD and partners that led to the species' recovery.

This extraordinary accomplishment represents approximately **10%** of all U.S. species delistings from the ESA due to recovery between 1973 and 2023 and **DOD's continued commitment to species protection** while enhancing the military mission.



6 Species recovered under ESA in **2023**

60 U.S. Species recovered between 1973 and 2023





DOD FAST FACTS

SINCE FY91, DOD has spent over \$2 billion to conserve threatened and endangered species on its installations and ranges while protecting its mission.

DOD lands comprise only 5% of the total federal land area yet include 82.6% of the diversity of ecosystems in the contiguous U.S.

DOD manages over 550 species protected under the ESA on its installations and ranges - **54 of which only exist on DOD lands.**

DOD lands support the greatest density of threatened, endangered, and at-risk species of any Federal land managing agency.

Innovative Regulatory Approaches and Tools

DOD and USFWS are exploring new ESA approaches that ensure DOD can meet its training and testing requirements while contributing to the conservation of species found on its installations.

Two RASP pilot projects in the Northwest and Southeast U.S. are developing solutions for conservation challenges of today and the future by defining ways that make our ESA collaboration more efficient and streamlined. By utilizing ecosystem management approaches benefiting multiple species and establishing long-term conservation commitments, DOD and USFWS are creating more flexibility for military installations to fulfill their missions, satisfying ESA requirements, and improving conservation outcomes.

A Monarch Butterfly feeding on Milkweed



Collaborative Conservation Initiatives

DOD, USFWS, federal, state, non-governmental, and university partners engage on strategies and coordinate conservation actions and resources across ecosystems and landscapes to conserve listed species and prevent additional listings under the ESA. These partnerships lead to greater conservation

outcomes for our shared priorities. Habitat restoration, ecosystem management, and prescribed fire are all examples of our collaborative conservation actions that provide benefits for species and habitats both on installations and in the “spaces between the bases.”

San Clemente Island Paintbrush



WANT TO LEARN MORE?

For additional information related to the RASP, please reach out to:

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[Recovery and Sustainment Partnership Initiative – Natural Resources](#)

For a full list of species addressed under the RASP, visit our website by scanning the QR code.

