

Endangered Species Act (ESA) Talking Points & Things to Ask For

What to Ask For When Visiting with Senate and House Members

Ask the Representative if they are ready to support comprehensive ESA reform to better protect endangered and threatened species by implementing a process that best utilizes government resources and sound scientific decisions.

- The Endangered Species Act (ESA) provides for the conservation of species that are endangered or threatened and the conservation of the ecosystems on which they depend. ESA's intent to protect and preserve species and their habitats is vital and necessary to conserve American ecosystems and our tremendous natural resources.
- Since the 1980's the ESA has not been significantly amended. During the past two decades it has become abundantly clear that it is broken. Species are not recovering at an acceptable rate (only 2.1% of species listed as endangered or threatened have been delisted due to recovery).
- When a pesticide is undergoing registration or registration-review, a consultation between the U.S. EPA and the Services is triggered if it appears that the pesticide *may affect* a listed species, which results in both the EPA and the Services conducting parallel scientific assessments with different standards and expertise.
- Pesticides approved by EPA pursuant to FIFRA may not cause any unreasonable adverse effects to the environment, taking into account the economic, social and environmental costs and benefits of the use of any pesticide. During the extensive review of pesticides, EPA implements the Endangered Species Protection Program (ESPP), which provides an additional review for those species listed as endangered and threatened.
- The Services are not conducting the required evaluations in a timely manner due to a lack of resources. A recent report found that the Services would need an additional \$474 million (25% increase) in their budget to conduct consultations as currently constructed; EPA is already conducting the necessary ecological and ESPP assessments as part of the registration and registration-review process.
- As part of continued cooperation, the Services and EPA must agree on best available data, as well as methods and procedures to evaluate effects of pesticides on listed species using existing process and resources already in place at EPA.
- Understanding how pesticides are used by the structural pest management industry in and around structures must be highlighted when considering the effects of these use patterns on endangered and threatened species, more stakeholder involvement and transparency is required.
- Overzealous activists are using the ESA to sue the government to inhibit the use life-saving public health pesticides to further an anti-pesticide agenda, signaling a flawed statute that must be amended.
- The process for determining which species should be listed has become politically motivated, speculative and lacks the integrity of decisions based on sound science. One recent example is the rusty patched bumble bee. Activists groups are targeting this species and most likely others as an end-around to ban neonicotinoids, a class of chemistry vital to controlling termites, bed bugs, cockroaches and other dangerous pests.
- Now is the time for action. This February, in a Senate Environmental and Public Works Committee hearing, there was bipartisan support to modernize the ESA.