

California Wildlife Action Plan

From Vision to On-the-Ground Action

California's wildlife action plan takes an ecosystem approach that recognizes the interdependence of multiple species and their habitats and also considers the needs of select species. The wildlife action plan is organized into nine geographic regions and identifies five key issues: integrating wildlife conservation into local land-use decisions, restoring and connecting riparian habitats, providing essential water for fish and wildlife, controlling invasive species, and expanding conservation education.

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Protecting Imperiled Land, Water, and Wildlife

Conserving Greater Sage-grouse

Greater sage-grouse is a species of special concern in California's wildlife action plan. Greater sage-grouse habitat in California has degraded in recent years resulting in population declines and losses statewide. Information is needed to

develop conservation strategies to prevent further losses of this sagebrush-dependent bird. The California Department of Fish and Game is working with the University of Idaho to better understand how populations are linked across the landscape and the quality of existing habitat conditions. Biologists are radio-tracking sage

grouse throughout their lives. This project will ultimately provide vital information about the species to a variety of public and private stakeholders in sage grouse conservation. It also provides site-specific information that is essential for making informed and cost effective decisions to conserve the greater sage-grouse for future Californians.

Working with Partners to Bring Back Wildlife and Natural Areas

Collaborating for Tricolored Blackbird Conservation

California is home to 99 percent of the world's population of tricolored blackbirds, which are a species of special concern in the state wildlife action plan. The tricolored blackbird population has dropped drastically in the last 60 years, along with the decline of native wetlands in California's Central Valley. In the absence of these wetlands, the birds commonly nest in silage fields, ditches, and other areas around dairy farms. This is a serious risk when fields are ready for harvest and young birds cannot yet fly. An alliance of 16 partners have come together to conserve habitat and restore tricolored blackbird populations without listing the species as threatened or endangered. This diverse partnership

includes the California Department of Fish and Game, Audubon California, California Farm Bureau, California Cattlemen's Association, Pacific Gas & Electric Company, and University of California. This voluntary



Sage grouse chick/Santiago Escruceria



Tri-colored blackbird/William Hamilton III

and proactive effort will conserve the tricolored blackbird and may avoid another costly endangered species listing.

Proactive Efforts that Benefit Wildlife and People

Conserving Burrowing Owls in California

The Department continued to develop a conservation strategy for burrowing owls, a priority species in California's wildlife action plan. The strategy will provide resource managers and researchers with vital information on the burrowing owl, including its conservation needs. By emphasizing outreach to different stakeholders and analyzing current information, the strategy will help state and federal partners set priorities. The Institute for Bird Populations finished a two-year study for burrowing owls statewide, with help from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the California Department of Fish and Game. This vital information will provide a strong foundation for the conservation strategy, and a basis for comparison to a similar effort conducted in the

early 1990s. Effort was also invested in updating existing mitigation guidance for projects affecting owls and their habitat. This information is vital for protecting burrowing owls and ties into the land use planning theme of the wildlife action plan, helping to conserve owls and their habitat before they decline to the point of becoming threatened or endangered.

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Burrowing owl/© Daniel K. Rosenberg

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Burrowing owl habitat/© Daniel K. Rosenberg