

New Mexico Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy

From Vision to On-the-Ground Action

The Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for New Mexico focuses on species of greatest conservation need, key wildlife habitats, and the challenges affecting the conservation of both. The overriding desired outcome is that New Mexico's key habitats will persist in the condition, connectivity, and quantity necessary to sustain viable and resilient populations of wildlife while hosting a variety of land uses with reduced conflicts.

Working with Partners to Bring Back Wildlife and Natural Areas

Restoring Zuni Bluehead Suckers

New Mexico's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy identifies conservation actions for recovery of the Zuni bluehead sucker. Found in only 10% of its historic range, this fish is state endangered in New Mexico and a federal endangered species candidate. In partnership with the tribal Zuni Fish

and Wildlife Department and others, the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish launched projects to improve habitat for the Zuni bluehead sucker and to remove predatory non-native green sunfish and crayfish. Additionally, the Department and The Nature Conservancy have purchased habitat for the species, protecting nearly its entire occupied range for the long term. Conserving the Zuni bluehead sucker and its habitat means cleaner water, benefiting people as well.

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Partners collect Zuni bluehead suckers for captive rearing studies/Matthew Silva



Fisherman enjoying the undeveloped Gila River/New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

Gathering Information to Take Action Conserving Wildlife in the Gila River Riparian Area

The Gila River is the last main stem waterway in New Mexico without a major water development and contains at least 49 species of greatest conservation need. New Mexico's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy emphasizes obtaining abundance and distribution information for such priority wildlife, particularly in the riparian areas that border streams. Amphibians, reptiles, birds, and riparian vegetation are being surveyed to provide baseline data about this riparian ecosystem, which is facing threats from several types of development and modification. Obtaining such information will ensure efficient and cost-effective management and use of resources throughout the Gila watershed, conserving wildlife and natural areas for future generations.

Protecting Imperiled Land, Water, and Wildlife Conserving Texas Hornshell Mussels

The Black River harbors the highest diversity of native aquatic wildlife among New Mexico's permanent streams, including over 25 species of greatest conservation need such as the Texas hornshell mussel, a federal endangered species candidate. The Texas hornshell is the sole surviving species of

six native freshwater mussels that once lived in the lower Pecos River drainage of southeastern New Mexico. It is currently found only on private land along a 7-mile stretch of the Black River. Collaborative conservation efforts among municipal, state, and federal agencies, Miami University, and private landowners have focused on determining where and how mussels live, captive rearing, restoring water quality, and involving stakeholders in the recovery. This important work will help conserve this mussel before it becomes more costly to protect.

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Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies

444 North Capitol St, NW
Suite 725
Washington, DC 20001
202.624.7890
www.teaming.com
www.wildlifeactionplans.org

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

P.O. Box 25112
Santa Fe, NM 87504
<http://fws-nmcfwru.nmsu.edu/cwcs/>



Snorkel survey for Texas hornshell mussels/Brian Lang, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

