SPECIES OF COMMON CONSERVATION CONCERN WORKING TABLE

Virtual (hosted by Canada)
May 12-15, 2026

Co-chairs
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Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada

Maricela Constantino
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S.

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Facilitators
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XXIX Meeting of the Canada/Mexico/U.S. Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management
Species of Common Conservation Concern
May 12-15, 2026

Agenda at a Glance:

Time	Tuesday, May 12	Wednesday May 13	Thursday May 14	Friday May 15
12:00 - 2:00	Trilateral Committee welcome remarks from CAN, MX&US - Plenary Session "30th Anniversary of the Trilateral Committee"	California/Mexico Transboundary Plant Species Conservation U.S./Mexican binational conservation efforts associated with the NPS Southwest Border Resource Protection Program Trilateral Island Initiative: Conservation and Restoration of the Islands of Canada, US and Mexico Prioritization of Grassland and Black-Tailed Prairie Dog Conservation Black-footed Ferret Recovery Update for Mexico, Canada, and the United States	Binational Collaboration Supports Recovery of the Whooping Crane US-Mexico California Condor Recovery Program Masked Bobwhite: Transnational Collaboration for Stewardship of an Endangered Subspecies Project Obscurus: NM ridge-nose rattlesnake management and recovery Evaluating Early Post-Release Behavior and Growth of Bolson Tortoises (*Gopherus flavomarignatus*) on Federal Lands	Impacts of the Bison Integrated Genomics project on bison conservation Bison Reintroduction to Banff National Park Bringing Bison Back from the Brink: Bison Conservation in (and out of) Elk Island National Park Bison Conservation in Mexico Transboundary movement of endangered wildlife
2:00 - 2:15 Break				
2:15 - 2:45	SCCCWT Welcome, Introductions, Action Item Report, Adoption of the Agenda, and Co-Chair Country Report	**Joint Session ECWT/SCCCWT - Monarch and Pollinator Session** North American Monarch Butterfly Conservation/Domestic Updates (a) U.S. (b) Mexico (c) Canada	North American Bat Conservation Alliance Report on the First Conference and the Path to the Second International Coexistence Conference 2027 Braiding Indigenous Knowledge and Western Science in the Yellowstone Bison Species Status Assessment	Species Table Close Out and Action Item Plan
2:45 - 3:15				Species Table Chair Preparation for Executive Table Session
3:15 - 3:30 Break				
3:30 - 4:45	Mexican Wolf Recovery in the US and Mexico Protecting and Enhancing Critical Ecological Corridors for At-Risk International Populations of Grizzly Bear, Lynx, and Wolverine Ocelot (Leopardus pardalis) Recovery in the United States	**Continued Joint Session ECWT/ SCCCWT Monarchs and Pollinator Session** North American Monarch Conservation - Trinational Science Update Priority Actions for Monarch Conservation in North America: Advancing a Renewed Trinational Framework for the Migratory Monarch USFWS -Center for Pollinator Conservation Update	Controlled in situ reproduction of the reproductive stock of Yaqui catfish (Ictalurus pricei) genetically certified, for the benefit of the Yaqui nation native to Sonora Native freshwater fish conservation, a strategy for the borderlands, case Sonora (México) - Arizona (USA) Advancing binational recovery planning for the Yaqui Catfish The bacteria Vibrio pectenicia, a causative agent of sea star wasting disease	Executive Table and Co-Chairs Meeting Joint Session
4:45 - 5:00	Ocelot Binational Recovery Actions			2026 Meeting Closing

* *All Times are Eastern Time and subject to change*

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TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2026

2:15 – 3:15 Species of Common Conservation Concern Working Table Welcome, Introductions, Adoptions of the Agenda, 2024-2025 Action Item Report, and Co-Chair Country Reports

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Craig Machtans (Canadian Wildlife Service), Maricela Constantino (US Fish and Wildlife Service), María del Carmen García Rivas (Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturals Protegidas).

DESCRIPTION: Welcome and introductions of new and returning participants to the working table. Approval and adoption of the agenda. Report relevant updates on species conservation from each country.

BACKGROUND: Standard item to build consensus and ensure full participation.

3:15 – 3:30 Break

3:30 – 4:00 Mexican Wolf Recovery in the United States and Mexico

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS AND COLLABORATORS: Brady McGee, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Jim deVos, Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD), Stewart Liley, (NMDGF), José Feliciano González, CONANP, Fernando Gual, SEMARNAT

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
We propose to continue to work with our governmental and non-governmental partners at local, state, and federal levels in México and the U.S. on the conservation and recovery of the Mexican wolf throughout its historical distribution in the southwestern U.S. and Mexico and on the implementation of the Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan and agreed to in the bi-national Letter of Intent.

We also intend to continue working with Mexican partners on the development and implementation of its Compensation Strategy for presence of wolves in Mexico.

BACKGROUND: In November 2017, the USFWS completed the Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan, First Revision, with the assistance of CONANP, SEMARNAT, AZGFD, NMDGF, and other agencies and scientists from both countries. The recovery plan provides guidance that will lead to the delisting of the Mexican wolf under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. Focused bi-national efforts on continuing to grow the U.S. population, conducting releases and establishing a population in México, a 10-year recovery plan evaluation to determine what strategies are working, and reorientation of the México program to meet the established goals.

4:00 – 4:20 Protecting and Restoring International Ecological Corridors for At-Risk Populations of Grizzly Bear, Lynx, and Wolverine

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Andrea Kortello, kortello@yahoo.com, Poisson Consulting; Diana Ghikas, dghikas@sasktel.net, retired Canadian Wildlife Service biologist; Michael Proctor, mproctor@netidea.com, independent research scientist;

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:
Alvin First Rider, afirstrider@btlands.com, Blood Tribe; Andrea Morehouse, amorehouse@winiskresearch.com, Winisk Research; Anne Hubbs, anne.hubbs@gov.ab.ca, Government of AB; Erin Slater, erin@elmatters.com, Environmental Leadership; Joanna Burgar, joanna.burgar@gov.bc.ca, Government of BC; Nathan Kluge, nathan.kluge@mt.gov, Government of MT; Nikki Heim, nikki@y2y.net, Y2Y; Robin Gutsell, robin.gutsell@gov.ab.ca; Government of AB; Wayne Kasworm, wayne_kasworm@fws.gov, USFWS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
This new project focuses on fractured, at-risk populations of grizzly bear, lynx, and wolverine, located at the southwestern extent of their remaining ranges in Canada and the United States. In these fragmented landscapes, ecological corridors are vital for safe movement, population persistence, and genetic diversity --needs made more urgent by increasing human activity and climate-driven habitat change. Building on progress connecting transborder grizzly bear populations in the Rocky and Selkirk Mountains, the project aims to fill major gaps in connectivity for all three focal species from the west coast to the prairies within the transborder region. The working group will develop coordinated recommendations to maintain and enhance wildlife connectivity along the western Canada -U.S. Border.

Goal 1: Identify and prioritize critical ecological corridors for transboundary connectivity. **Goal 2**: Produce an adaptive, jointly developed binational plan outlining recommended corridors and management practices to support connectivity. **Goal 3:** Develop a joint letter of intent affirming Canada -U.S. support for the plan and continued collaboration.

BACKGROUND: Grizzly bear, lynx, and wolverine are listed as threatened under the US ESA in the lower 48 states. In Canada, grizzly bear and wolverine are listed nationally as special concern; grizzly bear is of high conservation concern in southern BC and threatened in Alberta. Lynx is generally secure in Canada but designated as sensitive in Alberta. Trans-boundary grizzly bear populations vary in their degree of fragmentation, size (locally extinct to recovering), and female dispersal success. Ongoing grizzly bear recovery in the lower 48, likely supports grizzly bear recovery in southern Canada. For lynx, a priority recovery action in the lower 48 is to maintain or enhance connectivity between habitats in species status

assessment units 1 -4 and adjacent lynx habitats north of the border. For wolverine, with only ~300 individuals remaining in the lower 48, dispersal from southern Canada is vital to the genetic and demographic health of the US (USFWS, 2023). Please see background document.

4:20 – 4:40 Ocelot (Leopardus pardalis) Recovery in the United States

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Janess Vartanian, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Laura de la Garza, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Janess Vartanian, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Laura de la Garza, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Grant Harris, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Carlos Barriga, Pronatura Noreste; Daniel Kunz, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; Neal Wilkins, Lindsay Martinez, Ashley Reeves, East Foundation; Lisanne Pertacca, Dave Hewett, Caesar Kleburg Wildlife Research Institute; Roel Lopez, Texas A&M University

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The endangered ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*) will benefit from continued binational conservation. Habitat loss, fragmentation, vehicle collisions, and illegal harvest have manifested in dramatic population declines for ocelot in the U.S. and Mexico. The USFWS, in collaboration with CONANP, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas A&M Universities, U.S. and Mexican NGOs, and private landowners have embarked on an ambitious plan to establish a new ocelot population in Texas and hope to secure sufficient genetic stock to support facilitating genetic connectivity between existing populations in the U.S and Mexico. We will provide an update on the wild ocelot populations in the U.S., including recent information on genetics and connectivity, and progress on the captive breeding program, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services Ocelot Recovery Team to further enhance binational collaboration and to track and guide progress toward recovery.

BACKGROUND: The USFWS and CONANP share a long history of collaboration on binational ocelot recovery, including establishment of a binational working group focused on international wildlife corridor design and implementation, development of the USFWS 2016 Ocelot Recovery Plan, and collaboration toward the translocation of ocelots to increase genetic diversity of wild populations in Texas. In 2023, binational communications were reinvigorated, and much progress has been made. Through binational meetings, we've expanded external partnerships, developed a draft workplan and draft letter of intent to promote coordinated conservation and recovery, and aim to finalize and sign the letter of intent, establish a new ocelot recovery team, and successfully incorporate MX ocelot genetics into the U.S. via captive breeding and release strategies. Continued binational collaboration will advance ocelot conservation and recovery in the U.S. and Mexico, while fostering binational relations and trust.

4:40– 5:00 U.S. - Mexico Ocelot Recovery Actions (Update)

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Carlos Barriga, cbarriga@pronaturane.org, Pronatura Noreste

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:
Comision Nacional de Areas Naturales Protegidas: María del Carmen García Rivas (mcgarcia@conanp.gob.mx); Jose Feliciano Gonzalez Jimenez (jose.gonzalez@conanp.gob.mx)

Other Partners:
Daniel Kunz / daniel.kunz@tpwd.texas.gov / Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; Fernando Najera / fernanaj@ucm.es / University of California - Davis; Roel Lopez / roel.lopez@ag.tamu.edu / Texas A&M University; Neal Wilkins / nwilkins@eastfoundation,net / East Foundation; Lindsay Martinez / lmartinez@eastfoundation.net / East Foundation; Ashley Reeves / areeves@eastfoundation.net / East FoundationBill Swanson / bill.swanson@cincinnatizoo.org / Cincinnati Zoo

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*), listed as endangered by the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) and under law in Mexico (i.e., NOM-059-SEMARNAT-2010), will benefit from continued binational conservation. Genetic augmentation of existing wild populations and establishment of a new population in the U.S are primary objectives in the USFWS 2016 ocelot recovery plan. Representatives from the USFWS and CONANP re-established communication in 2023, to begin discussions about establishment of a captive breeding population in the U.S. and the incorporation of genetic material (individuals and gametes) from Mexico. We will provide an update on the wild ocelot populations in the U.S., progress on the captive breeding and release program, and summarize this programs contributions to ocelot recovery.

BACKGROUND: he U.S. and Mexico share a long history of binational collaboration on ocelot recovery, including development of the 2016 Recovery Plan. Since then, USFWS and partners have conducted population viability and habitat assessments to support the establishment of a new population in Texas and to increase genetic diversity via a captive breeding and release program. Parties have begun collection of wild ocelot semen (TX) and developed necessary protocols. These efforts have optimized conditions for the successful recovery of ocelots in TX and would benefit from genetics (MX), to increase genetic diversity (U.S.) and restore genetic connectivity (U.S.-MX), while buffering new populations against catastrophic events. Captive breeding could ensure wide incorporation of genetics across populations.

To achieve the above, USFWS and CONANP have engaged in a dialogue to support this recovery sheltered by a Letter of Intent and Work Plan that ensures a mutually beneficial strategy.

5:00 – 5:05 Day 1 Species Table Close Out

WEDNESDAY, May 13, 2026

12:00– 12:20 U.S. (California)/ Mexico Transboundary Plant Species Conservation

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Julie Simonsen (USFWS); Mary Crawford (USFWS); Susan Wynn (USFWS)

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Dr. Mariana Delgado Fernández, Ecotono Sustentable A.C., Universidad Autónoma de Baja California; Dr. Sula Vanderplank, Conserva Loreto & SUVA Research; Fernando Gabito, Director, Terra Peninsular A.C.; Costa Salvaje; Dr. Jon Rebman, Curator of Botany, San Diego Natural History Museum; Dr. Christa Horn, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance; Margie Mulligan, Mulligan Biological Consulting; Jessie Vinje, SageVinje Biological; Dr. Kristine Preston, U.S. Geological Survey

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The goal of the U.S. (California)/ Mexico Transboundary Plant Species Conservation Project is to continue collaboration and develop partnerships to implement conservation and recovery actions for listed and rare transboundary plant species. For decades, partners in Mexico and the U.S. have been collaborating to study and conserve the endemic plant flora of the Californias (Baja California and Baja California Sur, Mexico and California, United States). We seek to build and strengthen relationships with the Mexican government to further these efforts.

At least 14 U.S. federally-listed plant species—and numerous rare plant species of conservation concern—have distributions that span the U.S./Mexico border. Botanical research and collaboration have strengthened cross-border relationships, documented threats, and evaluated plant conservation status. Additional capacity in Mexico is needed to continue research, discovery surveys and threat assessment; engage landowners and continue outreach; support permitting, conservation seed banking and database management; and conserve and manage rare plant habitat. Through this effort, we seek to support ongoing collaborations to conserve and protect the flora of the Californias and recover listed cross-border species.

BACKGROUND: Botanical research informs conservation and management of biodiversity and ecosystem restoration to address global and landscape-scale threats. Our partners in U.S. And Mexico have been collaborating on the conservation of the endemic plant flora of Baja California for decades and we are looking for support to further these efforts. Surveys in the Baja California Peninsula

have contributed to binational botanical discovery and inventory, conservation status assessment, and community outreach. For example, cross-border Otay tarplant surveys engaged NGOs, Tribes, local governments, landowners and botanists from both sides of the border, documented new occurrences and assessed threats, and incidentally documented two new plant taxa. Botanical research has also documented rare and listed plant taxa in areas of high biodiversity, such as in the Colonet Region. These efforts and partnerships provide the foundational science for habitat conservation, planning and land management.

12:20– 12:40 U.S./Mexican binational conservation efforts associated with the NPS Southwest Border Resource Protection Program

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Tyler Coleman, National Park Service

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Krista Muddle, National Park Service; Katy Warner, National Park Service

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The objective of this presentation is to highlight conservation efforts supported by the Southwest Border Resource Protection Program (SWBRRP). The SWBRPP provides financial and technical assistance to National Parks and partners along the US-Mexico border to mitigate the impacts on cultural and natural resources and to further collaboration between Mexican and American land managers.

This presentation will be led by Tyler Coleman, Chief of Resource Management at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument (ORPI). ORPI is a 517 sq. mile park unit that shares a 30 mile border with Mexico, including the Pinacate Biosphere Reserve. ORPI and the Pinacate have received numerous grants from the SWBRPP. Additionally, various US and Mexican entities have contributed to ongoing conservation efforts supported by the SWBRRP. The presentation highlights specific and ecosystem level conservation actions. Examples include:

- Transboundary Sonoran
- Pronghorn Connectivity
- Binational beaver monitoring and research on lesser-long nosed bats
- Influence of tinajas on cross-border wildlife connectivity, use and survival
- Riparian restoration along the Rio Bravo/Rio Grande
- Binational studies and restoration of freshwater features

12:40 – 1:00 Trilateral Island Initiative: Conservation and Restoration of the Islands of Canada US and Mexico

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Annie Little (USFWS) and representatives from Canada, U.S., and Mexico

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Annie Little (NPS); Federico Méndez Sánchez (Conservación de Islas); Gregg Howald (Advanced Conservation Strategies); Patty Baiao (Island Conservation); Nick Holmes (The Nature Conservancy); Eric VanderWerf (Pacific Rim Conservation)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: This agenda item focuses on a collaborative trilateral effort to conserve and restore marine island ecosystems, including seabird populations. Following the signing of the Letter of Intent (LOI) at the 2014 Trilateral Committee meeting, the three countries have been collaborating on multiple issues of shared interest related to island conservation. The Trilateral Island Working Group will update the SCCCWT on the status of current collaborative efforts, including ongoing projects, new priorities, and efforts to further the LOI.

BACKGROUND: Over the last decade, multiple bilateral and trilateral island restoration projects have been initiated. In order to further encourage coordination and collaboration on island projects, a Trilateral Island Working Group was created in 2012. This group developed the LOI that was signed by the three countries at the 2014 Trilateral Meeting in Querétaro, Mexico. The LOI documents that the three countries intend to engage in cooperative bilateral and trilateral activities to promote sustainable environmental policies and practices in support of island conservation. The Working Group will discuss achievements, priorities, and updates of recent collaborative efforts related to island conservation.

1:00 – 1:20 Prioritization of Grassland and Black-Tailed Prairie Dog Conservation

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Bill Van Pelt, Francisco Abarca, Arizona Game and Fish Department

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Bill Van Pelt, Arizona Game and Fish Department; Francisco Abarca, Arizona Game and Fish Department; Jennifer Presler, Arizona Game and Fish Department; Holly Hicks, Arizona Game and Fish Department

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The presentation will incorporate information specific to the BTPD re-establishment effort which was initiated in 2008. Furthermore, it will expand upon the contribution this project has to the national effort to conserve BTPD in the United States and the grassland habitats the species depend upon. Finally, it will include information on identifying important grasslands for conservation.

BACKGROUND: In 2025, the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) continued with the re-establishment of black-tailed prairie dogs (BTPD) to southeastern Arizona, which began in 2008. There are currently four established colonies at Las Cienagas National Conservation Area (LCNCA), one on Pima

County land at Sands Ranch, and one on a private ranch in Cochise County. Additional monitoring efforts included visual counts and colony perimeter mapping by AGFD employees and volunteers. In 2021, expansion levels allowed for translocation of animals into a third county in AZ. The significant accomplishment for 2025 returning prairie dogs back to Sonora, Mexico. In addition to the six re-established colonies, the BTPD have dispersed to create 2 known small colonies on private land. These colonies were first discovered in 2017 and have grown each year. In 2021 and 2023 these dispersal colonies were the source population for translocations to new colonies in Arizona and now in 2024 for Mexico.

1:20 – 1:40 Black-footed Ferret Recovery Update for Mexico, Canada, and the United States

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Tina Jackson, US Fish & Wildlife Service; Laura Gardiner Wildlife Ecologist, Grasslands National Park; Jesus Pacheco Rodriguez, Laboratoria de Ecologia y Conservacion de Fauna Slilvestre Instituto de Ecologia Protegidas

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The presentation will include Tina Jackson (USFWS), Laura Gardiner (Parks Canada), and Jesus Pacheco Rodriguez (Laboratorio de Ecologia y Conservacion de Fauna Slilvestre Instituto de Ecologia) to report continuing Black-footed Ferret Conservations in the US, CN, and MX.

All three countries continue recovery efforts with plague being the biggest challenge.

CN has ongoing experimental distribution of orally-administered insecticide (Fip-bit) to help advance sylvatic plague management.

US continues working with State, Federal, Tribal, and NGO partners in developing plague management techniques and distribution.

CN and MX have not recently released any BFFs due to low numbers of prairie dogs on colonies and the challenges of mitigating plague.

The FWS continues to work with cloning partners in the ongoing development of cloning the BFF.

BACKGROUND: The Black-footed Ferret Recovery Program continues efforts to meet challenges with plague and working with partners to mitigate plague at reintroduction sites. Continued coordination with the Black-footed Ferret Recovery Implementation Team partners in recovery efforts.

1:40 – 2:00 FREE

2:00 – 2:15 Break

2:15 – 3:15 North American Monarch Butterfly Conservation/Domestic Updates: A Joint Session with the Ecosystems Working Table

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS:

Mexico: Greisy Jocelyn Flores Sierra, Leader in priority species, greisy.floressierra@fao.org, CONANP

Canada: Greg Mitchell gregory.mitchell@ec.gc.ca STB, ECCC; Elisabeth Shapiro, elisabeth.shapiro@ec.gc.ca. CWS, ECCC

U.S.: Melissa Burns, USFWS, melissa_burns@fws.gov (or alternate)

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:

Mexico: Greisy Jocelyn Flores Sierra, Leader in priority species, CONANP, greisy.floressierra@fao.org

Canada: Antoine Asselin-Nguyen, aasselin@cec.org, Project Lead, Ecosystems, Comission for Environmental Cooperation, Greg Mitchell gregory.mitchell@ec.gc.ca STB, ECCC; Elisabeth Shapiro elisabeth.shapiro@ec.gc.ca. CWS, ECCC

U.S.: Ryan Drum, USFWS, National Pollinator Science Lead, Center for Pollinator Conservation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, ryan_drum@fws.gov; Nicole Alt, USFWS, Nicole_alt@fws.gov

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Mexico: As a result of the ongoing efforts of the Scientific Committee, its members have prioritized the development and updating of the 2008 North American Monarch Butterfly Conservation Plan and Mexico´s 2018-2024 Monarch Butterfly Conservation Action Plan, as well as its update for the 2025-2030 period.

Complementarily, the trinational efforts have been strengthened through the creation of the Trinational Alliance for the Scientific Conservation of the Monarch Butterfly, which serves as a collaborative platform among the three countries. In May 2024, this alliance met in Mexico to begin the reassessment of conservation priorities at a continental scale, continuing a long term, coordinated process. This process builds upon the 2008 North American Conservation Plan and seeks to

update it based on new scientific knowledge and emerging challenges. The resulting strategic framework is organized around three pillars: Coordination, Science, and Habitat.

During the 2025-2026 winter season, Monarch butterfly colonies occupied 2.93 hectares of forest, representing a 64% increase compared to the previous season, when 1.79 hectares were recorded.

Between February 2024 and February 2025, a total of 2.55 hectares of forest were affected, reflecting a 32 % reduction.

Canada: This presentation will provide an update on monarch conservation status and conservation activities in Canada.

U.S.: This presentation will provide a highlight of monarch butterfly conservation activities in the United States in 2025 and preview the work planned for 2026 and beyond. A population update for the eastern and western populations is included as well as an overview of the recent technological advancements, collaborative scientific research, and conservation successes benefiting monarch butterflies.

BACKGROUND:

Mexico: In 2018 authorities from Mexico, the United States and Canada established the Trilateral Scientific Committee for Monarch Butterfly Conservation with the purpose of working towards the achievement of these goals.

After a pause of several years, in 2023 the committee, formed by high-level scientists from the three countries, was reinvigorated under the framework of the Trilateral Committee Meeting and met in Mexico City in February 2024 to update the knowledge that so far had been obtained about the monarch butterfly and identify the main threats to its migratory patterns, restoration of critical habitats and the reduction of agrochemical use.

U.S.: For decades, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has partnered with states, tribes, private landowners, farmers, ranchers, and conservation organizations to support monarch butterflies and the habitat on which they depend. These voluntary efforts continue to be central to monarch conservation across North America.

3:15 – 3:30 *Break*

3:30 – 4:00 North American Monarch Conservation - Trinational Science Update: A Joint Session with the Ecosystems Working Table

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Greg Mitchell gregory.mitchell@ec.gc.ca STB, ECCC; Antoine Asselin-Nguyen aasselin@cec.org CEC; Wendy Caldwell, wcaldwell@monarchjointventure.org Monarch Joint Venture

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Ryan Drum, ryan_drum@fws.gov, USFWS; Xiomara Labiosa, xiomara_labiosa@fws.gov, USFWS; Alma Villaneuva Rodriguez, alma.villanuevarodriguez@fao.org, FAO Mexico; Greisy Flores, greisy.flores@conanpy.gob.mx, CONANP; Wendy Caldwell, wcaldwell@monarchjointventure.org, Monarch Joint Venture

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Trinational Monarch Conservation Science Partnership will provide an update on trinational monarch conservation science activities:

- Greg Mitchell (STB, ECCC) - Update on trinational science initiatives (e.g., tagging, decision support tool for investment in conservation)
- Antoine Asselin-Nguyen (CEC) and Wendy Caldwell (MJV) will present the results of the CEC supported project to develop an evidence informed North American Monarch Butterfly Conservation Plan "Strengthening Evidence-based Collaborative Monarch Conservation Action"

4:00 – 4:20 Priority Actions for Monarch Conservation in North America: Advancing a Renewed Trinational Framework for the Migratory Monarch: A Joint Session with the Ecosystems Working Table

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Christine Chase, Monarch Joint Venture; Alyssa Taylor, Monarch Joint Venture

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Christine Chase, cchase@monarchjointventure.org, Monarch Joint Venture; Alyssa Taylor, ataylor@monarchjointventure.org, Monarch Joint Venture; Wendy Caldwell, wcaldwell@monarchjointventure.org, Monarch Joint Venture

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The migratory monarch butterfly is one of North America's most iconic and internationally shared species, linking ecosystems, cultures, and communities across Canada, Mexico, and the United States. In response to evolving conservation challenges and nearly two decades of new scientific knowledge, partners across the continent have collaboratively developed Priority Actions for Monarch Conservation in North America. This is a renewed trinational framework designed to guide coordinated monarch conservation efforts.

This presentation will introduce the updated framework and highlight the collaborative process that shaped its development. Over the course of one in-person and ten virtual meetings throughout 2025, representatives from government agencies, academic institutions, and nongovernmental organizations across all three countries contributed to refining and strengthening shared priorities for monarch conservation.

The presentation will summarize the framework's three interconnected focus areas: Systems for Collaboration and Communication, Coordination of Science and Monitoring, and Strategic Habitat Initiatives. It will also explore how the framework can support decision-making, strengthen existing initiatives, align investments and partnerships, and mobilize collective action across jurisdictions and sectors.

BACKGROUND: The original *North American Monarch Conservation Plan* was released in 2008 as a landmark effort in trinational collaboration for monarch conservation. Since that time, monarch conservation status, scientific understanding, and cross-border partnerships have evolved significantly. In 2025, the Commission for Environmental Cooperation engaged the Monarch Joint Venture to facilitate a collaborative process with the Trinational Monarch Conservation Science Partnership to identify updated priorities for monarch conservation across Canada, Mexico, and the United States. The resulting framework reflects current science, shared experience, and a renewed commitment to coordinated continental conservation action.

4:20 – 4:40 US Fish and Wildlife Service – Center for Pollinator Conservation Updates: A Joint Session with the Ecosystem Working Table

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Ryan Drum, USFWS

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Ryan Drum, USFWS; Nicole Alt, USFWS; Melissa Burns, USFWS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services ' Center for Pollinator Conservation serves a unique role as the only US federal entity dedicated to monarch butterfly and pollinator conservation. The Center's efforts span collaboration, engagement, and applied science functions. This presentation will highlight recent progress, including technological advancements, collaborative scientific research, and conservation successes benefiting monarch butterfly, other native pollinators, and their habitats.

BACKGROUND: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service mission is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats. The Center for Pollinator Conservation, established in 2022, promotes working together to address declining pollinator populations in America. This national

center is a place for land managers, decision and policy makers, scientists, program leaders and others to explore, coordinate and share best practices and approaches. We work collaboratively with partners to implement conservation that benefits pollinator species, habitats, and human communities.

4:30 – 4:40 Day 2 Species Table Close Out

THURSDAY, May 14, 2026

12:00 – 12:20 Binational Collaboration Supports Recovery of the Whooping Crane

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS AND COLLABORATORS: Kevin McAbee, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; John Conkin, Environment and Climate Change Canada

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Bi-national collaboration between the United States and Canada is a hallmark of the recovery of the iconic Whooping Crane. For over 80 years, both nations have closely cooperated on foundational research and monitoring projects, innovative scientific initiatives, and landscape-scale management actions. Independent monitoring in each nation provides complimentary demographic and habitat data, creating meaningful efficiency. Collaborative projects, such as GPS tracking of individuals as they migrate between nations, support managing the species across international boundaries. The Whooping Crane recovery program seeks continued support for these ongoing monitoring projects and the long-term datasets that are fundamental to assessing the status of the species. Since 1985, binational cooperation has been formalized under the Memorandum of Understanding on Conservation of Whooping Crane. This MOU, renewed four times since its inception, aligns the two nations' common stewardship while recognizing each nation's autonomy and authority. The Whooping Crane recovery program wishes to again renew this MOU to streamline research, monitoring, and management across international boundaries, facilitate the exchange of data and materials, and empower the recovery team to conserve the species.

BACKGROUND: The US estimates the total number of whooping cranes in the Aransas-Wood Buffalo Population each winter. In 2025, efforts estimated that over 550 individuals wintered in coastal Texas, a record high.

Canada annually surveys the nesting grounds to document distribution, number, and productivity of breeding pairs. In 2025, surveys documented 115 nests and 66 pre-fledge juveniles, record highs.

The Whooping Crane Tracking Partnership, a joint effort between four US and Canadian federal agencies, tracks individuals outfitted with GPS/GSM transmitters up to 1440 times daily. Over 120 individuals have been outfitted with transmitters

and approximately 45 whooping cranes are still transmitting data as part of this project.

The MOU on Conservation of the Whooping Crane was first signed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Canadian Wildlife Service in 1985. It has been extended 4 additional times, the last in 2013. In 1995, US Geological Survey and Parks Canada joined as signatories.

12:30 – 1:00 U.S.-Mexico California Condor Recovery Program

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Catalina Porras (CONANP)

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Ashleigh Blackford, California Condor Coordinator, USFWS: Steve Kirkland, California Condor Field Coordinator, USFWS; Jose Feliciano Gonzalez, Director General for Institutional Strengthening and International Affairs, CONANP; Fernando Gual, Director General for Wildlife, SEMARNAT; Adriana Fernandez, Director General for Mexico City Zoos and Wildlife; Ignacio Vilchis, Associate Director of Recovery \ Ecology, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The U.S.-Mexico recovery program for the California condor in Mexico began in 1999 with the collaboration agreements reached by the governments of the United States (through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; USFWS) and Mexico; first, through Mexico's' National Institute of Ecology (INE) and later on through the National Commission for Natural Protected Areas (CONANP) with the participation of the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance (SDZWA). To date, there is an estimated 392 condors in the wild, 57 of which are in the Sierra de San Pedro Mártir National Park (SSPMNP). The management and recovery of the Mexican population is integrated into the overall strategy to recover the species range-wide. The Baja condor population provides unique opportunities for population expansion but also some challenges including funding and cross-border logistics.

This agenda item provides an update on the overall species status and program implementation as well as highlights the efforts/accomplishments of the Mexico reintroduction and captive breeding program. We will also discuss the ongoing successes and challenges and identify next steps.

BACKGROUND: The California Condor Recovery Program is an international multi-entity effort, led by the USFWS, to recover the endangered California condor. Captive breeding and release of condors, range-wide, continue to be the primary sources of population increase, as recruitment and survival in the wild are lower than mortality. The first condor releases in SSPMNP, Baja California

occurred in 2002. The release site in Baja is one of 7 release sites in the recovery program and the only one in Mexico.

The condor population in Mexico grew steadily until 2014 from releases from captive bred birds and natural productivity. Cross border regulations resulting from concerns related to the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) occurring in the U. S. prevented exporting birds to Baja from sites in the U.S. from 2015-2021. The program successfully re-established annual transfer of birds to Mexico in 2022. These transfers boost population growth and infuse novel genetics into the Baja floc.

1:00 – 1:20 Masked Bobwhite: Transnational Collaboration for Stewardship of an Endangered Subspecies

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Jennie Duberstein, USFWS; Naomi Varela, Africam Safari; Teresa Solis Herrera, Comisión de Ecología y Desarrollo Sustentable del Estado de Sonora (CEDES)

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Rich Albers, USFWS; Lacrecia Johnson, USFWS; Steve Sesnie, USFWS; Jennie Duberstein, USFWS; Celene Moncayo, Sonoran Joint Venture; Santiago Nyssen, Africam Safari; Naomi Varela, Africam Safari; Norma Cruz, CEDES; Teresa Solis Herrera, CEDES; Milka Berenice Valenzuela Gonzalez, CEDES

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Partners in the U.S. and Mexico are working to re-establish a captive breeding population of Masked Bobwhite at Africam Safari in Puebla, Mexico as well as to support reintroduction efforts in Sonora, Mexico. In spite of obstacles encountered over the past three years, our transnational team of federal and state agencies and NGOs on both sides of the border has continued to collaborate and problem solve. We will present our new project timeline and phased approach to support captive breeding and reintroduction efforts for Masked Bobwhite in Mexico, and plans for long-term success and contribution to the overall recovery of this species across its range. This includes obtaining necessary permits, transferring eggs to Africam Safari, and ultimately transferring adult birds and chicks to CEDES in Hermosillo, Sonora for pre-release conditioning and release to appropriate habitat in northern Sonora. The project timeline also includes ongoing work with ranchers in Sonora to improve habitat in designated areas for future releases, and to undertake a public communications campaign to raise awareness about the need for conservation of this species.

BACKGROUND: The long-term recovery of Masked Bobwhite relies on stewarding habitat to rebuild connectivity across the international border as well as focusing on reintroduction efforts. Collaboration between the U.S. and Mexico goes back to the 1960s, and since 2016 a binational working group of the Masked Bobwhite Recovery Team (now working in support of the Masked Bobwhite

Action Team) has been trying to establish a captive breeding population in Mexico. A facility was built at Africam Safari in Puebla, Mexico, although initial transfer of live birds approximately 10 years ago did not result in the successful creation of a captive breeding colony. USFWS, Sonoran Joint Venture, Africam Safari, and CEDES have been meeting regularly, developing and refining plans to restart captive breeding in Puebla and pre-release conditioning facilities in Hermosillo, Sonora at the Centro Ecológico. Our team is currently beginning the permitting process to be able to transfer eggs from the U.S. to Mexico.

1:20 – 1:40 Project obscurus: NM ridge-nosed rattlesnake management and recovery

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Clinton Smith, U.S. Fish and wildlife Service

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Andrew T. Holycross, The Rattlesnake Conservancy; Larry Kamees, The Rattlesnake Conservancy; Anthony Daly-Crews, The Rattlesnake Conservancy; Jesus Sigala-Rodriguez, Universidad Autonoma de Aguascalientes

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Project obscurus seeks to assist with management and recovery for the federally threatened NM ridge-nosed rattlesnake (NMRR). This work is being led by The Rattlesnake Conservancy and includes a diverse partnership of relevant state and federal agencies, zoos, private landowners and conservation organizations. Project obscurus consists of five goals to help address NMRR population viability. Goal 1, investigate important NMRR environmental factors and the spatial and temporal availability of these factors on the landscape (2024-2025). Goal 2, continue 30 years of monitoring, providing data for capture-recapture and habitat modeling (2024-2026). Goal 3, implement captive husbandry and breeding, producing progeny to augment natural populations (2024-onward). Goal 4, immediately augment a genetically poor US population (2024). Goal 5, disseminate NMRR information to be used by partners for recovery (2024-onward). This update will discuss successes for goals and cover 2025/2026 work.

1:40 – 2:00 Evaluating Early Post-Release Behavior and Growth of Bolson Tortoises (Gopherus flavomarignatus) on Federal Lands

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Endi Piovesana, USFWS; Vance Wolf, USFWS; Sam Vassallo, USFWS; Shawn Sartorius, USFWS; Abigail J. Lawson, USFWS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey and the Turner Endangered Species Fund, is evaluating the feasibility of establishing a conservation population of the endangered Bolson tortoise (*Gopherus flavomarginatus*) at the Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge in central New Mexico. As part of this effort, a 3.4-hectare (8.5-

acre) soft-release enclosure was constructed on the refuge. Juvenile tortoises equipped with VHF transmitters were introduced in three cohorts on 26 September 2024, 26 April 2025, and 8 May 2025. The enclosure currently houses 30 tortoises. We monitored all individuals to assess acclimation, movement behavior, and growth. Movement activity was quantified using mean movement rate (m/day) and mean step length (m). Behavioral differences likely reflect differences in rearing environments, as the September and May cohorts were raised in semi-wild conditions, whereas the April cohort originated from a zoo setting. Overall, these results have provided crucial insight into ensuring the success of these relocation efforts in the future and establishing self-sustaining populations of this endangered species on federal lands.

BACKGROUND: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey and the Turner Endangered Species Fund, is evaluating the feasibility of establishing a conservation population of the endangered Bolson tortoise (*Gopherus flavomarginatus*) at the Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge in central New Mexico. As part of this effort, a 3.4-hectare (8.5-acre) soft-release enclosure was constructed on the refuge. Juvenile tortoises equipped with VHF transmitters were introduced in three cohorts on 26 September 2024, 26 April 2025, and 8 May 2025. The enclosure currently houses 30 tortoises. We monitored all individuals to assess acclimation, movement behavior, and growth. We attribute the slower growth of the Fall cohort to the harsh overwinter period they experienced immediately after release, a challenge the Spring cohorts avoided. Overall, these results have provided crucial insight into ensuring the success of these relocation efforts of viable populations on Federal lands.

2:00 – 2:15 *Break*

2:15 – 2:40 North American Bat Conservation Alliance

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Rodrigo A. Medellin, Mexico, UNAM, CONABIO; Jeremy T. H. Coleman, US Fish and Wildlife Service; Charles M. Francis, ECCC, Canadian Wildlife Service

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Winifred Frick, Bat Conservation International; Amanda Adams, Bat Conservation International; Luis Trujillo, UNAM; Jorge Ortega Instituto Politécnico Nacional; Joaquin Arroyo, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia; Brian Reichert, USGS Fort Collins Science Center; Jonathan Reichard, US Fish and Wildlife Service; Anne Ballmann, USGS National Wildlife Health Center

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The three countries have been actively pursuing several collaborative projects related to bat onservation, with coordination through the North American Bat Conservation Alliance (NABCA).

XXIX Meeting of the Canada/Mexico/U.S. Trilateral Committee for Wildlife
and Ecosystem Conservation and Management
Species of Common Conservation Concern
May 12-15, 2026

1) The State of the Bats in North America
Following on the public report summarizing the conservation status and major threats facing bats in all three countries, released 17 April 2023 (International Bat Appreciation Day, https:// digital.batcon.org/state-of-the-bats-report/2023-report/), NABCA worked with partners to publish a paper describing the data and science behind information shared in the 2023 report. Published in late 2024 (Adams et al., https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.15225), this unprecedented effort revealed that 81 of the 153 species (53%) face threats leading them to be considered at-risk in at least one of the three countries. Decreasing population trends in 90% of the assessed species demonstrate the need for conservation action. This is the most robust assessment to date of the conservation status of 153 species of bats of North America and a very significant contribution to guide new policy decisions regarding bats.

2) The Collaborative Response to White-nose Syndrome in North America
The fungus *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (Pd) that causes the disease white-nose syndrome (WNS) in bats continues to spread in North America, leading to death of millions of bats. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) leads the coordinated response to WNS in the U.S. And provides grant support to States, Tribes, and other partners to conduct bat monitoring, disease surveillance, and management actions to mitigate the effects of WNS and improve survival of susceptible species. Several States are involved with adaptive management and/or field-testing tools to combat the effects of WNS. With the USGS National Wildlife Health Center (NWHC) and many additional partners, the USFWS supports WNS and Pd surveillance along the leading edge of spread and at important hibernacula to better understand disease dynamics in the western U.S. In Canada, the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative coordinates and supports surveillance and mitigation efforts with many partners. With USFWS support, Mexico has made significant progress assessing hibernacula in Mexico and sampling hibernating bats across the territory for the fungus. To this end, over 100 caves with hibernating bats have been visited (of which several have only recently been discovered through these efforts). In all three countries, ongoing sampling is crucial to provide early warning of the presence of the fungus and to inform understanding of disease dynamics; improvements in surveillance tools and availability are being explored. In the U.S. an assessment of the national response effort for WNS has recently been completed and a report with guidance is forthcoming.

3) Wind energy mortality mitigation across North America
As identified in the State of North America's Bats Report, mortality due to collisions with wind turbines is a pressing concern for North American bats, particularly as the number of turbines on the continent continues to increase. In Canada, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife

in Canada has recommended three migratory bat species, the hoary (*Lasiurus cinereus*), the silver-haired (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*), and the eastern red bat (*Lasiurus borealis*), for federal listing as Endangered due largely to impacts from wind turbines. In the U.S., the USFWS has included the hoary bat on the listing workplan with a status assessment to be conducted in 2028. A number of potential mitigation measures have been identified and improved tools are in development to reduce mortality of bats, but coordinated efforts and standards are needed to encourage wind energy companies to adopt those measures. Furthermore, rapid growth of offshore wind highlights a need for more information related to bats moving along coasts and across the Great Lakes, and the potential risks to bats of offshore wind development.

4) Continental Coordination of Bat Population Monitoring
   The North American Bat Monitoring program, NABat, continues to expand in capability and capacity, with over 2,700 registered users who have contributed nearly 200 million data records across 49 U.S. states and 8 Canadian provinces. Nine regional bat hubs have been established to coordinate monitoring activities across the U.S. and Canada. The Mexican program, SIMMA has been on hold since the pandemic, but we continue to plan for the eventual convergence of data from the Mexican program with NABat.

5) Identification, designation, and implementation of Key Biodiversity Areas for Bat Conservation
   Quantitative information from bat monitoring programs such as NABat and other sources is being used to identify areas of important conservation value for bat species in North America, in the context of the Key Biodiversity Areas program. The book entitled Áreas y Sitios de Importancia para la Conservación de los Murciélagos en Latinoamérica y el Caribe was published in December 2022 identifying a suite of AICOMs and SICOMs across Latin America and the Caribbean. The next step is to work with CONANP to secure recognition and protection for the 30 AICOMs and SICOMs identified in México.

6) Protection of long-nosed bats of the genus Leptonycteris
   Mexico is ready to launch PROREST CC (Program for the Protection and Restoration of Ecosystems and Priority Species in the component of Community Conservation, for its Spanish acronym) covering long-nosed bats of the genus (*L. yerbabuenae* and *L. nivalis*). We are exploring ways to synergize with the U.S. given the existing nivalis conservation network and the updating process of the Post-Delisting Monitoring Plan for *L. yerbabuenae.*

BACKGROUND: The North American Bat Conservation Alliance, involving representatives from the bat conservation community in all 3 countries, was formed

under the umbrella of a Letter of Intent signed by the Executive Table of the Trilateral Committee in 2015. We have provided regular updates to the Trilateral on progress under this initiative and continue to rely on endorsement by the Trilateral Committee to advance high priority projects through collaboration.

2:40– 3:00 International Coexistence Conference. Report on the First Conference and the Path to the Second International Coexistence Conference 2027

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Lizardo Cruz, Lizardo.cruz@endesu.org.mx, Amanda Gonzalez, Department of Interior

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: ENDESU, Josef Warman, Felipe Ramírez, DGVS Fernando Gual, Antonio Fuentes Montalvo, CONANP Pedro Álvarez Icaza, Antonio Gonzalez Azuara, Reneé González, Ana Barillas FMCN, UK Embassy Denice Lugo, WWF Sandra Petrone, Gobierno de Yucatán y Campeche

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: A second international meeting is proposed, tentatively to be held in Mérida, Yucatán, with the aim of prioritizing the Selva Maya as a strategic region and presenting cases of coexistence, such as that of the jaguar, as well as other relevant meetings in the region. The meeting will serve as a follow-up to the one held in 2025 and will be spearheaded by the heads of CONANP and the General Directorate of Wildlife, with the support and funding of national and international partners.

The meeting will discuss the main challenges and advances in terms of human-wildlife coexistence, featuring examples from across the country as well as keynote lectures and presentations on national projects and policies by CONANP and DGVS.

BACKGROUND: In November 2025, the first International Meeting, "30 Years of Coexisting with Wildlife in Mexico," was held. The main objective was to disseminate progress in conservation and coexistence with wildlife and to raise the profile of coexistence with nature on the national agenda. Nine government partners, civil society organizations, academia, and international agencies involved in funding and planning participated in this first meeting, coordinated by ENDESU. The meeting was a hybrid event held at the Sala de Novicios of the Colegio de San Ildefonso in Mexico City. It was attended by nearly 300 in-person participants, over 2,000 virtual attendees, more than 24,000 people who watched various conferences via social media streams, and over 200 visitors to the exhibitions and workshops that ran through the end of the year.

https://coexistencia.endesu.org.mx/

3:00 – 3:15 Braiding Indigenous Knowledge and Western Science in the Yellowstone Bison Species Status Assessment

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Amity Bass, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Mikiya Reuther, InterTribal Buffalo Council (ITBC)

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: DJ Monette, USFWS, Amy Lankford, USFWS; Amity Bass, USFWS; Mikiya Reuther, ITBC

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) routinely conducts Species Status Assessments (SSAs). SSAs are reports that entail compiling the best available information on a species to inform a listing decision under the Endangered Species Act. These reports have primarily been composed of western science, with limited consideration of other available information, such as Indigenous Knowledge. The Service is developing an SSA for the Yellowstone bison (i.e., Yellowstone buffalo), with a proposed listing decision scheduled for September 2027. Buffalo and Indigenous Peoples have deep-ancestral connections that span time immemorial. Therefore, any report on the status of buffalo without meaningful inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge, is not a complete report. To meaningfully integrate Indigenous Knowledge, the Service has partnered with the InterTribal Buffalo Council (ITBC) to help collect Indigenous Knowledge from Knowledge Holders throughout the historical range of plains bison. Knowledge has been compiled in a buffalo Indigenous Knowledge report that will be used to inform the SSA. To date, ITBC and the Service have worked with over 20 Tribes and collected Knowledge from 28 Knowledge holders. Here, we build upon information shared with Tribal partners over the last year, and provide updates on the progress made, share Lessons learned, and give insight on discussions and development of potential methodology for meaningful integration of Indigenous Knowledge and western science.

BACKGROUND: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has relied on Species Status Assessments (SSAs) as a foundational scientific tool for evaluating species' conditions and informing decisions under the Endangered Species Act. While SSAs are designed to compile the best available information, their development has historically emphasized western scientific data, with limited incorporation of other knowledge systems that hold deep relevance for many species. This gap is particularly significant for Yellowstone buffalo, a species whose history, survival, and cultural importance are inseparable from Indigenous Peoples across North America. Recognizing that any comprehensive assessment of buffalo must meaningfully include Indigenous Knowledge, the Service initiated a partnership with the InterTribal Buffalo Council to engage Tribal Nations and Knowledge Holders throughout the historical range of plains bison. This collaboration reflects a broader effort within the Service to strengthen relationships with Tribes and advance co-stewardship by honoring Indigenous perspectives, values, and lived

relationships with buffalo. The resulting Indigenous Knowledge report represents a crucial step toward a more holistic understanding of the species and supports development of the Yellowstone bison SSA ahead of the proposed 2027 listing decision.

3:15 – 3:30 *Break*

3:30 –3:50 Controlled in situ reproduction of the reproductive stock of Yaqui catfish (Ictalurus pricei) genetically certified, for the benefit of the Yaqui nation native to Sonora

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Dr. Alejandro Varela-Romero,
DICTUS University of Sonora, alejandro.varela@unison.mx

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Dr. Alexsandre Gutiérrez-Barragán, alexsandre.gutierrez@unison.mex, DICTUS University of Sonora; Dra Fabiola Salcedo Morán, fabiola.moran@sonora.gob.mx, Institute of Aquaculture of the State of Sonora; Biól. José Alfredo Bahena, Catalán Municipality of Cajeme

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Yaqui catfish is an endangered species due to the reduction in its natural distribution and population abundance over the last 50 years in the Yaqui, Mayo, and Fuerte river basins, and its extirpation from the Sonora and Casas Grandes rivers. The recent detection of hybrids and backcrosses with the exotic channel catfish, *I. Punctatus*, introduced into the Yaqui River basin, necessitates a recovery and conservation strategy to ensure its survival and repopulation.

Genomic analyses of Yaqui catfish (Bavispe River sub-basin), allowed the discovery and elimination of hybrids and backcrosses between both the species, enabling the selection of pure Yaqui catfish individuals and creation of a breeding stock.

The stock is maintained in a rustic pond on the Yaqui River, owned by the Jiak Kuchureom Yaqui Community (CYJK) of the Yaqui Nation of Sonora. Controlled reproduction of the breeding stock is proposed as the most cost-effective strategy to initiate its recovery, management, and conservation through the involvement of the CYJK. Reproduction will be carried out in a rustic pond and, hormone-treated feed and/or hormone injections will be used to promote maturation and spawning.

Wild Yaqui catfish will be captured, morphologically examined for specimen selection, and evaluated by low-depth whole-genome sequencing (lcWGS) to create a new breeding stock. The results are proposed as an experience to initiate a sustainable use of the species, providing ecological, environmental, social, and economic benefits for the Yaqui people.

The project is funding by SECIHTI for a period of 27 months starting this year.

3:50 –4:10 Native freshwater fish conservation, a strategy for the borderlands, case Sonora (México) - Arizona (USA)

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Nélida Barajas Acosta, nelida@cedo.org. Centro Intercultural de Estudios de Desiertos y Océanos; Alejandro Varela Romero alejandro.varela@unison.mx DICTUS-UNISON

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Sonora-Arizona Desert Museum. Debra Colodner; National Park Service; Tohono O'odam Nation; International Sonoran Desert Alliance; University of Arizona; IUCN -SSC-Freshwater

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: La presentación conjunta bajo la premisa de l"a naturaleza no reconoce fronteras", los resultados de un Conversatorio Colaborativo de expertos (instituciones y personas) de México y Estados Unidos trabajando en la conservación, protección y restauración de especies y ecosistemas dulceacúativos en la franja fronteriza, con especial énfasis en la región Sonora-Arizona.

Entre las especies detacán *Cyprinodon eremus*, *Agosia chrysogaster e Ictalurus pricei*.

BACKGROUND: El estudio de peces nativos y su hábitat en el frontera entre México y Estados Unidos particularmente en Sonora ha generado numerosas contribuciones, grupos de trabajo multinstitucionales han presentado en la "trilateral" casos de estudio como los peces nativos de agua dulce del Sonoyta y el bagre yaqui.

Recientemente los esfuerzos en el trabajo de especies y ecosistemas conjuntaron a los expertos y de forma colegiada desarrollan una estrategia para la conservación de peces nativos de agua dulce del noroeste de México, dicha estrategia conjunta la experiencia de trabajo y alinea los esfuerzos de recuperación de hábitat y especies con compromisos multilaterales como el marco mundial para la naturaleza Kunming-Montreal, la COP de especies migratorias, mociones de la Unión Internacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza, programas nacionales de México como el de Restauración de Ecosistemas e iniciativas subnacionales como el programa de ordenamiento ecológico del Territorio del Estado.

4:10 – 4:30 Advancing binational recovery planning for the Yaqui Catfish

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Cassondra Walker (cassondra_walker@fws.gov; USFWS), Janess Vartanian (janess_vartanian@fws.gov; USFWS), Gary Pandolfi

(gary_pandolfi@fws.gov; USFWS), and David R. Stewart
(david_stewart@fws.gov; USFWS)

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Tasha Harden, tasha_harden@fws.gov (USFWS); Grant Harris, grant_harris@fws.gov (USFWS); Joseph Barron, joseph_barron@fws.gov (USFWS);

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The purpose of this agenda item is to identify and strengthen collaborative pathways for the recovery of the Yaqui Catfish through enhanced bi-national cooperation between the United States and Mexico. While recent efforts have focused primarily on information exchange and reporting activities, the next phase will require a coordinated strategy centered on joint recovery planning, scientific collaboration, and implementation of conservation actions. This discussion aims to identify Mexican institutions, agencies, and researchers interested in participating in the recovery planning process, and to clarify what recovery planning entails for both the United States and Mexico. Recovery planning will involve defining shared conservation objectives, identifying priority actions such as population assessments, genetic research, habitat restoration, and the development of captive propagation programs that can support long-term species survival. A key component of this effort will be identifying practical pathways for the legal and safe transport of Yaqui Catfish across international borders to support establishment of captive propagation in the U.S., binational genetic management of brood stock, and population re-establishment in the wild.

BACKGROUND: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) completed a 5-year status review of the Yaqui Catfish in 2019 and has initiated development of a Species Status Assessment (SSA) to evaluate the current condition of the species across its range and identify the factors influencing its viability. The SSA process compiles the best available scientific information on the species' distribution, habitat conditions, and scientific reporting in both the United States and Mexico. As this assessment progresses, the next phase of conservation will involve recovery planning, which will require coordination and input from partners throughout the species' binational range. Because the majority of the Yaqui Catfish's historical distribution occurs in Mexico, the participation of Mexican government agencies, scientists, and conservation institutions is essential to defining recovery goals, identifying conservation priorities, and determining appropriate management actions within Mexico.

4:30 – 4:50 The bacteria Vibrio pectenicia, a causative agent of sea star wasting disease

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Alyssa-Lois Gehman, alyssa.gehman@hakai.org, Hakai Institute and University of British Columbia

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Melanie Prentice, melanie.prentice@hakai.org

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: More than ten years following the onset of the sea star wasting disease (SSWD) epidemic, affecting over 20 asteroid species from Mexico to Alaska, the causative agent has been elusive. Identifying the causative agent underpins the development of recovery strategies. Fulfilling Koch's postulates, we identified *V. pectenicida* strain FHCF-3 as a causative agent of SSWD. The identification of a causative agent guides ongoing conservation actions, including 1) evaluation of wild populations for genetically linked resistance, which could aid captive breeding efforts, 2) evaluation of the seasonality and dynamics of *V. pectenicida* in regions of conservation concern 3) screening of captive populations for *V. pectenicida* to aid disease control and 4) search for *V. pectenicida* targeted phages and probiotics in the wild, for potential phage treatment of disease.

4:50 – 5:00 Day 3 Species Table Close Out

FRIDAY MAY 15, 2026

12:00 – 12:20 Impacts of the Bison Integrated Genomics project of bison conservation

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Greg Wilson, Parks Canada

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Todd Shury, Todd.Shury@pc.gc.ca, Parks Canada; Beth Shapiro, bashapir@ucsc.edu, University of California Santa Cruz; Jonas Oppenheimer, jooppenh@ucsc.edu, University of California Santa Cruz; Gregg Adams, Gregg.Adams@usask.ca

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The purpose of the Bison Integrated Genomics project is to develop tools that can be used to address conservation concerns faced by bison throughout North America. One of the greatest challenges for bison management today is the limitation of conservation herds to relatively small, isolated populations. This raises concerns about the levels of genetic diversity in bison, which can impact future survival. The analysis of ancient bison DNA samples revealed there used to be little genetic differentiation in bison across North America, and modern bison have higher levels of differentiation than in previous time periods due to current species management practices. The analysis of ancient bison DNA samples has also found that some individual bison, and some bison populations, are free of cattle introgression. All of this information will help guide future reintroductions and translocations for the species. We have also developed techniques to allow for the movement of germplasm among populations to increase genetic diversity through the use of artificial reproductive technologies and a bison biobank. The development of a more

reliable TB test and a combined TB/brucellosis vaccine also provides valuable tools to address the presence of these diseases in some bison herds.

BACKGROUND: Bison conservation activities have been presented annually in recent years. The signing of a Letter of Intent highlights the positive and collaborative nature of bison conservation, and formalizes the process for continued, strengthened collaboration moving forward. Members would like to highlight the important bison conservation actions that have been undertaken, and develop a path forward for future collaborations as outlined under the LOI.

12:20 – 12:40 Bison Reintroduction to Banff National Park

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Salman Rasheed, Executive Director, Alberta, Parks Canada (Salman.Rasheed@pc.gc.ca).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Wild bison disappeared from what is now called Banff National Park before the park was created in 1885. The Banff Plains Bison Reintroduction Pilot (2017 - 2022) began with a small herd of bison released on the eastern slopes of Banff National Park. Parks Canada is pleased to announce that, moving forward, we will work towards keeping bison on the landscape in Banff National Park while the Agency explores options for sustainable bison population management and range expansion through the development of a bison management plan.

Many jurisdictions are grappling with the reintroduction of bison into their wildlife management programs. This case study offers a pertinent, timely and successful example, as well as an example of braiding Indigenous knowledge into wildlife management.

The Banff Plains Bison reintroduction pilot has helped Parks Canada understand how we can keep bison on the landscape in Banff National Park. Based on the feedback received throughout the five-year pilot and the subsequent public engagement period, support for sustaining reintroduced bison in Banff National Park continues to be high.

BACKGROUND: A Trilateral Bison Letter of Intent (LOI) has been under development for around a decade, and was recently signed The LOI formalizes the importance of working together to conserve bison in North America, and opens up new avenues for collaborating on bison conservation projects that are important to all three countries. Bison conservation activities have been presented annually in recent years. The signing of a Letter of Intent highlights the positive and collaborative nature of bison conservation, and formalizes the process for continued, strengthened collaboration moving forward. Members would like to highlight the important bison conservation actions that have been undertaken, and develop a path forward for future collaborations as outlined under the LOI.

12:40 –1:00 Bringing Bison Back from the Brink: Bison Conservation in (and out of) Elk Island National Park

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Jonathan DeMoor, Resource Conservation Manager, Elk Island National Park, Parks Canada, jonathan.demoor@pc.gc.ca

DESCRIPTION: Canadian national parks have worked to maintain and restore bison herds for conservation, increasing bison populations from their near extinction in the 1800s. Parks Canada also works to uphold bison health and genetic diversity by maintaining disease-free conservation herds. Elk Island National Park is at the forefront of global conservation efforts for the recovery and preservation of plains and wood bison, as the main source of bison stock for reintroduction projects.

Parks Canada has made significant contributions to bison conservation and restoration in North America. Parks Canada translocates bison between populations to ensure sufficient genetic diversity, collaborating with Indigenous communities and international partners. The Agency has transferred over 3400 Plains and Wood Bison to conservation sites and other interested groups. Over 600 of these bison were transferred to Indigenous communities to support them in establishing their own conservation or cultural herds.

Parks Canada supports the restoration of cultural heritage of Indigenous peoples to create cultural and socio-economic opportunities, Parks Canada continues to learn from past experience with bison transfers, adapting protocols and handling facilities to better manage conservation herds.

BACKGROUND: In total over the past century, Elk Island National Park has translocated over 3600 plains and wood bison to conservation sites around the globe, including translocation of bison to the United States (Montana and Alaska) and Russia (Sakha Republic (Yakutia)).

Bison have also been sent to other national parks. Elk Island National Park has sent bison to Waterton Lakes National Park (plains bison 1952, 2021, and 2023), Riding Mountain National Park (plains bison multiple dates), Nahanni National Park Reserve (plains bison 1980), Rocky Mountain National Historic Site (plains bison multiple dates), Grasslands National Park (plains bison 2005), and Banff National Park (plains bison 2017).

Bison are an integral part of the lives of many Indigenous peoples across North America and as such, Parks Canada works with Indigenous nations to transfer bison as a way of supporting Indigenous rematriation efforts.

1:00 – 1:20 Bison Conservation in Mexico

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: Ana Laura Barillas, ana.barillas@fmcn.org, Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza (FMCN)

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: María del Carmen García, CONANP, mcgarcia@conanp.gob.mx

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Updated status on the bison (Bison bison) recovery program in Mexico, highlighting advances in population recovery based on the core herd established at Rancho El Uno (Chihuahua), which currently exceeds 500 individuals, enabling the establishment of new conservation herds in the northern region of the country. Building on these advances, Mexico seeks a transition toward an adaptive management approach that will help consolidate the ecological and financial viability of the species across its historical range. In this context, it is important to review the conservation status of the bison in Mexico from "threatened" to "subject to special protection," in order to enable more flexible management schemes.

Likewise, the role of sustainable use as a conservation tool will be explored, aiming to create economic incentives for landowners and communities, and facilitating the expansion of the species in productive landscapes.

In collaboration with CONANP, we intend to continue the dialogue with our counterparts in the United States and Canada in an effort to strengthen the populations connectivity, promoting genetic exchange, and building a regional model for bison conservation based on active management.

BACKGROUND: Recovery efforts for the bison in Mexico go back to 2009, with the donation of 23 individuals from Wind Cave National Park and a subsequent herd of 8 individuals from Vermejo Park Ranch in 2011, which were all reintroduced at Rancho El Uno, establishing the genetic base of the Mexican population.

Since then, the population has shown sustained growth, allowing not only its consolidation at the original site, but also the establishment of new conservation herds in other regions of northern Mexico.

1:20 – 1:40 Transboundary movement of endangered wildlife

AGENDA ITEM PRESENTORS: David L. Bergman / Advisor to the Transboundary Movements of Wildlife Working Group

XXIX Meeting of the Canada/Mexico/U.S. Trilateral Committee for Wildlife
and Ecosystem Conservation and Management
Species of Common Conservation Concern
May 12-15, 2026

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Jim Devos (Arizona Game and Fish Department), David L. Bergman (External Advisor), Angelica Narvaez (CONANP)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Frequent changes of officials involved in the permits process, the number of federal and state agencies that hold responsibilities for it, and overall changes within each administration can often create confusion in established processes and regulations that can result in long and cumbersome requirements that delay and/or impede conservation actions of highly endangered species across the border. These can affect both terrestrial and aquatic species.

Sanitary requirements, timelines, last minute changes that can occur (i.e. sudden outbreaks) and miscommunication, can result in failed cross-border movements of specimens that can, at a certain point, be detrimental to local populations of species and their recovery.

In another intent to facilitate and expedite the process of key permits that are needed for these transboundary movements of individuals, the group would like to explore specific options, such as “annual umbrella agreements” and/or “multi-year permits” that may, under the formal framework of the Trilateral Agreement for Management and Conservation of Wildlife and Ecosystems, open informal channels of communication to clarify questions/concerns related to each project, as well as an expeditious process for required approvals.

The working group has developed a draft process document outlining the steps required to move at-risk wildlife across international borders, with the goal of facilitating more efficient and timely transfers. The group now seeks to engage additional partners interested in contributing to this effort to help refine and finalize the document, as well as to continue identifying existing barriers within the current process and strategies to address them.

BACKGROUND: Aimed to facilitate the translocation of endangered transboundary species between Mexico and the United States, in 2022 representatives from various institutions on both sides of the border proposed the creation of a binational group that could begin a dialogue among participants of the Trilateral to identify obstacles that needed to be addressed with pertinent authorities in both countries and, in a timely fashion, try to negotiate at required levels, expedited procedures that could facilitate the translocation of species at risk, in compliance with national and international laws and regulations.

The above dialogue would intend to identify roadblocks that cause a negative impact on the successful translocation of species and would develop strategies that could lead to more effective regulations for transboundary movements of species at risk and its recovery.

1:40 – 2:00 FREE

2:00 – 2:15 *Break*

2:15 – 2:45 Species Table Close Out and Action Item Plan

2:45 – 3:15 Species Table chair preparation for Executive Table session

3:15 – 3:30 Break

3:30 – 4:45 Executive Table and Co-Chairs Meeting Joint Session

4:45 – 5:00 Meeting Closing