

Statewide Rare/Threatened/Endangered Species Inventories

NEED: The Louisiana Natural Heritage Program (LNHP) maintains a comprehensive, computerized database on the occurrences of rare animal species. It is the only such database in the state. These data are collected by staff, university researchers, or gleaned from existing literature. The database is used by researchers, the generally public, private industry, and state, federal, and local governments in conservation and planning efforts. Internally, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries uses the database in reviewing proposed projects for the US Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Transportation and Development, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service, etc. The database has been used in reviewing nearly 20,000 proposed projects in Louisiana. Because of its widespread use, the database has come to be depended on as the source of occurrence information for all rare, nongame species in the state. A recent review of the files indicated that the database contains many old records that need to be updated with field surveys. For example, approximately 90 percent of the existing zoological records in the database have a "LAST OBSERVED" date (indicating the last date the element was sought and observed at that location) more than 5 years old. Overwhelmingly, data are generated by LNHP staff via field surveys. We have inadequate staffing levels to update the aging records.

Additionally, there is a need to continue surveys for all animal species highly ranked by the LNHP due to their rarity or vulnerability, that potentially could be listed in the future as threatened or endangered. Knowing their status now would allow the state to take conservation actions to prevent their listing, and to insure their continued existence as elements of the state's biodiversity. Nearly 400 Louisiana rare animal species are currently tracked by a single staff zoologist, whose annual field plans are determined by the rank of each species.

OBJECTIVES: To systematically survey areas known to have housed LNHP S1 (state rank indicating 5 or fewer locations in the state), S2 (state rank indicating 6-20 locations in the State) and S3 (State rank indicating 21 to 100 known extant populations) species. Surveys will be completed to verify the continued existence of the tracked species. Areas with potential suitable habitat for the species will also be surveyed.

EXPECTED RESULTS AND BENEFITS:

- 1- New records of rare animal species.
- 2- Identification of sensitive areas housing rare species.
- 3- Increased efforts of protection for rare species, as a proactive step in their conservation.
- 4- Updating of the database.

APPROACH: To contract universities and/or individual zoologists to conduct field surveys of S1, S2 or S3 species. The LNHP anticipates authorizing up to 3 contracts for the 3-year grant term.

LOCATION: State of Louisiana

TOTAL COST: \$125,000

Grant Agreement – Budget Information

Project Name: Database for Tracking Rare/Threatened/Endangered (R/T/E) Species

Budget Tracking: The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries has an accounting system that will separately track funds obligated to Segment 2 (75:25 match) and the new present proposed segment (50:50). Any contracts will be set up to draw funds from only one or the other segment so that there will be no double billing.

Effective Dates: From: 07/01/07 To: 06/30/08

<u>Object Class Categories</u>	<u>Project Costs</u>
Salaries (includes benefits)	\$100,000
Vehicle	\$ 25,000
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Total	\$125,000
State Share	\$ 62,500
<u>Federal Share</u>	<u>\$ 62,500</u>
Totals	\$125,000