



## DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE FACT SHEET

### THE BUSH BUDGET A DISASTER FOR WILDLIFE

On February 6, 2006, President Bush submitted his budget for FY 2007 to Congress and the American people. As in past years, the president has used his budget to shortchange key conservation programs through funding cuts and budgetary gimmicks, seriously jeopardizing our wildlife and public lands. The president's budget would cut funding for natural resources and the environment by 13% below FY 2006. The total that the president has allocated for this important line item is \$28.7 billion, just 1 percent of the massive \$2.8 trillion federal budget. This represents a cut of \$4.3 billion, or 13 percent, below 2006 funding levels.

The FY 2007 budget is nothing short of a disaster for our nation's wildlife and habitat and falls far short of recommendations made in the FY 2007 Green Budget released by fifteen environmental groups. For the few programs where modest increases were provided, they are still far below the need, are outstripped by cuts to other programs, and in most cases do not keep pace with fixed costs. **For a more detailed analysis or to review the Green Budget visit <http://www.defenders.org/newsroom/budget07.html>.**

Some of the lowlights of the president's budget include:

- **Land and Water Conservation Fund:** The president's budget eviscerates the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), cutting it by \$57.4 million or more than 40% below 2006 and uses budget gimmicks to mask the true impacts. The LWCF, established in 1964, is one of the greatest tools we have to address the increasingly significant loss of open space, forests and wildlife habitat by providing funding for acquisition of lands for our national wildlife refuges, parks and forests and for state purchase of open space.
- **Endangered Species Conservation:** The president's budget again cuts Fish and Wildlife Service funding for recovery of endangered and threatened animals and plants, this year by 10.4% below 2006 levels. With cuts like this, we cannot expect too many more conservation success stories such as the bald eagle, peregrine falcon, wolves, or manatees anytime soon.
- **National Wildlife Refuge System:** The president's nearly \$1 million cut for National Wildlife Refuges is really much worse – a \$17 million cut when accounting for fixed costs and coming on top of unprecedented hurricane damage to refuges last year that will require millions more to recover.

- **Partners for Fish and Wildlife:** While lauding the benefits of working in partnership to conserve wildlife, the president cuts this crucial landowner assistance program by \$8.4 million or 16%.
- **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge:** Once again the president's budget proposes the tired old idea of opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to energy. Using wildly speculative calculations, the president's proposal claims that lease sales in the refuge will generate \$7 billion after an initial sale in 2008, and another \$1 billion after a second sale in 2010. Generating this much money would only happen if oil companies paid more than 209 times per acre what they've been willing to pay for any lease on Alaska's North Slope in the last 15 years!
- **Multinational Species Conservation Fund:** The president's budget hacks by 33.4% this small but effective fund that leverages a 3 to 1 match for on the ground conservation of elephants, rhinos, tigers, apes and sea turtles in foreign lands.
- **Bureau of Land Management Wildlife and Fisheries Management and Threatened and Endangered Species Management:** Level funding for these programs along with greatly escalated energy development on BLM lands will likely ensure continued siphoning away of meager resources from proactive wildlife and habitat conservation work.
- **Forest Service Wildlife and Fisheries Habitat Management:** The president's budget slashes by \$9 million or 6.8 percent, even though the Forest Service has identified approximately \$186 million in needed fish and wildlife habitat conservation projects for FY 2007.
- **Selling off Lands:** The budgets both for Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service include troubling proposals to sell off our public lands. The BLM budget proposes a new land sale program with a target of raising \$182 million over the next five years from the privatization of public lands.
- **Farm Bill Conservation:** While heralding full funding of the Wetlands Reserve Program, the president's budget once again fails to provide the mandatory levels to the whole suite of critical conservation programs as promised in the 2002 Farm Bill. The 2002 Farm Bill promised mandatory conservation funding in FY 2007 of \$4.693 billion. Yet, the total amount in the president's FY 2007 budget request for all programs is \$4.172 billion, \$521 million less than was promised and is needed.

*[Defenders of Wildlife](#) is recognized as one of the nation's most progressive advocates for wildlife and its habitat. With more than 490,000 members and supporters, Defenders of Wildlife is an effective leader on endangered species issues. For more information, please contact Mary Beth Beetham, at (202) 772-0231, [mbeetham@defenders.org](mailto:mbeetham@defenders.org).*