

Critics attack Bush wildlife record

July 6 2007

Critics of the Bush administration's policies on wildlife protection say the endangered species list is itself endangered.

"It's wonderful the bald eagle is recovering -- one of the most charismatic and best funded species ever," Jamie Rappaport Clark -- a former director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service who now works for Defenders of Wildlife -- told The Los Angeles Times. "But what's happening with the other species? This administration has starved the endangered species' budget. It has dismantled and demoralized its staff."

The Bush administration has added fewer species to the endangered list than any administration since the list was established in 1973. Of the 58 it has added, 54 were put on the list in response to lawsuits, the Times reported.

"Court orders are the only thing that makes the agency take any action," said Kieran Suckling of the Center for Biological Diversity in Houston.

"We have a national deficit, and we are in the midst of a war," Bryan Arroyo, acting assistant director of endangered species for the Fish and Wildlife Service, told the Times. "We have to live within the president's budget."

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Citation: Critics attack Bush wildlife record (2007, July 6) retrieved 10 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2007-07-critics-bush-wildlife.html>

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