

THIS WEEK

Bald Eagle Taken Off Endangered Species List

July 2, 2007*Reporting by Roddy Scheer*[Normal View](#) [Print View](#) [Without Graphics](#) [Mail to a Friend](#)

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service made it official last week: the bald eagle is no longer listed as threatened under the nation's landmark Endangered Species Act (ESA). The long road to delisting began in 1999 when the agency, citing the great bird's recovery from the brink of extinction in the Lower 48, first proposed the move.

Conservationists were initially reluctant about the delisting as they feared it could undermine ongoing species recovery efforts. But some have embraced the decision, especially given recent encouraging population counts. According to the nonprofit Center for Biological Diversity (CBD), the bald eagle's population in the continental U.S. rebounded from only 417 pairs in 1963 to more than 11,000 this year. Federal protection of the bird, along with a ban on the harmful pesticide DDT and an intensive captive breeding program were all instrumental in the eagle's recovery.



In the U.S., bald eagle populations have rebounded from 417 pairs in 1963 to more than 11,000 this year.

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"The bald eagle's recovery from the edge of extinction is one of the world's great conservation success stories," says Kieran Suckling, CBD policy director.

Although the bald eagle will no longer enjoy federal protection under the Endangered Species Act, hunting or harassing the bird, as well as trading in its parts, will remain illegal thanks to the Bald Eagle Protection Act of 1940, as well as various state laws. Suckling and other environmentalists hope to see eagle populations continue to soar even without ESA threatened status.

Source: [Biological Diversity/Bald Eagle](#)

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