

## A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO SPECIES CONSERVATION ON PRIVATE LANDS

Stewardship of our nation's land and natural resources is the responsibility of all who touch them – private forest landowners and foresters, farmers and ranchers, hunters and anglers, conservationists, and state and federal agencies. The most effective conservation of fish and wildlife relies on productive collaboration among all stakeholders to identify common goals and different roles in protecting wildlife and natural habitats.



**NAFO IS COLLABORATING WITH THE U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE (USFWS) AND OTHER PARTNERS ON A SHARED MISSION TO CONSERVE AT-RISK AND LISTED SPECIES.**

We are brought together by a shared recognition that private forestry is an important conservation solution. NAFO members bring to the table more than 45 million acres of working forests – the scale needed to achieve real, proactive conservation success – and a long-term commitment to species conservation.

### OUR VISION: A NATIONWIDE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP ROOTED IN TRUST

To conduct impactful conservation for listed and at-risk species across the landscape of privately owned, working forests, we must:

- Value real conservation, at a scale that is ecologically meaningful
- Favor collaborative solutions over regulatory approaches
- Support the USFWS to make decisions about the listing of at-risk species with better information
- Employ creative solutions
- Inspire a relationship built on trust, partnership and collaborative conservation
- Establish this as a priority throughout the agency

**THE NAFO SPECIES CONSERVATION INITIATIVE IS A PRIME EXAMPLE OF HOW TO CONDUCT CONSERVATION WITHOUT CONFLICT, BUILT UPON THE FOLLOWING SHARED INSIGHTS:**



**PRIVATE FOREST OWNERS ARE CRITICAL TO CONSERVATION SUCCESS.**

Private forest owners care for more than 450 million acres of forestland – 60% of the nation's forests. Private forests support 60% of at-risk species found in the conterminous United States. NAFO members are committed to managing for listed and at-risk species on their 45 million acres of working forests. NAFO and USFWS recognize certification as a method to guarantee adherence to common forestry values.



**BETTER DATA INFORMS BETTER CONSERVATION PLANS.**

The most effective conservation plans rely on sound science – surveys that track population sizes, research that tells us about specific habitat needs, and monitoring to show which conservation measures are working and which are not. A partnership with private landowners provides much-needed access for researchers to conduct on-the-ground studies about forest-dwelling species.



**ACTIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT IS A PROVEN CONSERVATION TOOL.**

Active forest management – planting, thinning, harvesting, and replanting trees – keeps forests strong and productive, and helps insulate them from economic pressure to convert forests to another land use. Actively managed, working forests can provide habitat for at-risk and other rare species, particularly those found in young forests and open canopy. Best Management Practices for streams and riparian habitats are helping conserve aquatic species in working forests.

## EARLY SUCCESSES IN COLLABORATIVE CONSERVATION

### WEST COAST FISHER: REGIONS 1 & 8

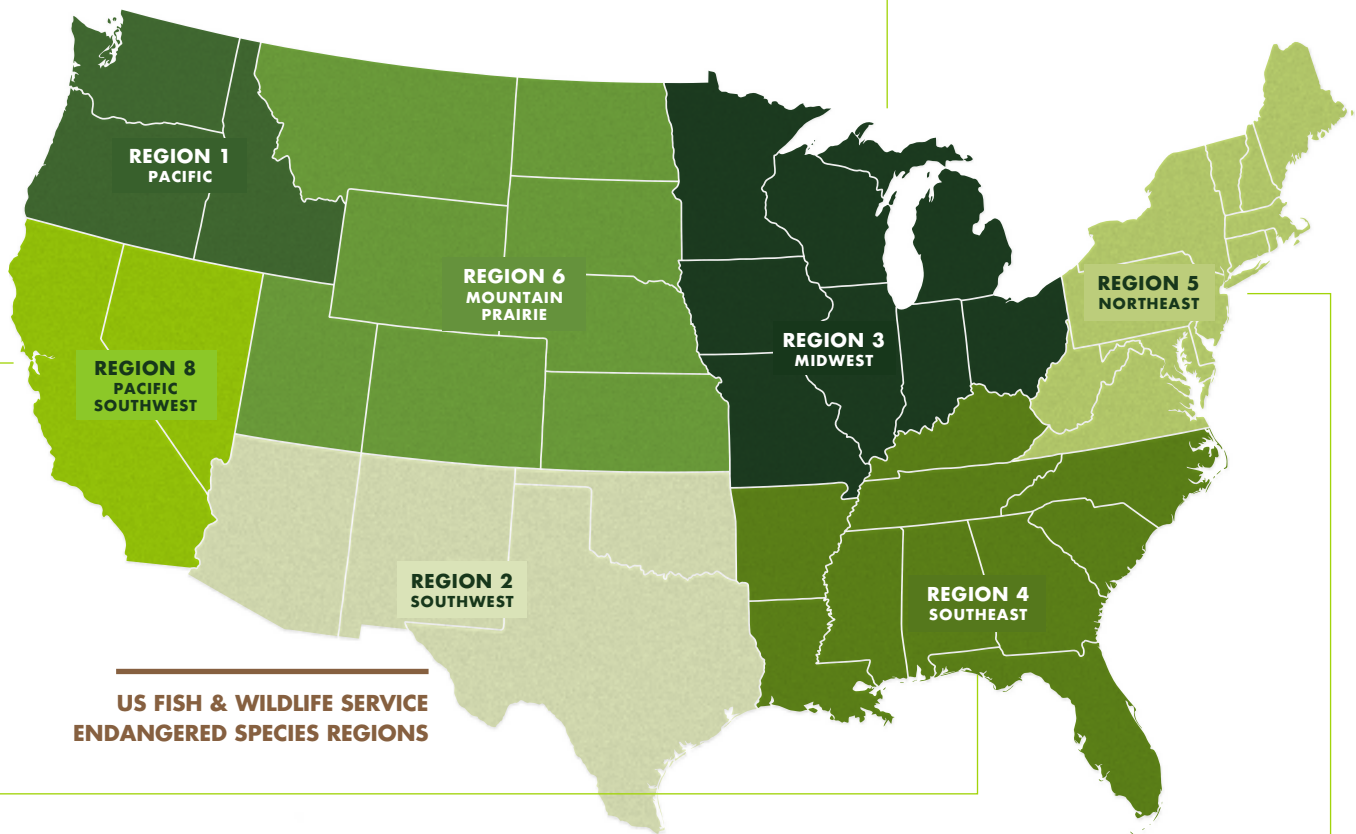
#### ESA LISTING NOT NECESSARY, CONSERVATION AGREEMENTS IN PLACE

Commitments and information provided by NAFO members contributed to the USFWS decision not to list the West Coast fisher under the ESA. Continued work with state agencies and USFWS produced a Fisher Candidate Conservation Agreement in Oregon, with ten forest owners committed to participate. Similar agreements have been completed in California and Washington.

### KIRTLAND'S WARBLER: REGION 3

#### PRIVATE FOREST OWNERS INVITED

Through a dialogue opened by this Initiative, the USFWS has welcomed private landowner involvement in plans to continue the recovery of the Kirtland's Warbler, which makes its home exclusively in jack pine forests. As the Kirtland's Warbler makes significant recovery – and discussions begin about its delisting – USFWS and the Michigan DNR are working with private landowners in Michigan's lower peninsula to develop forest management strategies for the jack pine forests.



US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE  
ENDANGERED SPECIES REGIONS

### GOPHER TORTOISE: REGION 4

#### RESEARCH PROJECTS UNDERWAY ON PRIVATE LANDS

NAFO members granted researchers from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources private land access to conduct inventories of tortoises and their burrows. DNR is now assessing the data and also reaching out to additional landowners to participate. Researchers at the University of Georgia are using similar access to study tortoise movements in response to forest management activities.

### WOOD TURTLE: REGION 5

#### NEW VOLUNTARY EFFORTS UNDERWAY

A partnership established in Maine with landowner participation has identified a watershed pilot project between the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the National Council for Air and Stream Improvement, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the USFWS, and private landowners from NAFO and the American Forest Foundation.

### AQUATIC SPECIES: REGION 4 A MODEL FOR CONSERVATION

NAFO members and other private landowners are working with the USFWS Alabama Field Office to survey for at-risk and listed aquatic species. Collaboration is underway to develop conservation measures that will contribute to the recovery of listed species or help preclude the need to list. State best management practices (BMPs) that protect the water quality are the cornerstone of this work, as BMPs provide water quality and riparian habitats needed by at-risk mussel, crayfish, fish and other aquatic species.