



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Creating Connections with our Southern Neighbor

Wildlife Without Borders - Mexico



Mexico and the United States are two nations bound by geographic proximity, cultural links and trade. Historically, the close diplomatic relations between the countries have fostered ever stronger linkages in the areas of agriculture, commerce, tourism, culture, education, transportation, and science. These bonds of friendship and cooperation have provided expanded opportunities to address the biodiversity management concerns shared by both nations.

Mexico is one of the most important countries in the world in terms of biological richness, and many of its species, communities and ecosystems extend across its borders. Mexico also plays a vital role in providing stopover and wintering habitats for numerous migratory species that breed as far north as Alaska and Canada, and migrate as far south as the tip of South America. Managing this shared natural wealth requires collaborative international efforts.

Throughout the years both nations have demonstrated leadership in creating more effective means for international cooperation. Recently, by building upon the past 65 years of joint efforts, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Mexican Secretariat for the Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) have developed the *Wildlife Without Borders-Mexico* program to:

- Strengthen Mexico's capacity to address biodiversity conservation and management needs;
- Promote the exchange of information and technology;
- Support joint projects, which promote the conservation of natural resources of importance to both nations;
- Foster greater investment in resource management and conservation in Mexico.

Projects supported can be categorized under three broad program areas: training, ecosystem management, and information and technology exchange. All projects are developed in coordination with SEMARNAT. Proposals are jointly reviewed, evaluated, ranked, and selected by the federal wildlife agencies of both countries.

Projects under this initiative:

- Address specific conservation and management issues;
- Integrate training, information and technology exchange and environmental education;



- Promote local participation;
- Are endorsed by local authorities.

Examples of project activities funded to date include the following:

- Scholarships for Masters Degrees in Wildlife Management Programs;
- Training workshops in natural resource management for small-scale farmers;
- Technology and information exchange meetings;
- Applied research to improve management and conservation of habitats and specific species;
- Community based environmental education programs;
- Implementation of conservation activities in nature reserves and priority ecosystems.

Some of the results generated by these projects include: short courses; workshops; training and educational materials for local communities, grassroots support organizations, governmental and academic institutions; and management and recovery plans. Hundreds of resource managers, teachers, local people, reserve managers and game wardens have benefitted from these projects. Activities have taken place in 28 nature reserves, including nine along the U.S.-Mexico border.

All projects include significant financial investments by partner institutions. During its first six years the initiative leveraged almost \$9 million in local contributions, which tripled the Service's investment. Some of these partners include:

Bat Conservation International (Texas)
CONABIO (Mexico City)
Instituto de Ecologia (Veracruz)
Instituto de Historia Natural (Chiapas)
Organic Producers Union (Chiapas)

RARE Center for Tropical Conservation (Washington, D.C.)
San Diego Natural History Museum (California)
Sonoran Institute (Arizona)
Terra Nostra (Tamaulipas)
Texas Parks and Wildlife (Texas)
Universidad Autonoma de Mexico (Mexico City)
University of Baja California (Ensenada)

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