

## Marzulla Testifies on Endangered Species Act

On October 10, 2013, Roger Marzulla testified before the Natural Resources Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives working group on Endangered Species Act. The title of the forum was “*40 Years of the Endangered Species Act and Seeking Improvement for People and Species*.” The hearing featured 17 panelists, representing diverse groups and interests from across the country, all of whom had one message for Congress: fix the Endangered Species Act. The participants all discussed different ways in which the Endangered Species Act can and should be changed to improve its effectiveness and fairness. Participants highlighted the need to empower states, local governments, and private landowners to conserve species and avoid federal listings, the need for balance within the law, the importance of transparent data and science and the need to prevent the ESA from being a tool for lawsuits and closed-door settlements with litigious groups.

Roger Marzulla testified about the significant gap in the Endangered Species Act: the ESA’s failure to provide a meaningful role for state government in protecting species, particularly when the State engages private landowners and industry in a program aimed at avoiding the threat of extinction and so keeps species from ever becoming endangered or threatened.

“Although well-intentioned, the Endangered Species Act has often worked against both the nation’s economic interests and the continued vitality of the very species whose welfare the ESA was enacted to ensure,” said Roger Marzulla. “The time has come to revise the Endangered Species Act to harness state and private species conservation efforts not only to protect those species that are in danger of extinction, but to encourage the vitality of many other species that need never reach the brink of extinction. Congress should integrate species and habitat protection into state and local land use and resource development programs just as it has done in the Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, and the Resource Conservation Act.”

Marzulla further stated: “Over the past 40 years we have learned much about how to protect our country’s precious wildlife resources. One thing we have learned is we can better. We can protect species before they are endangered, and we can harness the considerable wildlife protection machinery of the states plus the private sector to insure a diverse and robust wildlife for our nation.”

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