

STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT ON SIGNING S. 1143 INTO LAW
DECEMBER 28, 1979 (PUBLIC LAW 96-159)

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT AMENDMENTS

I am very pleased today to sign into law S. 1143, a 3-year reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act. This act is one of the most far-reaching and progressive laws ever enacted by any nation to protect wildlife and plant resources. Reauthorization of the act has been one of my high legislative priorities.

In addition to reauthorization, the bill I am signing strengthens our endangered species protection program by including plant, as well as animal, species in the emergency listing and international cooperation provisions. The act also authorizes funds to the the Department of Agriculture to enforce provisions related to plants.

The bill revises the procedures for implementing the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. The Congress has established a strong and independent International Convention Advisory Commission to advise the Secretary of the Interior on Scientific Authority responsibilities related to the convention. The scientific integrity of the convention will be preserved by the Commission's advice on the effects of trade, the listing of species on the convention appendices, and the interpretation and implementation of the convention.

I look forward to and will continue to support the implementation of a vigorous endangered species program.

Note : As enacted, S. 1143 is Public Law 96-159, approved December 28.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HEARINGS

U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on International Organizations. Review of Recent Efforts to Protect Endangered Species. Hearings, 96th Congress, 1st session, May 15 and 24, 1979 (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), Part I). Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1979. 63 p.

'This hearing on international protection of endangered species was held to review current issues, particularly as they were addressed at the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in San Jose, Costa Rica in March 1979.

Testifying on Tuesday, May 15, 1979 were William A. Hayne, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, Department of State; Robert S. Cook, Deputy Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior; Richard Parsons, Chief, Federal Wildlife Permit Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Gerald A. Bertrand, Chief, International Affairs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and Michael J. Bean, Chairman, Wildlife Program, Environmental Defense Fund.

On Thursday, May 24, 1979 the Honorable John B. Breaux, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation and the Environment testified.

Submitted for the record was a list of nations party to CITES. Appendices include the text of CITES, the introduction to the 1977 annual report for CITES, a list of member organizations of the Monitor Consortium (1979), excerpts from reports from the first and second meetings of the CITES parties, and statements submitted by the Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc. and by the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries. Subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation and the Environment. Endangered Species. Hearings, 96th Congress, 1st session, April 6-July 27, 1979. Serial no. 96-12. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1979. 356 p.

This document covers three sets of hearings conducted on four days in April and July, 1979. The hearings of April 6 covered endangered species authorization and oversight and the reauthorization bill, H.R. 2218, in particular. Included in the printed hearings are the text of H.R. 2218 and Interior's report on that bill and on S. 1143. Testimony and statements of a number of Federal officials in the Departments of Commerce and the Interior, and of representatives of such private organizations as the National Audubon Society, Defenders of Wildlife, and the National Forest Products Association, inter alia, are included.

The hearings of July 16 dealt with endangered species scientific authority oversight. Numerous Federal, State and private organization representatives testified or provided statements for the record. Particular attention was directed to the case of the American alligator in Louisiana, its biological status and its treatment under the ESL and CITES.

Endangered Species Act oversight hearings were also conducted on July 20 and 27, with particular purpose to review the recently completed General Accounting Office report on the operation and administration of the Endangered Species Act and to analyze the implementation of the 1978 amendments to date.

Testimony and Statements were taken from nearly two dozen individuals including Members of Congress, Federal agency representatives, the private sector of industry, and the private sector of conservation organizations.

U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Environment and Public Works. Subcommittee on Resource Protection. Endangered Species Act Reauthorization. Hearings, 96th Congress, 1st session, April 3, 1979. Serial no. 96-H11. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1979. 132 p.

These hearings were held to discuss procedures under the 1978 amendments to the Endangered Species Act providing for an Endangered Species Committee to arbitrate conflicts arising under provisions of the Act, specifically as the Committee considered exemptions under the Act for the Tellico Dam in Tennessee and the Grayrocks Dam in Wyoming. The hearings also addressed portions of the then still draft GAO report on administration of the Act which pertained to the matter of reauthorization.

Testifying were Congressman Duncan of Tennessee, Henry Eschwege of the GAO, Robert Herbst and Lester Silverman of the Department of the Interior, Terry Leitzell of the Department of Commerce, Thomas Lovejoy of the World Wildlife Fund, and Elvis Stahr and John Borneman of the National Audubon Society. Statements for the record were also submitted by the International Primate Protection League, the National Forest Products Association, and the Pacific Marine Fisheries Commission.