

Dedicated to the Memory of Commissioner Enoch S. "Inky" Moore Jr.

PLAY



Pennsylvania • League • of • Angling • Youth

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THE ROAD TO EXTINCTION THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

by Kim Mumper

Do you know what Lake Erie's blue pike has in common with dinosaurs, dodo birds and the passenger pigeon? They are all extinct. This means they no longer live.

Some species are extinct because of natural events, like the beginning or ending of an ice age. Recently, extinction has been the result of human actions.

Along the road to extinction, humans have reduced the number of that species. Their habitat was changed and that species couldn't survive. Taking too



many species for food also put some species on the road to extinction.

Changing or destroying habitat affects species numbers. Often, species that are more sensitive to change head down the road to extinction. These species tend to be "habitat specialists." They require certain types of habitats to survive. The bog turtle is a good example of a habitat specialist. It lives in spring-fed, marshy wetlands.

The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) and other state agencies work hard to keep species found in Pennsylvania off the road to extinction. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service does the same on a national level.

TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

Species: Related organisms with common characteristics. They can breed and produce offspring. Example: Bullfrogs are a species of frog.

Range: The geographic area where a species is found.

Habitat: Place that provides water, space and shelter in the right combinations for a species to survive.

Extirpated: The species is no longer found in Pennsylvania (or other places), but does live in other locations in its range.

Endangered: The species is in danger of becoming extinct.

Threatened: The species is in danger of becoming endangered.

Candidate: The species is in danger of becoming threatened or endangered.

ENDANGERED SPECIES PREVENTION

There are 71 species on the PFBC's list of threatened, endangered and candidate species. It is easier to keep a species off the

road than to restore it. The PFBC works hard to prevent species from getting on the list.

LIST OF THREATENED, ENDANGERED AND CANDIDATE SPECIES NUMBER OF SPECIES

	ENDANGERED	THREATENED	CANDIDATE
Fish	28	15	11
Amphibians	4	1	0
Reptiles	4	1	3
Aquatic Invertebrates	4	0	0
TOTAL	40	17	14

Remaining populations of species on the list are protected by PA laws and regulations. It is illegal to have, gather, collect whole or parts of species on the list.

Laws and regulations also protect habitat. PFBC biologists review plans for big building projects. This review includes plans for roads, bridges, shopping malls, pipelines, wind farms and housing developments. If important habitats could be damaged, the Commission requires builders to change their plans.

The PFBC conducts research on special species and their habitats. Some projects help us learn more about the critter. Some projects focus on the habitat. The Commission even has projects designed to restore species and their habitats.



ENDANGERED: BOG TURTLE



THREATENED: GREEN SALAMANDER



CANDIDATE: TIMBER RATTLESNAKE