

Name _____ Date _____

Endangered Species Act



Read about the Endangered Species Act below. Then read “Back to the Wild” (April 16, 2021). Use information from both texts to answer the questions at the bottom of this worksheet.

Did you know there are more than 1,400 animal species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA)? It takes a long time to bring a species back from being endangered. Many of the species that have fully recovered from being endangered were on the original list.

On December 28, 1973, President Richard Nixon signed the ESA into law. The goal of the act is to protect and restore at-risk species and their ecosystems. Under the ESA, species can be listed as “endangered,” which means they are in danger of extinction, or “threatened,” which means a species is likely to become endangered in the future. Part of the ESA’s goal is also to conserve species that are at risk, so they won’t need to be listed as endangered or threatened.

Once a species is added to one of the lists, a recovery plan is created. For most species, habitat conservation is the most important part of this plan. For others, a breeding program might be required to increase the population. An office in every U.S. state has staff working to conserve endangered species and their habitats. Once a species is listed, it’s illegal for a person to harm, hunt, or capture individuals of that species.

1. How does the Endangered Species Act protect animals?

2. Based on the article “Back to the Wild,” what has the ESA done for gray wolves? What impact has it made?

3. Using information from both texts, do you think the gray wolf should be removed from the endangered-species list? Explain.
