December 10, 2009

Secretary Ken Salazar
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar,

As conservation scientists, we are writing to you to request that you rescind the 2007 Solicitor's memorandum (M-37013) reinterpreting the phrase "significant portion of its range" (SPOIR) in the definition of endangered species in the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

The memorandum sharply limits the scope of the ESA by limiting the analysis of whether species are endangered to current range and by specifying that when species are found to be endangered in a SPOIR, they will only be listed in the portion of range considered significant.

We are concerned that these interpretations will result in imperiled species not receiving protection and limit where species that are listed are ultimately recovered. We are also concerned that the memorandum will limit protection for endangered species to small portions of range where they may not be recoverable.

The ESA is our strongest law for protecting the species and ecosystems of the U.S. and thus it is of critical importance that it is implemented in a manner that provides protection to the many species that need them in all or significant portions of their range and to recover species and the ecosystems upon which they depend in as much of their historical range as possible. For all of these reasons, we ask that you rescind the Solicitor's memorandum on SPOIR.

Sincerely,

Erica Antill BS
University of Maryland, Baltimore

Dan Ardia PhD
Franklin & Marshall College

Ruth Ashbach BS

Clare Aslan
UC Davis

Gordon Becker MS
Center for Ecosystem Management and Restoration
David Berg PhD
Department of Zoology, Miami University

Elizabeth Biro
Washington University

Jim Boone PhD
Desert Wildlife Consultants, LLC

Tracy Borneman MS Candidate
North Carolina State University

Natalia Borrego
University of Miami

Clait Braun PhD
Grouse Inc.

Jeremy Bruskotter PhD
The Ohio State University

Patricia Butler
Little Traverse Conservancy

Carlos Carroll PhD
Klamath Center for Conservation Research

Theresa Cichocki BS
Village of Northbrook

Sandra Cooke PhD
Duke University

Patrick Crist PhD
NatureServe

Dominick DellaSala PhD
National Center for Conservation Science & Policy

James des Lauriers MS
Department of Biology, Chaffey College

Sarah DeYoung MS
North Carolina State University
Laura DiGruttolo BS  
Wildlands Conservation, Inc.

Vladimir Dinets  
University of Miami

Stephanie Doerries BS

Edith Dooley  
University of Montana College of Forestry and Conservation

Lee Dyer PhD  
University of Nevada Reno

Farrah Fatemi  
University of Maine

Patricia Faulkner MS

John Fitzpatrick PhD  
Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Thomas Fleischner PhD  
Prescott College

Chris Frissell PhD  
Pacific Rivers Council

Julie Ghrist BS  
Art of Conservation Inc.

Tom Giesen  
PhD Candidate  
Oregon State University

Kandis Gilmore  
MS Candidate Sonoma State University

Laurie Goodrich MS  
Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association

Steven Green  
Professor of Biology, Univ. of Miami

Noah Greenwald MS  
Center for Biological Diversity
Linnea Hall PhD
Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology
Ben Haller PhD Candidate
McGill University

C. B. Halpern PhD
University of Washington

Richard Halsey MS
The California Chaparral Institute

Neal Halstead
University of South Florida

Diane Haughney PhD
Bucknell University

Dennis Hedgecock
University of Southern California

Colin Henderson MS

Susan Heydler PhD

Bill Hilton Jr.
Hilton Pond Center for Piedmont Natural History

Adam Hinkle
University of South Dakota Biology Department

Karen Holl PhD
University of California Santa Cruz

Monica Iglecia MS Candidate
North Carolina State University

Thomas Ihde PhD
Versar, Inc.

Thomas Jervis PhD

Daniel Johnson
Indiana University

Kris Johnson MS
University of Minnesota
Vivian Kimball MS  
Antioch University New England

Lucinda Knight MS  
Teton Youth and Family Services

Lorraine Kohorn PhD  
Bowdoin College

Jason Koontz PhD  
Augustana College (IL)

Aaron Kortenhoven  
Wildlife biologist

Inga La Puma PhD Candidate  
Rutgers

TyAnn Lee MS Candidate  
Duke University

Toni Lee MS  
California Institute of Technology (Caltech)

Katie L'Heureux  
Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries

Elinor Lichtenberg  
University of California, San Diego

Jennifer Loda MS  
Lewis and Clark Law School

Travis Longcore PhD  
University of Southern California

Olga Lyandres PhD  
Northwestern University

Silvia Macia PhD  
Barry University

Malcolm MacPherson PhD

Krisztian Magori PhD
University of Georgia

Erin McClelland PhD
The Commonwealth Medical College

Gail McDiarmid BS
Furman University

Vince Mendieta
MS Candidate Texas A&M University

Brian Miller PhD
Wind River Ranch Foundation

Marianne Moore PhD
Wellesley College

Marc Myers BS
Primate Conservation, Inc.

Clifton Nunnally PhD Candidate
Texas A&M University, Galveston

Sarah Olimb MS
Conservation non-profit

Sheryn Olson BS
University of Maine

Katie Ombalski MS
ClearWater Conservancy or Central PA, Inc.

Jessica Orlofske
University of New Brunswick

Lisa Paine MS
North Carolina State University

Christopher Papouchis MS
American River College

David Parsons MS
The Rewilding Institute

Michael Perouansky MD
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Trevor Persons BS
Field herpetologist

Mike Phillips PhD
Turner Endangered Species Fund

Stuart Pimm PhD
Duke University

Pamela Polloni MS
MBLWHOI Library Herbarium

Tony Povilitis PhD
Life Net Nature

Roger A. Powell PhD
North Carolina State University

Jessica Pratt MS
University of California, Irvine

Edward Raynor
Nicholls State University

Richard Reading PhD
University of Denver

Michael Robinson PhD
Dept. of Biology, University of Miami

Javier Rodriguez
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Philip Rosen PhD
University of Arizona

Jonathan Rosenfield PhD
Aquatic Restoration Consulting

Michael Sandel
University of Alabama

Benedetta Sarno PhD
Melissa Savage PhD  
UCLA  
Adam Schawel PhD Candidate  
UC Berkeley

Paula Schiffman PhD  
California State University, Northridge

Angie Shelton PhD  
Indiana University

Barry Sherr PhD  
Oregon State University-COAS

Steve Shippee PhD Candidate  
University of Central Florida, Biology Dept

Margaret Simon  
Florida State University

Andrew Simons  
University of Minnesota

Walter Smith PhD Candidate  
University of Alabama

Robin Snyder  
Case Western Reserve University, Biology Dept.

Stephanie Spehar PhD  
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

David Spiering MS  
Buffalo Museum of Science

Jerome Stefferud MS

Sally Stefferud  
Retired U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Todd Steiner MS  
Turtle Island Restoration Network

John M. Stewart PhD  
Emeritus Professor and Director, Northland Wolf Research Team
Jessica Stocking MS Candidate  
NC State University

Kerry Topel MS Candidate  
Humboldt State University

Nash Turley  
North Carolina State University

Beth VanDusen MS Candidate  
University of North Carolina- Chapel Hill, Institute of Marine Science

John Vucetich PhD  
Michigan Technological University

Jon Way PhD  
Eastern Coyote Research

Kirsten Wert  
University of South Dakota

Sandra Wilmore MS

David Wilson University of Miami

Sharon Wise PhD  
Utica College

Melissa Wolfe MS

Andrew Wright MS  
Leviathan Sciences

Charles Yackulic PhD  
Columbia University, Department of Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Biology

Jean-Paul Zagarola BS  
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife