

## **Pelosi Statement on Endangered Species Act**

To: National Desk

Contact: Brendan Daly or Jennifer Crider, 202-226-7616, both of the Office of House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, Web: <http://democraticleader.house.gov>

WASHINGTON, July 20 /U.S. Newswire/ -- House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi released the following statement today that was read at a news conference with environmental groups to discuss the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and present 170,000 petitions on the ESA to the White House:

"Thank you to the environmental activists who have converged on Washington this week to talk to your elected officials about the Endangered Species Act. We need to raise awareness in Washington and around the country because the Endangered Species Act itself should be on the 'threatened' list right now. You are the cavalry coming to storm the Hill.

"You know that all species are part of a web of life, and we owe it to our children to protect animals and plants from extinction. The Endangered Species Act provides a safety net for wildlife, plants, and fish that are on the brink of extinction.

"Unfortunately, the Bush Administration takes the same approach to the Endangered Species Act that it takes to all the other major environmental laws that protect our air, water, and lands. Their approach is to appease, abuse, and assault.

-- They appease their corporate supporters. To the Bush Administration, endangered species are simply an obstacle to the business practices of their corporate supporters, whose views on the environment are vastly different from responsible companies.

-- They abuse the scientific evidence for protecting the environment. In a confidential survey of U.S. Fish and Wildlife employees earlier this year, large numbers of agency scientists reported political interference in scientific decisions.

-- And they assault our environmental laws through regulatory changes and court cases. For example, the Forest Service is allowed to proceed with logging and road-building in endangered species habitat without assessing the affects on the endangered species.

"The Endangered Species Act is under attack in Congress as well.

"The nation rejoiced this spring when the Ivory-billed woodpecker, long thought to be extinct, was spotted in the woods and swamps of eastern Arkansas. The nation's capital rejoiced a few days ago when a baby panda was born in the National Zoo. We need to build on these happy events.

"I don't need to tell you why we should save all endangered species, not just the glamorous ones, like pandas. The

web of life is essential to our own survival. It is not up to us to decide which of God's creations should live and which should disappear from the face of the earth.

"Thank you again for coming to Washington. You are the cavalry. You can be sure I join with you in this fight to save the Endangered Species Act."