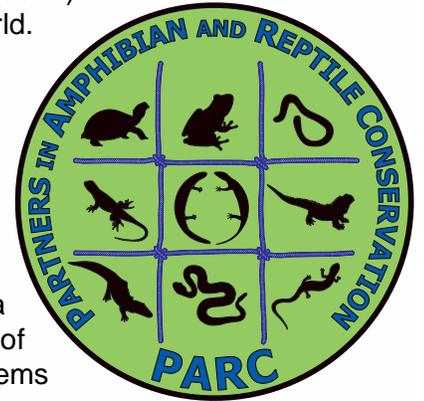


Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation

In recent years, populations of amphibians and reptiles (the herpetofauna) have declined significantly in North America and throughout the world.

A coordinated, cooperative program of research, monitoring, management, public policy, and education is needed to identify vulnerable species and habitats for prudent, workable conservation initiatives and to develop public appreciation for the environmental welfare of all species of herpetofauna.

Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC), a recently developed initiative designed to address conservation of amphibians and reptiles, is poised to find the solutions to the problems faced by herpetofauna.



Who is involved?

PARC, a new, multi-sector conservation partnership that encompasses both reptiles and amphibians, will develop a comprehensive strategy for the long-term conservation of U.S. amphibians, reptiles, and their habitats. The organizational meeting in Atlanta in June, 1999, included representatives from universities, museums and nature centers, state wildlife departments, and federal units representing five major departments (Agriculture, Interior, State, Defense, and Energy), conservation societies and research laboratories, and forest products companies and other industries, including pet trade organizations and advisory groups. The attendance included participants from 33 states, Canada (British Columbia), Mexico (Mexico City), and the District of Columbia.

The Atlanta meeting has been called "the most significant meeting on the conservation of reptiles and amphibians ever held." The 1999 **PARC** conference attendance record alone indicates the burgeoning interest in the welfare of reptiles and amphibians both within the private and public sector of society.

Leaders from government agencies, conservation groups, universities, and industry participated in the development of **PARC**. Through the involvement of others, **PARC** will become one of the most important conservation events ushering in the new millennium. Developing a coordinated, cooperative, and strategic approach for herpetofaunal conservation represents

the most meaningful step we can take to better understand and conserve these important components of biological diversity.

The major federal agencies contributing to **PARC** include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other components of the Department of Interior and the U.S. Forest Service in the Department of Agriculture. Other groups involved in the development of the **PARC** initiative are the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the University of Georgia's Savannah River Ecology Laboratory, the Joseph W. Jones Ecological Research Center, and many others. Strong support from the private sector has complemented the programs being supported by state and federal agencies. Any person or group is welcome to participate in **PARC**.

the **PARC** mission:

To conserve amphibians, reptiles, and their habitats as integral parts of our ecosystem and culture through proactive and coordinated public/private partnerships.

Do amphibians and reptiles really have a problem?

In North America, documented declines of amphibians and reptiles are too numerous for comfort. If known and suspected declines are included, the numbers become especially disquieting. Extirpation of populations of scores of amphibian and reptile species and the unnatural declines in the numbers of individuals within hundreds of populations are unquestionable. In addition, many species of herpetofauna can no longer be found in parts of their former geographic range where they were once abundant. (How many other species of amphibians and reptiles are suffering from habitat loss or other environmental assaults?) Determining where problems exist is an objective of **PARC**. Only through identification of the problems faced by herpetofauna can solutions be reached that provide remedies that maintain our natural biodiversity of herpetofauna in ways that are palatable to the public.

When was the last time you saw or heard one of these creatures in the wild?



mountain treefrog



Pacific pond turtle



Indigo snake



short-horned lizard



gopher tortoise



gopher frog



American crocodile



southern hognose snake



Arizona ridge-nosed rattlesnake

Priority Conservation Needs

1

Educate the public about herpetofauna and conservation.

PARC will promote acceptance and appreciation of amphibians and reptiles by raising public awareness of conservation needs through publication and distribution of educational materials, development of educational information on the PARC web site, and support of programs that use live herpetofauna to inform the public about this fascinating group of animals.

2

Establish a dynamic database on the ecology and habitat requirements of amphibians and reptiles.

A critical step for identifying environmental problems is to organize information already available. PARC will help launch programs to assure the availability of necessary data by developing a mega-database which will be posted on the PARC web site (www.parcplace.org) or, for sensitive species, be placed on CD-ROMs for selective distribution.

3

Standardize data collection and inventory techniques.

Standardized techniques will assure consistency in determining regional population trends and in reporting declines or recoveries of species. PARC will assist in the continuing review, synthesis, and publication of all standard techniques for data collection and analysis.

4

Create a user-friendly database of all management information and existing policies on herpetofauna.

PARC will compile all pertinent literature related to management strategies that have been used successfully to enhance biodiversity for amphibians and reptiles in different regions and for different activities. In addition, PARC will compile a reference base of federal, state, and local policies and regulations relating to herpetofauna.

5

Establish a PARC Fellowship program.

Having students of all ages participate actively in the herpetofaunal conservation effort is critical to recruiting the next generation of advocates for the conservation effort—advocates who have the broad perspective necessary for success. PARC will encourage projects that integrate multiple aspects of biology across wide geographic regions, introduce students to the complexity of conservation issues, and provide opportunities for students to become involved at a professional level.

What can you do to help amphibians and reptiles?

Visit the **PARC** Web site,
now located at
www.parcplace.org
or e-mail PARC at
PARC@SREL.edu

Determine how you might contribute to the **Priority Conservation Needs** of amphibians and reptiles.

Lend your support to efforts by nature centers, museums, or schools in your community that are involved in educational projects directed toward amphibians and reptiles.

Sponsor this flier and put your organization's logo **HERE**