

Asheville Ecological Services Field Office Strategic Plan 2023-2028



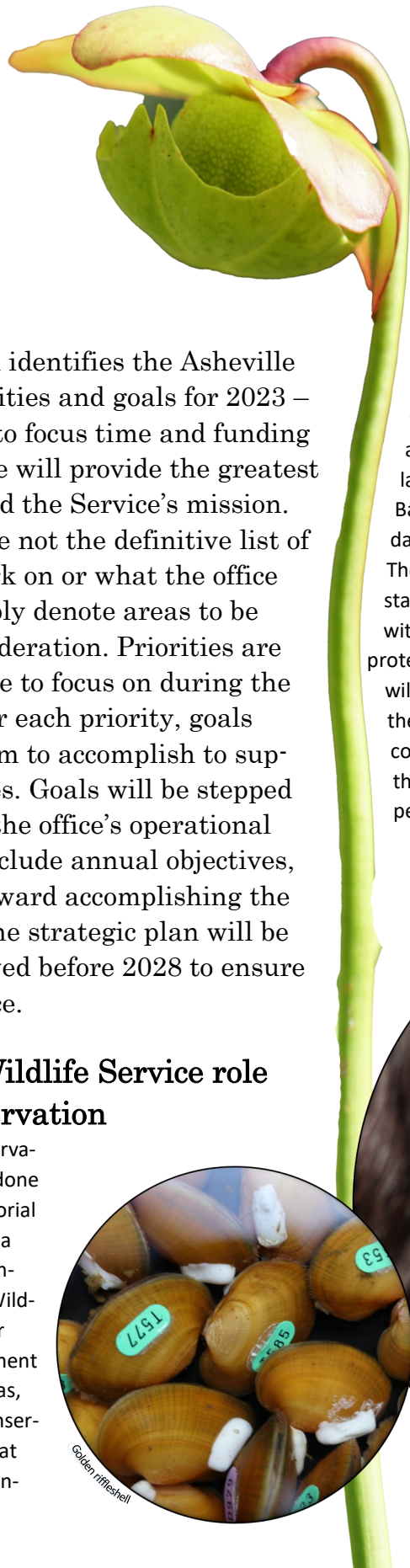
This strategic plan identifies the Asheville Field Office's priorities and goals for 2023 – 2028, enabling us to focus time and funding on areas we believe will provide the greatest contribution toward the Service's mission. These priorities are not the definitive list of what staff will work on or what the office will fund, but simply denote areas to be given special consideration. Priorities are areas we would like to focus on during the next five years. For each priority, goals specify what we aim to accomplish to support those priorities. Goals will be stepped down annually in the office's operational plan, which will include annual objectives, or specific steps toward accomplishing the identified goals. The strategic plan will be periodically reviewed before 2028 to ensure continued relevance.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service role in wildlife conservation

While most wildlife conservation and management is done by state, tribal, and territorial wildlife agencies, there is a role for the federal government. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is our nation's wildlife management agency. Among other areas, the Service assists the conservation of birds and fish that migrate across state and in-

ternational borders; manages the National Wildlife Refuge System, the only system of federal lands wholly dedicated to wildlife; and enforces and administers federal wildlife laws, including the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, and Endangered Species Act.

The Service's mission statement is "working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people."



Spreading events



Karla Quast and Laura Fogo



Colleen riffsstell

Ecological Services role within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Within the Service, the Asheville Office is part of the Ecological Services program, which is broadly responsible for:

- Assessing species status and including or removing species from the threatened and endangered species list as needed.
- Funding, coordinating, and implementing recovery efforts for threatened and endangered species.
- Addressing impacts to fish, wildlife, and plants resulting from projects that are federally authorized, or carried out.

Asheville Field Office role within Ecological Services

The Asheville Field Office is composed of sixteen staff members who implement the Service's listing, recovery, project review, and Partners for Fish and Wildlife programs by:

- Compiling and analyzing data for certain species – largely found in southern Appalachia or the upper Piedmont of North Carolina - being considered for inclusion on the federal endangered species list.
- Coordinating with partners, including private landowners, government agencies, NGOs, universities, and private businesses, to recover listed species for which our office has the national recovery lead or occur in western North Carolina. This may include both habitat and population management, supported by data compilation and analysis, research, outreach, and education.
- Working with federal agencies or their designated representatives to avoid or minimize negative impacts to plants, fish, and wildlife from projects they fund, authorize, or carry out in western North Carolina.

Office values

Asheville Field Office values and culture are guided by our agency's mission, stated above, and regional vision: "Together, we will connect lands and waters to sustain fish, wildlife and plants by being visionary leaders, bold innovators and trusted partners, working with and for people." Moreover, this office has developed a Team Agreement outlining our commitment to a workplace dedicated to respect, communication, and safety to effectively accomplish our mission.

Office geography

Our core work area is the western 41 counties of North Carolina: Alexander, Alleghany, Anson, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Cabarrus, Caldwell, Catawba, Cherokee, Clay, Cleveland, Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Gaston, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Iredell, Jackson, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mecklenburg, Mitchell, Polk, Rowan, Rutherford, Stanly, Stokes, Surry, Swain, Transylvania, Union, Watauga, Wilkes, Yadkin, and Yancey.

This core work area is where we provide environmental review of federally funded or authorized projects and represents the core range of most of the species for which we have listing and recovery responsibilities. Many of the species we work with have ranges extending beyond this area, and some have ranges entirely outside this area.



Federally threatened and endangered species for which the Asheville Field Office has lead responsibilities

The Asheville Field Office provides national-level expertise and recovery planning for:

- Carolina northern flying squirrel
- Bog turtle (southern population)
- Spotfin chub
- Spruce-fir moss spider
- Noonday globe snail
- Appalachian elktoe
- Cumberland monkeyface
- Finerayed pigtoe
- Shiny pigtoe
- Tan riffleshell
- Blue Ridge goldenrod
- Bunched arrowhead
- Dwarf-flowered heartleaf (proposed for delisting)
- Heller's blazing star
- Mountain golden heather
- Mountain sweet pitcher plant
- Roan Mountain bluet
- Rock gnome lichen
- Schweinitz's sunflower
- Small-anthered bittercress
- Spreading avens
- White irisette

Other threatened and endangered species

Staff of the Asheville Field Office also have expertise in other federally protected species occurring in our core work area, though staff in other field offices have lead responsibility in planning and coordinating recovery:

- Gray bat
- Indiana bat
- Northern long-eared bat
- Tricolored bat (proposed)
- Virginia big-eared bat
- Roanoke logperch
- Sickie darter (historic)
- Atlantic pigtoe
- Carolina heelsplitter
- James spiny mussel
- Littlewing pearly mussel
- Longsolid mussel
- Green pitcher plant
- Michaux's sumac
- Round hickorynut
- Rusty patched bumble bee (historic)
- Small-whorled pogonia
- Smooth coneflower
- Swamp pink
- Virginia spiraea
- White fringeless orchid



Appalachian elktoe



Heller's blazing star



Noonday globe snail

At-risk species for which the Asheville Field Office has lead responsibilities

“At-risk” is an informal phrase describing species under consideration for Endangered Species Act protections. They’re either species we’ve been petitioned to add to the federal threatened and endangered species list, or species that are candidates for the list, i.e. they warrant listing but doing so is precluded by higher priority species. Staff of the Asheville Field Office have the responsibility for compiling and analyzing data that will be used to determine if these species warrant Endangered Species Act protection:

- Bog turtle (southern population)
- Hickory Nut Gorge green salamander
- Margarita skimmer
- Smokies needlfly
- Cumberland moccasinshell
- Pyramid pigtoe
- Tennessee clubshell
- Tennessee heelsplitter
- Tennessee pigtoe
- Carolina hemlock
- Mountain purple pitcher plant

Other at-risk species

Additional at-risk species occur in our work area and we may assist another office’s efforts to compile and analyze data used for listing decisions.

- Little brown bat
- Golden-winged warbler
- Lake sturgeon
- Eastern hellbender
- Orangefin madtom
- Robust redhorse
- American bumble bee
- Frosted elfin butterfly
- Monarch butterfly
- Regal fritillary
- Septima’s clubtail
- Southern plains bumble bee
- Variable cuckoo bumble bee (historic)
- Green floater
- Bog spicebush
- Tennessee pondweed



Eastern hellbender

Species under a Candidate Conservation Agreement

Candidate Conservation Agreements (CCA) or a Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances (CCAA) are documents memorializing commitments to conserve a species before it’s placed on the federal threatened and endangered species list. Sometimes the work done under a CCA/CCAA means the species does not need to be listed. The Asheville Ecological Services Field Office works with several species under a CCA/CCAA:

- Lake sturgeon
- Orangefin madtom
- Robust redhorse
- Sicklefins redhorse
- Brook floater
- Cumberland moccasinshell
- Green floater
- Georgia aster
- Monarch butterfly
- Yadkin river goldenrod



Lake sturgeon



Bog turtle

Legal and administrative obligations

The Asheville Field Office fulfills a suite of commitments made by the Service or obligations defined in federal law.

National listing workplan

The Service's national listing workplan outlines when species will be evaluated for inclusion on the federal threatened and endangered species list. This entails field offices compiling and analyzing all pertinent data on the species. During the next five years, staff of the Asheville Field Office will have the lead in compiling and analyzing data for the following:

- Bog turtle (southern population), decision due in FY 25
- Hickory Nut Gorge green salamander, decision date not set
- Margarita River skimmer, decision date not set
- Smokies needlety, decision date not set
- Cumberland moccasinshell, decision due in FY 23
- Pyramid pigtoe (proposed for listing)
- Tennessee clubshell, decision due in FY 23
- Tennessee heelsplitter, decision due in FY 23
- Tennessee pigtoe, decision due in FY 23
- Carolina hemlock, decision due in FY 25
- Mountain purple pitcher plant, decision date not set

Where possible, Asheville Field Office staff will also help fund and implement conservation efforts that may preclude the need to list.

Regional 5-year review workplan

Each listed species is periodically evaluated for status changes significant enough to warrant a change in its status under the Endangered Species Act. Ideally this evaluation occurs every five years and is referred to as a five-year review. Over the next five years, staff of the Asheville Field Office will conduct the following five-year reviews:

- Carolina northern flying squirrel, FY 27
- Spotfin chub, FY 24
- Spruce-fir moss spider, FY 26
- Noonday globe snail, FY 25
- Appalachian elktoe, FY27
- Cumberland monkeyface, FY 26
- Finerayed pigtoe, FY 27
- Shiny pigtoe, FY 26
- Tan riffleshell, FY 26
- Blue Ridge goldenrod, FY 24
- Bunched arrowhead, FY 25
- Heller's blazing star, FY 25
- Mountain golden heather, FY 24
- Roan Mountain bluet, FY 28
- Rock gnome lichen, FY 25
- Schweinitz's sunflower, FY 24
- Small-anthered bittercress, FY 28
- Spreading avens, FY 25
- White irisette, FY 24

Our priorities — obligations



Candidate Conservation Agreements, Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances

Candidate Conservation Agreements are pledges to work for the conservation of a species before it becomes federally threatened or endangered. If significant enough, these agreements may preclude the need to list a species. The staff of the Asheville Ecological Services Field Office currently help the Service meet its commitments under three Candidate Conservation Agreements:

- Lake sturgeon
- Orangefin madtom
- Robust redbreast
- Sicklefin redbreast
- Brook floater
- Cumberland moccasinshell
- Green floater
- Magnificent ramshorn
- Georgia aster
- Monarch butterfly
- Yadkin river goldenrod

FERC hydropower relicensing commitments

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission issues multi-decadal licenses to operate private hydropower facilities on public waters. As a part of this process, the Service serves as the voice of fish, wildlife, and plants affected by the hydropower operation, ensuring that the needs of fish, wildlife, and plants are addressed in the licensing process. This may entail helping implement certain terms of the license that affect fish, wildlife, and plants. There are multiple hydropower licenses where staff of the Asheville Ecological Services Field Office work to fulfill the Service's commitments:

- Tapoco Project
- Catawba-Wateree Project
- East Fork Tuckasegee Project
- West Fork Tuckasegee Project
- Queens Creek Project
- Nantahala Project
- Spencer Mountain Project
- Bryson Project
- Yadkin Project
- McAdenville Project
- Long Shoals Project
- Coolemeemee Project
- Henrietta Project
- Caroleen Project
- Hardins Project
- Walters Project
- Ivy River Project

Endangered Species Act Section 7 review

Under the Endangered Species Act, federal agencies have an obligation to ensure activities they fund, authorize, or carry out, from the Federal Communications Commission authorizing a new cell tower to the Forest Service conducting a prescribed fire, will not jeopardize the existence of a federally threatened or endangered species or adversely modify any designated critical habitat. For projects that may affect listed species, the Service consults with the federal agency or its representative to minimize or eliminate the impacts of their project.

Endangered Species Act Section 6 implementation

Under the Endangered Species Act, state plant and wildlife management agencies receive federal grants to conserve imperiled species. Our office administers these grants for the state of North Carolina.



Laura Fogo



Lauren Wilson

Conservation

While our office is involved in myriad conservation efforts, there are situations where our work can achieve out-sized results. The priorities identified below focus on activities with the greatest potential impact, either in decisions regarding the legal conservation status of a species or by benefitting the greatest number of species.

Priority: Listed or at-risk species for which specific actions could significantly impact their conservation status

Noonday globe snail

- Goal: Ensure protection of known occupied habitats.

Rock gnome lichen

- Goal: Define population trends and status of the species.

Bog turtle

- Goal: Address bog turtle road mortality.
- Goal: Collaborate with refuges in the development and management of Mountain Bogs National Wildlife Refuge.
- Goal: Work with partners to restore bog turtle habitat.

Carolina hemlock

- Goal: Work with partners to implement outreach programming promoting Carolina hemlock conservation.

Schweinitz's sunflower

- Goal: Work with action agencies to develop ESA 7a1 agreements.
- Goal: Work with utility and transportation organizations to advance right-of-way habitat protection.
- Goal: Ensure botanical surveys done for consultation follow appropriate methods to maximize species detection.



Rebekah Reid



Nirali Ramirez-Bulon



Byron Hamstead

Jason Mays

Our priorities — conservation

Priority: Species connected by shared habitat

Southern Appalachian Mountain bogs - bog turtle, mountain sweet pitcher plant, green pitcher plant, bunched arrowhead, swamp pink, mountain purple pitcher plant

- Goal: Collaborate with refuges in the management and development of MBNWR.
- Goal: Improve habitats for rare bog species.

Early-successional pollinator habitat – rusty-patched bumblebee, American bumble bee, frosted elfin, monarch butterfly, southern plains bumble bee, variable cuckoo bumble bee

- Goal: Engage rights-of-way managers and private landowners to improve and expand habitat.
- Goal: Work with partners to implement outreach promoting pollinator conservation.

Southern Appalachian high-elevation habitats - Carolina northern flying squirrel, spruce-fir moss spider, Roan Mountain bluet, spreading avens, mountain golden heather, rock gnome lichen

- Goal: Implement spruce-fir moss spider monitoring protocol.
- Goal: Work with federal and state agencies to minimize or eliminate recreational impacts.
- Goal: Implement red spruce restoration.

Forest, cave, and mine bat habitat - Gray, Indiana, little brown, northern long-eared, tricolored, and Virginia big-eared bats.

- Goal: Work with agencies and private individuals to promote practices that benefit bats.
- Goal: Work with partners to implement outreach promoting bats

Little Tennessee River basin – Eastern hellbender, spotfin chub, sicklefin redhorse, Smokies needlefly, Margarita River skimmer, Appalachian elktoe, Virginia spiraea, Carolina hemlock

- Goal: Reconnect Oconaluftee River to the Tuckasegee River.
- Goal: Maintain and expand healthy riparian areas.
- Goal: Work with partners to implement outreach fostering aquatic habitat conservation.

Linville Gorge/Wilson Creek – Heller's blazing star, mountain golden heather, Carolina hemlock

- Goal: Minimize or eliminate recreational impacts.

French Broad River basin – Gray bat, eastern hellbender, lake sturgeon, Appalachian elktoe, Smokies needlefly, Margarita River skimmer, Carolina hemlock

- Goal: Conserve the hibernaculum for North Carolina gray bats.
- Goal: Establish mussel beds.
- Goal: Establish aquatic vegetation beds.
- Goal: Maintain and expand healthy riparian areas.
- Goal: Work with partners to implement outreach fostering aquatic habitat conservation.

Clinch River basin – Finerayed pigtoe, shiny pigtoe, Cumberland monkeyface, tan (golden) riffleshell

- Goal: Evaluate the efficacy of stocked species and identify targets for successful population establishment.
- Goal: Conduct annual assessment of hatchery broodstock and wild mussel health using established protocols.
- Goal: Monitor die-off events and the sources of potential triggering pollutants, and voucher shell material.
- Goal: Maintain consistent communication and engagement with stakeholders and natural resource management agencies involved in freshwater mussel conservation and expand outreach opportunities.



Byron Hornstead

Wellness

We believe a foundation of success is having a staff comprised of dedicated, motivated, empowered individuals working with a clear sense of meaning and functioning as part of a collaborative and supportive team. The priorities listed below were identified to foster such a community among our staff.

Interpersonal interaction

Priority: Advance a culture of strong intra-staff collaboration

- Goal: Create a culture where collaborative work based on individual knowledge, expertise, and interest is safe and expected.
- Goal: Expect each staff member to be at least rudimentarily trained in all aspects of office work.

Priority: Advance a culture of strong intra-office communication

- Goal: Create a culture where staff know the fundamentals of one another's work.
- Goal: Create a mechanism for staff to provide open and honest feedback in the pursuit of an improved work environment.
- Goal: Create a culture where staff feel safe to have hard conversations with one another and such conversations are as routine as needed.
- Goal: Review and revise the Team Agreement every two years.

Personal fulfillment and development

Priority: Advance a commitment to the professional development of staff, beginning with onboarding

- Goal: Ensure on-boarding is welcoming, informative, and comprehensive.
- Goal: Develop and implement mechanisms to share institutional knowledge with newer staff and between staff of different programs.
- Goal: Empower staff to take the initiative in identifying and fulfilling their professional development goals.
- Goal: Ensure we are up to date with safety training.

Priority: Create an office culture that fosters professional fulfillment

- Goal: For work beyond the office's legal and administrative obligations, empower staff to identify and pursue projects they find rewarding and that fulfill the office's responsibilities.



Mark Endries



Holland Youngman

Sue Cameron

Operations

The identification and implementation of efficiencies enables office staff to maximize time on conservation efforts with significant impact. The priorities below capture efficiencies needed in the next five years to ensure the Asheville Ecological Services Field Office makes effective and responsible use of limited resources, and ensures we remain nimble enough to quickly respond to changing situations.

Priority: Streamline ESA Section 7 review

- Goal: Develop and implement outreach and education programming to office partners and universities that describes our role to administer legal protections to fish and wildlife.
- Goal: Develop an aquatic programmatic with the N.C. Department of Transportation.
- Goal: Develop a bat programmatic with the N.C. Department of Transportation.
- Goal: Revise a programmatic for Natural Resources Conservation Service Environmental Quality Incentives Program.
- Goal: Create a programmatic for Natural Resources Conservation Service Emergency Watershed Protection Program.
- Goal: Refine office web presence for project review.
- Goal: Develop and maintain a list of impact, avoidance, and minimization measures' s by species – especially bats.
- Goal: Complete OneMap for all listed species in Western North Carolina.
- Goal: Develop standardized consultation procedures for species that frequently show up in consultations.
- Goal: Refine an internal review/surname process and roles and responsibilities for official office correspondence.
- Goal: Clarify roles and responsibilities – agency leads/species leads.

Priority: Address how to deal with consultations involving new and potential bat classifications

- Goal: Develop a bat programmatic with the NCDOT.
- Goal: Develop a conservation fund that can be used with bats.
- Goal: Develop and implement a bat conservation strategy for western NC that identifies information needs and conservation priorities.

Priority: Ensure record keeping is efficient and meets legal and contemporary standards

- Goal: Develop and implement digital filing system for each program accessible to all staff.
- Goal: Develop standards for ECOSphere data entry and management.
- Goal: Catalog office digital and physical library.

Priority: Maximize the efficiency with which we use administrative systems

- Goal: Create an in-house subject matter expert for GrantSolutions to support grant awarding and follow-up.

Priority: Ensure effective property management

- Goal: Ensure a comprehensive and up-to-date inventory of office property.
- Goal: Recycle, surplus, or dispose of equipment and materials that are no longer serviceable.
- Goal: Shift to cell phone-based telephone communications.

Priority: Ensure staff understand the fundamentals of how all office programs and operations function

- Goal: Ensure all staff have a basic understanding of all office programs.
- Goal: Ensure all staff have a basic understanding of office budgeting.
- Goal: Encourage staff to develop secondary skill sets.



Karla Quest

Federally threatened and endangered species for which the Asheville Field Office has lead responsibility

- Carolina northern flying squirrel, *Glaucomys sabrinus coloratus*
- Bog turtle (southern population), *Glyptemys muhlenbergii*
- Spottfin chub, *Erimonax monachus*
- Spruce-fir moss spider, *Microhexura montivaga*
- Noonday globe snail, *Patera clarki nantahala*
- Appalachian elktoe, *Alasmidonta raveneliana*
- Cumberland monkeyface, *Theliderma intermedia*
- Finerayed pigtoe, *Fusconaia cuneolus*
- Shiny pigtoe, *Fusconaia cor*
- Tan riffleshell, *Epioblasma walkeri*
- Blue Ridge goldenrod, *Solidago spithamaea*
- Bunched arrowhead, *Sagittaria fasciculata*
- Dwarf-flowered heartleaf, *Hexastylis naniflora*
- Heller's blazing star, *Liatris helleri*
- Mountain golden heather, *Hudsonia montana*
- Mountain sweet pitcher plant, *Sarracenia rubra* ssp. *jonesii*
- Roan Mountain bluet, *Hedyotis purpurea* var. *montana*
- Rock gnome lichen, *Gymnoderma lineare*
- Schweinitz's sunflower, *Helianthus schweinitzii*
- Small-anthered bittercress, *Cardamine micranthera*
- Spreading avens, *Geum radiatum*
- White irisette, *Sisyrinchium dichotomum*

Other threatened and endangered species

- Gray bat, *Myotis grisescens*
- Indiana bat, *Myotis sodalis*
- Northern long-eared bat, *Myotis septentrionalis*
- Tricolored bat, *Perimyotis sublavus*
- Virginia big-eared bat, *Corynorhinus townsendii virginianus*
- Roanoke logperch, *Percina rex*
- Sicklet darter, *Percina williamsi*
- Atlantic pigtoe, *Fusconaia masoni*
- Carolina heelsplitter, *Lasmigona decorata*
- James spiny mussel, *Parvispina collina*
- Littlewing pearly mussel, *Pegias fabula*
- Longsolid mussel, *Fusconaia subrotunda*
- Green pitcher plant, *Sarracenia oreophila*
- Michaux's sumac, *Rhus michauxii*
- Round hickorynut, *Obovaria subrotunda*
- Rusty patched bumble bee, *Bombus affinis*
- Small-whorled pogonia, *Isotria medeoloides*
- Smooth coneflower, *Echinacea laevigata*
- Swamp pink, *Helonias bullata*
- Virginia spiraea, *Spiraea virginiana*
- White fringeless orchid, *Platanthera integrilabia*

At-risk species for which the Asheville Field Office has lead responsibility

- Bog turtle (southern population), *Glyptemys muhlenbergii*
- Hickory Nut Gorge green salamander, *Aneides carolinaensis*
- Margarita skimmer, *Macromia margarita*
- Smokies needlefly, *Megaleuctra williamsae*
- Cumberland moccasinshell, *Medionidus conradicus*
- Pyramid pigtoe, *Pleurobema rubrum*
- Tennessee clubshell, *Pleurobema oviforme*
- Tennessee heelsplitter, *Lasmigona holstonia*
- Tennessee pigtoe, *Pleurobema barnesiana*
- Carolina hemlock, *Tsuga caroliniana*
- Mountain purple pitcher plant, *Sarracenia purpurea* var. *montana*

Other at-risk species

- Little brown bat, *Myotis lucifungus*
- Golden-winged warbler, *Vermivora chrysoptera*
- Lake Sturgeon, *Acipenser fulvescens*
- Eastern hellbender, *Cryptobranchus alleganiensis alleganiensis*
- Orangefin madtom, *Noturus gilberti*
- Robust redhorse, *Moxostoma robustum*
- Frosted elfin butterfly, *Callophrys irus*
- Monarch butterfly, *Danaus plexippus*
- Regal fritillary, *Speyeria idalia*
- Setima's clubtail, *Gomphus septima*
- Southern plains bumble bee, *Bombus fraternus*
- Variable cuckoo bumble bee, *Bombus variabilis*
- Green floater, *Lasmigona subviridis*
- Bog spicebush, *Lindera subcoriacea*

Species under a Candidate Conservation Agreement

- Lake sturgeon, *Acipenser fulvescens*
- Orangefin madtom, *Noturus gilberti*
- Robust redhorse, *Moxostoma robustum*
- Sickletfin redhorse, *Moxostoma* sp.
- Monarch butterfly, *Danaus plexippus*
- Brook floater, *Alasmidonta varicosa*
- Cumberland moccasinshell, *Medionidus conradicus*
- Green floater, *Lasmigona subviridis*
- Georgia aster, *Symphyotrichum georgianum*
- Yadkin River goldenrod, *Solidago plumosa*

- Volunteers to work on a strategic plan were solicited from staff, with Byron Hamstead, Andrew Henderson, Gary Peeples, and Karla Quast coming to form the strategic planning committee.
- The planning committee collected and studied past office strategic plans and plans from other offices and organizations, pulling content and design ideas.
- Desiring significant input from staff, the planning team interviewed all staff members individually. Interview questions were both developed independently for our office and pulled from the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats strategic planning model. In addition to verbal responses to the questions, the opportunity to provide written responses was also offered.
- Key points from the interviews were captured in a spreadsheet, which was then combed for recurring themes, which formed the basis of the strategic plan.
- Draft plan was written and circulated among staff for review and feedback.

Interview questions

- What provides you with direction and focus in your work?
- If you have identified what your priorities are, will you share them with us, and how you arrived at them?
- How could you see other staff members/programs contributing to your work?
- Describe how your ideal ES office would function (how programs would mesh, how staff interact, what we should be working on, what we shouldn't be working on, division of labor, etc.)
- Potential areas of collaboration among programs?
- Conservation challenge you would like to make a special effort to tackle/you would like to see the office make a special effort to tackle?
- What does success look like for you? For the office?
- What species or habitats do you see as having the greatest chance for conservation achievement in the next five years?"
- What new ideas/priorities are currently underrepresented in our office?
- Strengths (positive, internal)
- What do we do best?
- What unique knowledge, talent, or resources do we have?
- What advantages do we have?
- What resources do we have available?
- Weaknesses (negative, internal)
- What could we improve?
- What knowledge, talent, skills and/or resources are we lacking?
- What challenges do we have?
- In what areas do we need more training?
- Threats (negative, external)
- What obstacles do we face?
- What might challenge our mission in the future? How?
- Are there any standards, policies, staffing, organizational structure and/or legislation changes that might negatively impact us?
- Could any of our weaknesses prevent our unit from meeting our goals?
- Opportunities
- How can we turn our strengths into opportunities?
- How can we turn our weaknesses into opportunities?
- How is our field changing and how should we adapt?
- What opportunities do those changes present?
- What could we do today that isn't being done?
- What new partnerships could we utilize?
- Are there potential priorities in our various office Programs that you wish to share?