

# **DRAFT**

## **ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT 2006 SOUTHWEST ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT TEAM**

Calendar Year 2006 accomplishments by the Southwest Endangered Species Act (SWESA) Team are:

1. In cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Conservation Training Center (NCTC), the SWESA Team spent nearly a year updating and improving the Biological Assessment (BA) workshops to make them more consistent with other NCTC section 7 courses. The SWESA Team also executed two BA workshops in Albuquerque, New Mexico and two in Phoenix, Arizona that were presented in January 2006 and October 2006, respectively. Total attendance was nearly 140 students. Course evaluation forms submitted after the class demonstrated that the workshops were very highly rated and that the participants would recommend them to colleagues.
2. The SWESA Team received FY 2005 funding in the amount of \$105,000.00 through a Department of Defense (DoD) grant program (LEGACY Program) to prepare a Considerations for Making Effects Determinations [CMED](formerly called guidance criteria) document, produce a species at risk report, and develop awareness products. The USFWS obligated \$80,000.00 in 2006 to prepare a CMED document for the Chiricahua leopard frog and a kick-off meeting was held with the grantee, Dr. Terry Myers, on July 13, 2006. A preliminary draft of the CMED document was submitted to the SWESA on November 8, 2006. The SWESA reviewed the preliminary draft with Dr. Myers on November 15, 2006 at the regular SWESA meeting.

In 2006, the SWESA team completed a Species at Risk (SAR) report for the states of Arizona and New Mexico. The primary objective of the report was to accomplish the work necessary to finalize a draft SAR list that has been developed by a group of threatened and endangered species managers and biologists from several federal agencies (USFWS, Bureau of Land Management, DoD, Forest Service, National Park Service), the Game and Fish Departments of Arizona and New Mexico, and the Arizona and New Mexico Natural Heritage Programs. The SAR list includes information on the species state and global status, state and federal listing status, land jurisdiction of occupancy, limiting factors, habitat description and management recommendations. In addition, detailed species abstracts, including conservation and management recommendations, were completed

for 6 species (Baird's sparrow, California floater, Mexican gartersnake, Poling's hairstreak, Rio Grande sucker, and Western red bat). As a final step, an awareness product (SAR Report) was prepared and made available to state and federal agency managers and biologists in Arizona and New Mexico. To date, approximately 75 hard copies and over 100 compact disks have been distributed to state and federal agency managers and biologists in Arizona and New Mexico. Many of the agencies involved will be posting the SAR report to their web sites for their employees as well as the public. In addition, requests for the SAR report have come from the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission and Speciez.nm, a non-profit database resource site used by private consultants and other public organizations and individuals.

3. The SWESA Team continues to maintain the list of Issue Resolution Teams (IRTs) to be used by Southwest Strategy (SWS) member agencies to address section 7 consultation issues when an impasse is reached between the action agency and the USFWS at the field level. The IRT process was used in 2006 by SWESA Team participating agencies.

The SWESA Team will remain a SWS affiliate and will continue the multi-year BA Workshop training effort sponsored by SWS member agencies, as well as other projects that facilitate implementation of the Endangered Species Act and help conserve species of concern in the Southwest. Provided as an attachment to this report are several examples of projects in Arizona or New Mexico where streamlining techniques and early coordination were used to improve the section 7 consultation process with the USFWS.