



## STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH *All of God's Creation*

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, May 4, 2025

### *A Crisis of Species and Habitat Loss*

This is not the time to cut critical wildlife conservation programs. “We are in the midst of a biodiversity crisis. In our own country, 34% of plants and 40% of animals are at risk of extinction, and 41% of ecosystems are at risk of range-wide collapse.” (Susan Holmes. Executive Director, *Endangered Species Coalition*, 4/8/25)

“The *unusual mortality event* that wiped out thousands of Florida's manatees in recent years was the result of polluted habitat. Pollution choked off the seagrass manatees depend on, launching a death spiral that brought these gentle giants closer to the brink.” (Kierán Suckling, Executive Director, *Center for Biological Diversity*, 4/15/25)

**Now, all endangered and threatened animals are in danger of losing habitat protection.**

“The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration are **planning to redefine what it means to "harm" endangered animals — specifically their habitat.** Their latest proposal would give a green light to destroy some of the last places where endangered species are hanging on — opening the door for bulldozers, mines, chainsaws, roads, polluters, and endless sprawl.

**Habitat loss is the biggest driver of the extinction crisis.** You can't save species without also safeguarding the places they live. By launching a process to redefine "harm" so that it no longer includes habitat protections, the agencies charged with saving wildlife are rolling over to big business.” (Kierán Suckling, Executive Director, *Center for Biological Diversity*, 4/22/25)

**Recent orders by the Secretary of the Interior “directs the Department of the Interior to eliminate regulations critical to safeguarding endangered and imperiled species,** reopen Alaskan wilderness to drilling and mining activity, and open the Outer Continental Shelf to drilling for oil, gas and minerals, among other directives.” (Maggie Dewane, Communications Director, *Defenders of Wildlife*, 2/4/25)

“These are blatant and brazen efforts to undermine the Endangered Species Act and **will further put at risk migratory birds and already imperiled wildlife** ... and unnecessarily expand drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and other critical habitats. These orders are reckless and issued at a time that America is not experiencing an energy emergency, but rather a crisis of species and habitat loss.” (Robert Dewey, vice president of government relations for *Defenders of Wildlife*, 2/4/25) [Take action to save the Endangered Species Act.](#)

We would do well to consider the words of Rachel Carson who wrote *Silent Spring* in 1962 documenting the devastating effects of pesticides on the natural world: “Man’s attitude toward nature is today critically important simply because we have now acquired a fateful power to alter and destroy nature. But man is a part of nature, and his war against nature is inevitably a war against himself. **[We are] challenged as mankind has never been challenged before to prove our maturity and our mastery, not of nature, but of ourselves.**”

Comments on this column may be directed to the Social Justice Committee at [socialjustice@holycrossphl.org](mailto:socialjustice@holycrossphl.org).  
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