



# SPECIES PROTECTION ACCOUNT

## PREVENTING LISTINGS UNDER THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

# SPECIES PROTECTION ACCOUNT

- Established during the 1997 Utah Legislative Session (now Utah Code § 23A-3-214)
- Original purpose was “to protect any plant or animal species identified as sensitive by the state or threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973”



# SPECIES PROTECTION ACCOUNT GOALS

- Recover species already listed under the Endangered Species Act
- Prevent new Endangered Species Act listings



# ESA LISTINGS: WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Wildlife is found everywhere, on properties owned by all types of landowners.  
Listings under the Endangered Species Act:

- Increase federal oversight
- Increase economic restrictions
- Impact all Utahns (because animals have no boundaries)



# SUCCESS IN ESA DOWNLISTING AND DELISTING



**DESERET  
MILKVETCH**

Delisted  
in 2018



**JUNE  
SUCKER**

Downlisted  
from  
endangered  
to threatened  
in 2021



**KANAB  
AMBERSNAIL**

Delisted  
in 2021



**HUMPBACK  
CHUB**

Downlisted  
from  
endangered to  
threatened in  
2021



**RAZORBACK  
SUCKER**

Proposed for  
downlisting from  
endangered to  
threatened in  
2021



**UTE LADIES'  
TRESSES**

Proposed for  
delisting  
(anticipated  
in fall 2024)

# ESA LISTINGS PREVENTED

From 2002–2023, a total of **27 Utah animal and plant species** were either found **not warranted** for ESA listing or were withdrawn from consideration for listing.

## Amphibians and Lizards

- Boreal toad
- Columbia spotted frog
- Northern leopard frog
- Gila monster

## Mammals

- American bison
- American pika
- Gunnison's prairie dog
- Pygmy rabbit
- White-tailed prairie dog

## Fish and Mollusks

- Bonneville cutthroat trout
- Colorado River cutthroat trout
- Least chub
- Northern leatherside chub
- Virgin spinedace
- Yellowstone cutthroat trout
- Bifid duct pyrg
- Subglubose snake pyrg

## Birds

- Greater sage-grouse

## Plants

- Cisco milkvetch
- Goose Creek milkvetch
- Frisco buckwheat
- Frisco clover
- Graham's beardtongue
- Isley's milkvetch
- Ostler's peppergrass
- Stage station milkvetch
- White River beardtongue

# ESA PETITION REQUESTS ARE INCREASING

Species name	Group	ESA decision (federal fiscal year)
Monarch butterfly	Insect/pollinator	FY24
Western bumblebee	Insect/pollinator	FY24
Goodding's onion	Plant	FY25
Canada lynx	Mammal	FY25
Arizona toad	Amphibian	FY26
Little brown bat	Mammal	FY26
Mojave poppy bee	Insect/pollinator	FY26
Pipe Springs cryptantha	Plant	FY27
Pygmy rabbit	Mammal	FY28
Navajo bladderpod	Plant	FY28
Hoary bat	Mammal	FY28
Pinyon jay	Bird	FY28
Wilson's phalarope	Bird	Not scheduled

# RECOVERY PROGRAMS

- Recovery programs allow for continued economic growth in the face of ESA listings.
  - Streamlined ESA compliance for projects
- Federal funding can be unpredictable.
- Becoming more self-reliant as a state will help us ensure the benefits of recovery programs continue, even if federal funding is reduced.





# FISH RECOVERY PROGRAM COSTS ARE INCREASING

Program name	Current annual costs	Current Utah contributions	Future (10 years) minimum Utah contributions	Unfunded projects (FY2024)
Virgin River Program	\$3,300,000	\$730,000	\$730,000	\$580,000
June Sucker Recovery Implementation Program	\$1,500,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$500,000
Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program	\$8,655,000	\$180,000	\$450,000	\$1,134,448
San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program	\$3,800,000	\$0	\$76,000	N/A
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$17,255,000</b>	<b>\$1,210,000</b>	<b>\$1,556,000</b>	<b>\$2,214,448</b>

# UTAH WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

- The Utah Wildlife Action Plan is an ESA listing-prevention plan specifically for Utah.
- The 2015 version of the plan identifies:
  - **169 species** in need of conservation attention
  - **13 key habitats** those species rely upon
  - **11 priority threats** to those species and habitats



# UTAH WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION (CONT.)

Our current funding levels:

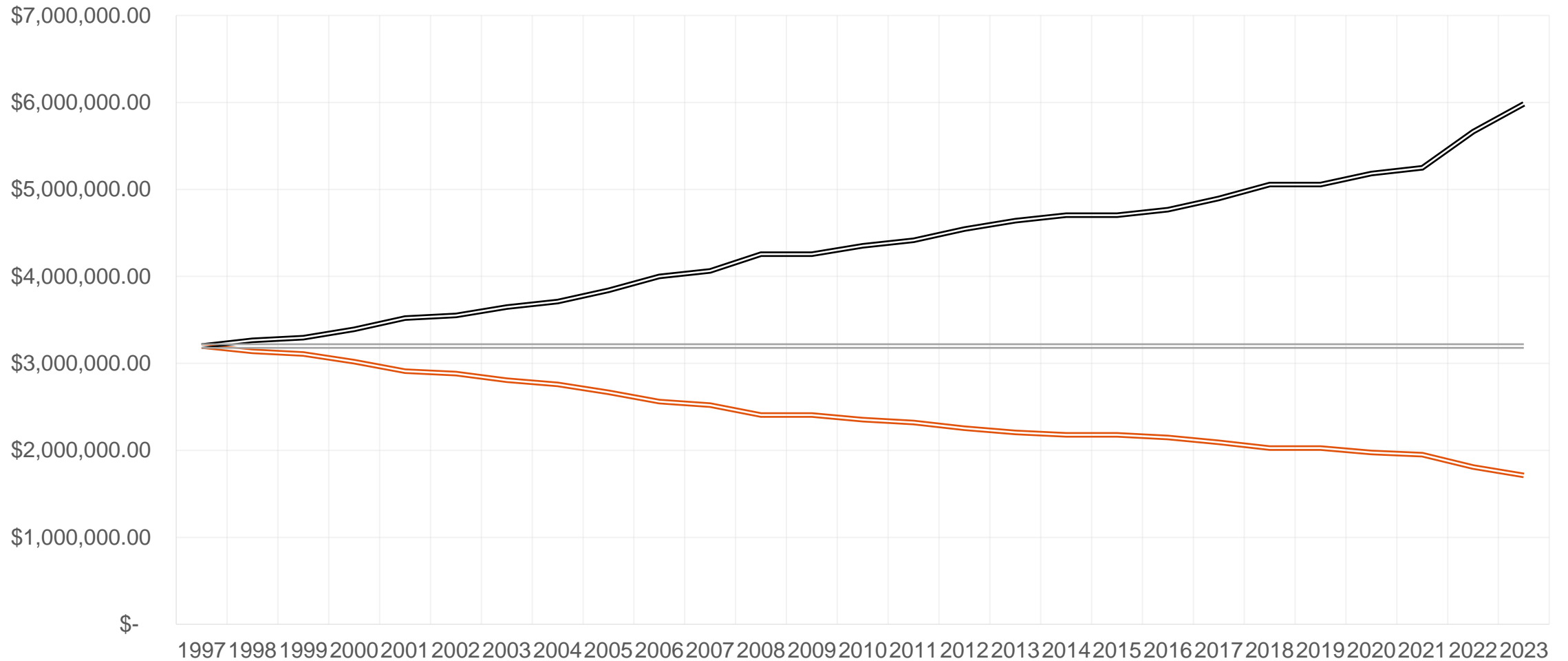
- Fund five DWR biologists that work on non-listed species
- Fund a portion of fiscal and data-management support positions
- Provide effective conservation for **25-30 species**
- Require triage management that prioritizes ESA-petitioned species



# SPECIES PROTECTION ACCOUNT FUNDING

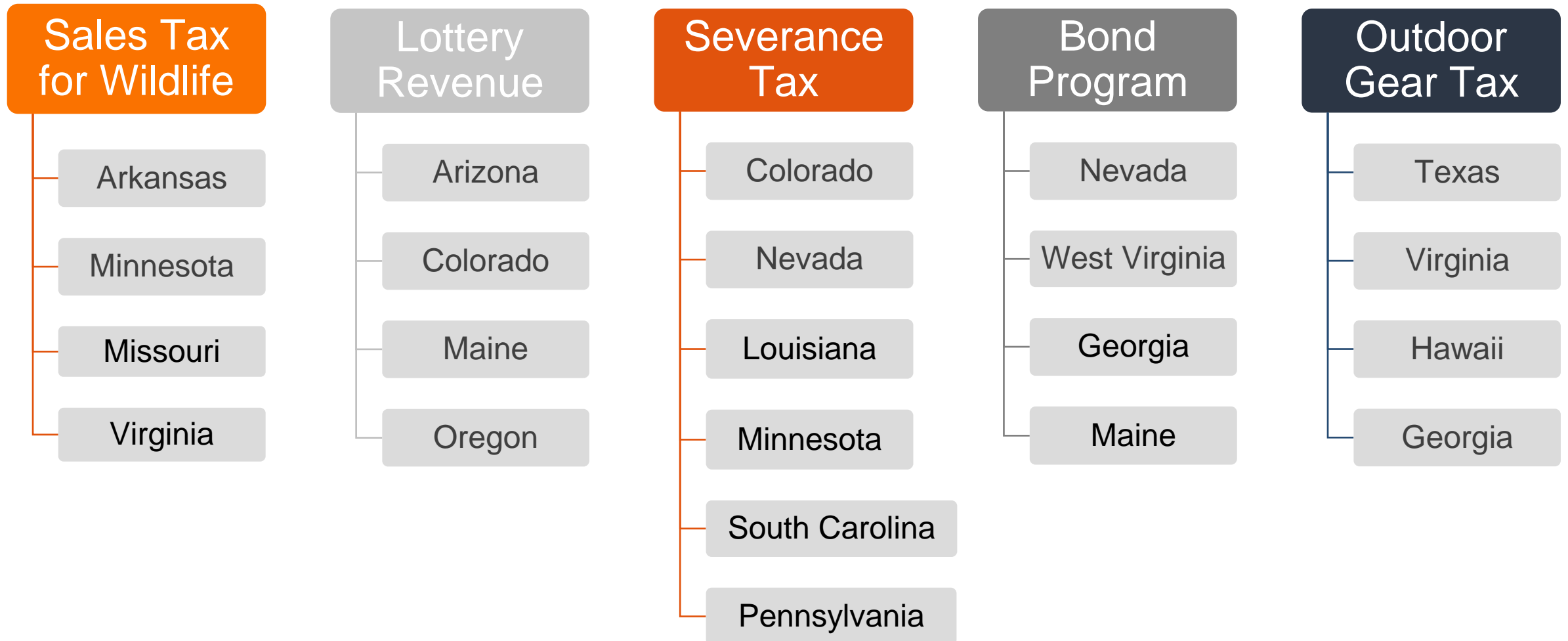
## BUYING POWER OVER TIME

Buying Power    Equivalent Value    Current Funding



# FUNDING NATIVE SPECIES CONSERVATION

Seventeen states are pursuing 2025 legislation to fund native species conservation efforts.



# THANK YOU



Utah Division of  
Wildlife Resources

