



50TH ANNIVERSARY ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SYMPOSIUM

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center
Austin, TX
November 14th, 2023

Symposium Overview

This year, 2023, marks the 50th Anniversary of the Endangered Species Act, one of the most influential pieces of legislation that has impacted conservation in the United States. We will celebrate the successes and document lessons learned from the past 50 years and discuss how to apply those lessons to the next 50 years of conservation work. The overall goal of this symposium is to celebrate 50 years of the ESA through a private land stewardship lens and look ahead to prepare the next generation of conservation leaders.

JAMES G. TEER CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

This symposium was organized by the fellows of the James G. Teer Conservation Leadership Institute (JGTCLI) which is sponsored by The Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society. The mission for the JGTCLI is to ensure a future legacy of well-trained conservation leaders by providing professional training in leadership skills and contemporary conservation issues for today's wildlife biologists and conservation professionals. The institute believes that there is a current need for a Texas-based leadership program that not only meets the needs of biologists and conservation professionals, but also focuses on the unique issues associated with Texas' private lands. As one of the founding goals of the program, cohort members should be knowledgeable of conservation concepts and contemporary conservation issues so they may successfully understand and manage Texas' wildlife and natural resources. As such, the program includes a team-based project on current natural resource issues facing that state.

JAMES G. TEER CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE COHORT

- Addie Smith, Geospatial Analyst, TAMU NRI
- Ben Olsen, Wildlife Health Specialist, TPWD
- Chloe Dannenfelser, Texas Coastal Outreach Coordinator, American Bird Conservancy
- Emma Guest, Ecologist, Bowman Consulting
- Megan Granger, Wildlife Biologist, TPWD
- Mitchell Riggs, Coordinating Wildlife Biologist, Quail Forever
- Olivia Kost, Wildlife Biologist, TPWD
- Shelby McCay, Project Coordinator, TAMU NRI
- Taylor Daily, Coordinating Wildlife Biologist, Quail Forever

SYMPOSIUM PANELISTS AND MODERATORS

Session 1:

- Jimmy Bullock, Forest Sustainability, Resource Management Service LLC
- Douglas Wheeler, ESA Author
- Peg Romanik, Retired DOI Office of the Solicitor
- Moderator: Roel Lopez, Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute

Session 2:

- Terry Anderson, Conservation Equity Partners LLC
- Ryan Orndorff, Department of Defense Natural Resources Program
- Bryan Arroyo, Retired U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Dave Tenny, National Alliance of Forest Owners
- Moderator: Lindsay Martinez, East Foundation

Session 3:

- Chad Ellis, Texas Agricultural Land Trust
- Mike Brennan, Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute
- Mike Leahy, National Wildlife Federation
- Gian Basili, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Moderator: Mike Marshall, Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center - Site Map

- Symposium Program – Building #2: Auditorium
- Registration & Meals – Building #3: The Great Hall



EVENT PROGRAM

8:00 am - Continental Breakfast, Great Hall

8:30 am - Symposium Introduction and Keynote, Auditorium

- Welcome: Roel Lopez
- Opening Remarks: Gary Frazer

9:05 am - Session 1: Past

- Moderator: Roel Lopez
- Teer Fellows: Megan Granger, Chloe Dannenfelser, & Addie Smith
- Panelists: Jimmy Bullock, Douglas Wheeler, & Peg Romanik

9:55 am - Break

- Snacks and coffee in Great Hall (no food or drinks allowed in the Auditorium)

10:15 am - Session 2: Present

- Moderator: Lindsay Martinez
- Teer Fellows: Taylor Daily, Shelby McCay, Mitchel Riggs, & Emma Guest
- Panelists: Terry Anderson, Ryan Orndorff, Bryan Arroyo, & Dave Tenny

11:15 am - Transition

11:20 am - Session 3: Future

- Moderator: Mike Marshall
- Teer Fellows: Ben Olsen & Olivia Kost
- Panelists: Chad Ellis, Mike Brennan, Mike Leahy, & Gian Basili

12:20 pm - Working Lunch- Discussion by Session, Great Hall

1:20 pm - Summary Recap/Podcast

- Moderator: Ed Roberson (Mountain and Prairies Podcast)
- Panelists: Gary Frazer, Jimmy Bullock, Peg Romanik, & Leo Miranda (Conservation Without Conflict)

2:20 pm - Closing Remarks

- Speaker: Roel Lopez (NRI)

2:30 pm - Adjourn

3:00 pm - Exit LBJWC

JGTCLI Cohort & Panelist Bios

Addie Smith **Geospatial Analyst, TAMU NRI**



Addie Smith is a geospatial analyst and program coordinator at the Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute. Using geospatial data, she examines new patterns and identifies trends to provide key information for complex Texas natural resource challenges through the power of “good map.”

She joined the institute as a student technician in 2012 and received a Bachelor of Science in wildlife and fisheries sciences in 2014 from Texas A&M University. In 2016, she received a Master of Science in wildlife and fisheries science from Texas A&M under a graduate fellowship from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Throughout her time at the institute, her work and research has focused on Texas Land Trends, a program that informs Texans about the status of our state’s privately owned working lands.

As a native Texan, Addie enjoys spending her free time outdoors with her family and bird dog, Birdie.

Ben Olsen **Wildlife Health Specialist, TPWD**

Ben Olsen is a Wildlife Health Specialist for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and is a current cohort member of the James G. Teer Conservation Leadership Institute. Ben holds a M.S. in Range and Wildlife Management from Texas A&M University – Kingsville. In his current position with Texas Parks and Wildlife, Ben’s primary role is to assist TPWD staff with all issues regarding wildlife health with a primary focus on Chronic Wasting Disease. Ben leads a team of 14 seasonal wildlife technicians to ensure deer check stations operate efficiently.



Chloe Dannenfelser
Texas Coastal Outreach Coordinator, ABC



Chloe Dannenfelser is the Texas Coastal Outreach Coordinator for American Bird Conservancy. She manages the SPLASH program (Stopping Plastics and Litter Along Shorelines) which is focused on creating a cleaner environment for coastal birds and other wildlife in the Houston Galveston region. This includes organizing cleanup events in the Houston Bayous all the way to the beaches of Galveston, and teaching communities about the impact marine debris and plastic pollution has on wildlife. She also works with local stakeholders, businesses, and municipalities to create trash management plans to reduce the amount of trash that ends up in ecosystems. Chloe is passionate about conservation and getting kids fired up about saving the birds!

Emma Guest
Ecologist, Bowman Consulting

Emma Guest is an Ecologist at Bowman Consulting and is a current fellow in the James G. Teer Conservation Leadership Institute. She received her B.S. in Natural Resources Management from Texas Tech University and M.S. in Wildlife Ecology from Texas State University. Her graduate thesis focused on deterrent technology as a minimization strategy to reduce bat mortality from wind turbine collisions. In her current role, Emma assists development projects in minimizing their environmental footprint by providing specific solutions to address complex environmental challenges and works closely with clients to ensure they meet their environmental responsibilities.



Megan Granger

Wildlife Biologist, TPWD



Megan Granger is a Wildlife Biologist for Texas Parks & Wildlife Department covering San Saba County and is a current cohort member of the James G. Teer Conservation Leadership Institute. Megan holds a M.S. in Range and Wildlife Management from Texas A&M University – Kingsville. In her current position with Texas Parks & Wildlife, Megan's primary role is working with private landowners throughout San Saba County to help them manage their lands for the benefit of native wildlife and their habitats. She also enjoys facilitating research opportunities and conducting education and outreach events to teach landowners and the public about all aspects of wildlife conservation.

Mitchell Riggs

Coordinating Wildlife Biologist, Quail Forever

Mitchell Riggs is a Coordinating Wildlife Biologist with Quail Forever and is enrolled in the James G. Teer Conservation Leadership Institute (JGTCLI). In his role with Quail Forever, his main priority is to promote the Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) initiative while also promoting federal, state, and NGO landowner incentive programs. Mitchell has gained experience working on private ranches throughout Texas and leverages that experience in his current role. His passion is to educate working ranches on profitability while incorporating high quality wildlife management. Mitchell focuses on restoring native grasslands for human health, livestock production, and grassland birds.



Olivia Kost

Wildlife Biologist, TPWD



Olivia Kost serves as the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department biologist for Brown and Mills counties and is a current fellow in the James G. Teer Conservation Leadership Institute. Her primary role is to provide technical guidance to landowners and local partners, helping them manage our native wildlife and their habitats. Her passion is to support landscape-scale conservation by engaging with wildlife management associations and cooperatives. She also enjoys leading new landowners in her area as they embark on their land stewardship journey. Olivia earned her bachelor's degree at Texas A&M University and her masters at Texas Tech University while serving as a fellow through the Welder Wildlife Foundation studying avian communities on coastal prairies.

Shelby McCay

Project Coordinator, TAMU NRI

Shelby McCay is a Project Coordinator for the Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute (NRI). Her work focuses on managing the Institute's distance education program by creating engaging educational materials centered around private land stewardship, military land sustainability and wildlife management. She also manages and produces the award-winning Leopold Live! video series in partnership with Selah, Bamberger Ranch Preserve. In addition, she assists researchers with projects related to threatened and endangered species conservation. She earned both a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences and Master of Natural Resources Development from Texas A&M University.



Taylor Daily
Coordinating Wildlife Biologist, Quail Forever



Taylor Daily is a Coordinating Wildlife Biologist with Quail Forever and is currently a fellow in the James G. Teer Conservation Leadership Institute. His primary role with Quail Forever is to provide technical guidance to landowners on native grassland management/restoration and promote the Grassland Restoration Incentive Program throughout the eastern Rolling Plains and Cross Timbers ecoregions of Texas. His goal is to aid in achieving landscape level conservation impact for northern bobwhites and other grassland obligate bird species. Taylor received his education from Texas Tech University with a B.S. in Natural Resources Management in 2017, and Sul Ross State University with a M.S. in Range and Wildlife Management in 2020. He enjoys spending time with his wife and son, especially when outdoors.

Roel Lopez
Director, TAMU NRI
Department Head, TAMU Rangeland, Wildlife, and Fisheries
Management

Dr. Roel Lopez is Director of the Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute and Department Head for the Department of Rangeland, Wildlife, and Fisheries Management at Texas A&M University. He has over 25 years of natural resource and land management experience with academia, federal and state agencies, and private industry. His research focuses on endangered and fragmented wildlife populations, sustainability of military lands, and rural land trends and demographics.



Gary Frazer
Assistant Director for Ecological Services, USFWS



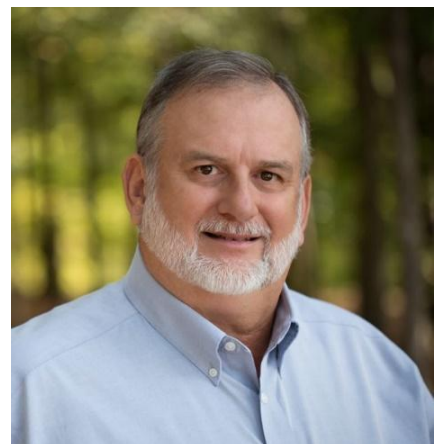
Gary Frazer is the Assistant Director for Ecological Services, assuming that position in August 2009. As Assistant Director, Gary is the senior career official responsible for policy development, budget, and oversight for the Fish and Wildlife Service's administration of the Endangered Species Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, Coastal Barrier Resources Act, and other environmental protection authorities delivered through the Service's Ecological Services program and field stations.

Gary grew up in a small farming community in southeastern Iowa. He earned a B.S. in Fisheries and Wildlife Biology from Iowa State University in 1977 and an M.S. degree in Forestry with a Wildlife Specialty from Purdue University in 1981. Gary and his wife live in Herndon, Virginia.

Jimmy Bullock
Senior Vice President, Forest Sustainability, Resource Management Service LLC

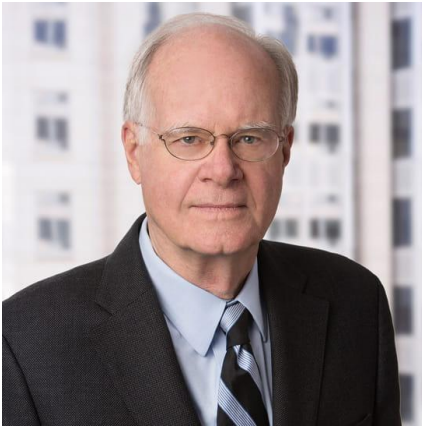
As Senior Vice President Forest Sustainability for Resource Management Service, LLC (RMS), Jimmy oversees sustainable forestry, environmental policy and programs, and advocacy on forestry issues for RMS-managed timberlands in the United States. He also leads environmental, social and governance (ESG) initiatives for RMS-managed timberlands globally.

Jimmy earned his B.S. degree in Forestry and his M.S. degree in Wildlife Ecology from Mississippi State in 1980 and 1982 respectively. A TWS Certified Wildlife Biologist, Mississippi Registered Forester and SAF Certified Forester, Jimmy is on the Board of Directors for the National Conservation Leadership Institute, the Catch-A-Dream Foundation, Wildlife Management Institute, Forest Landowner's Association, Amphibian and Reptile Conservancy, and Mississippi Wildlife Federation. Jimmy is a Professional Member of the Boone and Crockett Club.



Douglas Wheeler

ESA Author



Douglas P. Wheeler graduated from Hamilton College (B.A.) in 1963, and Duke University School of Law (LL. B.) in 1966. Thereafter he served in the U.S. Army, and thence joined the U.S. Naval Reserve JAG corps. Wheeler has worked exclusively with natural resources and environmental issues throughout his career. He joined the Department of Interior in 1969 where he served as Assistant Legislative Counsel, and then Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks under Assistant Secretary Nathaniel Reed, during which time he participated in the drafting of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 with Reed and Buff Bohlen and testified in the Congressional hearings. Afterward, Wheeler became Executive Director of the National Trust for Historic Preservation (1977 – 1980); President of the American Farmland Trust (1980 – 1985); Executive Director of the Sierra Club (1985 – 1987); Vice President of the World Wildlife Fund (1987 – 1991); and California Secretary for Resources, a cabinet level position (1991 – 1999). Wheeler has since practiced law with Hogan and Lovells in Washington, D.C., and today serves as Senior Counsel.

Peg Romanik

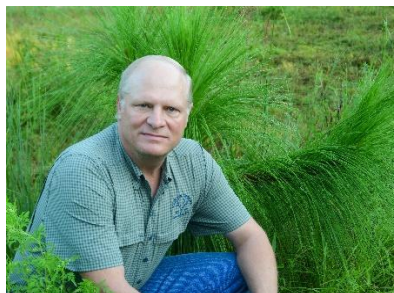
Retired DOI Office of the Solicitor

Peg is a recently retired lawyer for the Department of the Interior. She ended her career as the Associate Solicitor for Parks and Wildlife, the highest career lawyer for the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service. Peg spent the last 30 years of her career working on conservation, and in particular Endangered Species Act (ESA), legal issues. For decades here area of expertise was section 7 of the ESA, but she also focused on section 10 issues related to private landowners' compliance with the ESA. She worked with literally hundreds of FWS folks, private parties, other government agencies, and public and private attorneys to help implement the ESA. Peg received her law degree from the University of Notre Dame. She lives in Washington, D.C. And, her daughter is a proud Longhorn, class of 2012.



Terry Anderson

CEO, Conservation Equity Partners, LLC



Terry Anderson is a biologist, a forester, and a conservation entrepreneur, who has spent the last 31 years successfully operating in a broad range of eco-system markets. His latest efforts have focused on developing Conservation Equity Management, LP, a Texas based, natural resource, private equity firm, created in 2021. The firm has a unique perspective that centers around investment in natural capital. Anderson is also co-founder and CEO of Conservation Equity Partners, LLC, and a co-owner of Wildlife Systems, Inc.

Additionally, Anderson often assists at Stephen F. Austin State University's Arthur Temple College of Forestry with habitat management and wetland ecology courses. He acts as a Board Trustee for the Texas Wildlife Association Foundation and is philanthropically involved with the Texas Wildlife Association and the Texas Forestry Association.

Anderson is well-versed in conservation finance strategies and federal environmental policy while believing in and advocating for the merits of "*Good to Great*" principles in the business world. Working with private equity groups, venture capitalists, landowners, state and federal regulators, and land trusts, he concentrates most of his time and energy on developing integrated conservation and mitigation projects. While primarily focused on the southeastern US, Anderson has assisted in the development of mitigation projects in markets as wide ranging as Alaska and Colombia, South America. Over his career, he has been involved in developing more than 30 mitigation banks and countless other conservation projects.

Anderson has a passion for revitalizing wetlands ecosystems and restoring native species and was most recently recognized as the 2022 Land Steward of the Year, by the Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society.

Ryan Orndorff

Director of Environmental Planning and Conservation, DoD Natural Resources Program

Ryan Orndorff is the Director of Environmental Planning and Conservation for the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Environment and Energy Resilience. He leads a team of experts that provides DoD-wide policy and program oversight for natural and cultural resource management and stewardship, Native American Affairs, environmental planning and environmental justice. Mr. Orndorff has worked in various capacities within DoD for nearly 20 years focusing on natural resources conservation and management, landscape-scale planning and partnerships, conservation policy and regulatory issues.



Bryan Arroyo **Retired, USFWS**



Bryan Arroyo retired from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in December 2022. With over 30 years of experience, Bryan served at field, regional and national offices of the Service. Most recently, he served as Assistant Director, International Affairs. In this capacity, he oversaw the Service's work to coordinate domestic and international efforts to protect, restore, and enhance the world's diverse wildlife and their habitats with a focus on species of international concern, including domestic species that extend beyond our borders or are traded internationally. Bryan served as the Service's Deputy Director of Operations, overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Service, including providing executive direction through the Regional Directors, Native American programs, Diversity and Inclusion, and the National Conservation Training Center. Bryan also served as Assistant Director for Fisheries and Habitat Conservation and Endangered Species. Bryan attended the public school system in Puerto Rico, attended Catholic University of Puerto Rico and graduated in 1988 with a bachelor's degree in science with a major in biology. In 1991, he earned a master's degree in science with a major in Zoology from the University of Arkansas. He is married, has two daughters and a granddaughter. Bryan is an outdoor enthusiast and particularly enjoys fishing, hiking, and nature photography.

Dave Tenny **CEO, National Alliance of Forest Owners**

Dave Tenny is the founding President and CEO of NAFO. Under his leadership, NAFO has grown from 14 initial members in 2008 to 48 member companies that own and manage 46 million acres of private working forests and 34 state and national associations that represent tens of millions of additional acres. Dave's passion for building trust and pursuing solutions-based advocacy has helped NAFO become a leading national advocate committed to advancing federal policies that ensure our working forests provide clean air, clean water, wildlife habitat and jobs through sustainable practices and strong markets.

Dave previously served as Vice President for Forestry and Wood Products for the American Forest and Paper Association (AF&PA) and as Deputy Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment at the United States Department of Agriculture where he had responsibility for the U.S. Forest Service. He got his start in the U.S. House of Representatives where he served as Counsel and Natural Resources Policy Advisor for the House Committee on Agriculture and as Counsel for U.S. Representative Wally Herger of California.

A native of Boise, Idaho, he earned a bachelor's degree in American studies from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, and a law degree from George Washington University in Washington, D.C.



Lindsay Martinez
Research Program Coordinator, East Foundation



Lindsay Martinez is a Research Program Coordinator within the Science Division of the East Foundation, which has a mission to promote land stewardship through research, ranching, and education across more than 200,000 acres of ranchland in South Texas. Martinez has experience coordinating with private landowners, conservation organizations, universities, and agencies to plan policy for the conservation of endangered ocelots on East Foundation lands and other private lands in South Texas. In 2022, she was the first recipient of the Ronald F. Labisky Graduate Fellowship in Wildlife Policy.

Chad Ellis
CEO, Texas Agricultural Land Trust

Chad Ellis is the Chief Executive Officer for Texas Agricultural Land Trust (TALT). Mr. Ellis has over 25 years of experience working directly with producers and land managers implementing stewardship focused management. Ellis not only promotes and advocates land stewardship principles, and he also implements it within his own family operation in Lohn, Texas. Mr. Ellis is passionate about helping empower the producer to be better tomorrow than they are today.

Ellis brings deep connections and experience as chair to US Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (USRSB), chairman for Ecosystem Service Market Consortium (ESMC) and the founding chair of Trust in Food's Trust in Beef program.



Mike Brennan
Wildlife Conservation and Mitigation Program, NRI



Mike Brennan works for Texas A&M's Natural Resources Institute. He has focused on the creation and development of conservation solutions, strategies and policy under the Endangered Species Act since 1983, working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and in private practice. He has broad experience in wildlife and natural resource conservation throughout the United States and is a Professor of Practice at Texas A&M University and an Adjunct Professor at the University of Wyoming's Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources and the Ruckelshaus Institute. He is an emeritus member of the American College of Environmental Lawyers.

Mike's work with NRI utilizes innovative conservation strategies founded on the highest quality science and fidelity to the legal and regulatory programs relevant to species conservation.

Mike Leahy
Senior Director of Wildlife, Hunting, and Fishing Policy for National Wildlife Federation

Mike Leahy is Senior Director of Wildlife, Hunting, and Fishing Policy for National Wildlife Federation, where he leads policy efforts related to wildlife and biodiversity. Leahy's priorities include improving coordination among wildlife supporters, plugging gaps in wildlife and biodiversity policy, and building out a comprehensive network of lands and policies to sustain all species into the future. Issues include funding federal, state and tribal wildlife programs; establishing programs to maintain wildlife movements; addressing wildlife disease and other threats; and wildlife laws. Previously, he was Conservation Director for the Izaak Walton League of America, Regional Director for Defenders of Wildlife, and Forest Campaign Director for National Audubon Society. Leahy holds a J.D. from Georgetown University and a B.S. in Natural Resources from Cornell University.



Gian Basili

Deputy State Supervisor, Ecological Services



Gian Basili has a Ph.D. in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and has been working in Florida on landscape-scale conservation and restoration for more than 25 years. For 17 of those years, he worked for the St. Johns River Management District where he held numerous positions gaining skills at managing complex projects with large teams and budgets. He joined the USFWS in 2016 as the Coastal Program Coordinator for North Florida, served two years as the Florida Air Force Partnership Coordinator, and is currently the Deputy State Supervisor for Ecological Services.

Mike Marshall

Program Director, NRI

Mike Marshall is a program director for the Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute (NRI). Mr. Marshall has over 15 years' experience working in management, conservation, and recovery of at-risk species. Currently, Mr. Marshall works directly with multiple state and federal agencies, and private entities, in compiling the best available science for species status assessments (SSAs) that serve as the basis of Endangered Species Act (ESA) decisions.

A native Texan, Mr. Marshall studied ecology, evolution and behavior at the University of Texas in Austin and wildlife and fisheries and science at Texas A&M, receiving his master's in 2011.



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