



90 YEARS OF WINS FOR WILDLIFE

The National Wildlife Federation champions the protection of every species, great and small. This includes the ducks in Iowa's marshes (whose threatened decline inspired our founding); the bald eagle, a revered emblem of American patriotism; the gray wolf roaming the northern Rockies — even the tiny, mud-loving bog turtle. Each creature holds value, each habitat matters, and together they form the rich tapestry of our natural heritage.

1930s

1936: Following a conference of 2,000 farmers, hunters, anglers, garden club members, and other outdoor enthusiasts called together by President Franklin Roosevelt, the General Wildlife Federation is founded and later becomes the National Wildlife Federation.



1960s

1963: Bald eagles had been driven to the edge of extinction, with fewer than 500 nesting pairs left in the lower 48 states. The Federation and our partners restored critical habitat for eagles, helped ban the deadly insecticide DDT, and led the coalition to pass the Endangered Species Act. Today, there are more than 316,000 bald eagles in the Lower 48 states.



1980s

1985: In violation of federal laws, the Bureau of Land Management open 136,000 acres of public land in Southern Utah to mining, prompting the Federation to file a federal lawsuit. Although protections were ultimately restored, the legal fight to halt the heist of public lands continues to this day.



2000s

2002: The Federation creates the Wildlife Conflict Resolutions program to eliminate wildlife/livestock conflicts on public lands and expand habitat for grizzly bears, wolves, bighorn sheep, bison, and other species to over 1.7 million acres.

2020 – Present

2020: The bipartisan Great American Outdoors Act is passed, securing \$9.5 billion in conservation funds over five years.

2023: The largest ecosystem restoration project in U.S. history breaks ground in Louisiana. The Federation and partners will reconnect the Mississippi River to surrounding wetlands through large-scale sediment diversions, creating vital wildlife habitat and protecting coastal communities from storm surges.

2026: The world's largest wildlife overpass, the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing, nears completion over LA's 101 Freeway. It reconnects fragmented habitats, restoring connectivity and providing safe passage for mountain lions.

1950s

1951: The Federation establishes National Wildlife Week with Key deer as the first species featured. At the time, only 25 Key deer remained in the Florida Keys. This early conservation focus helped lead to the creation of the Key Deer National Wildlife Refuge in 1957. Today, an estimated 800-1,000 Key deer live in Florida.

1959: The Ranger Rick cartoon raccoon character is introduced, going on to become the beloved and iconic representation of the Federation's hugely successful education programming for children.



1970s

1972: Congress passes the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (popularly known as the Clean Water Act). Before this action, some 7.6 million acres of wetlands in the U.S. — roughly the size of Maryland — had been destroyed in the previous two decades.

1973: The Federation and partners help pass the Endangered Species Act. This landmark legislation supports the recovery of many species once near extinction, including the bald eagle, whooping crane, and peregrine falcon.



1990s

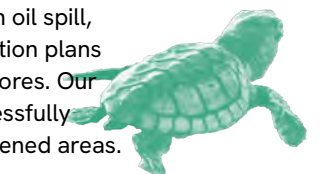
1994: Efforts to reintroduce the gray wolf to Yellowstone National Park begin. The Federation is instrumental in crafting a restoration plan to fit the needs of both wildlife and people. There are more than 6,000 estimated gray wolves today.

1997: The Federation convenes local, state, federal, and international governments to begin crafting a Platte River recovery program protecting critical habitat for species like the whooping crane. In 2021, two pairs nested in Texas for the first time in over a century.



2010s

2010: Following the disastrous Deep Water Horizon oil spill, the Federation is instrumental in organizing adaptation plans for the sensitive wetland habitats along the Gulf shores. Our partnership with the Sea Turtle Conservancy successfully relocates more than 14,000 turtle eggs from threatened areas.



*The past built our legacy
— but the future awaits.*

