

October 5, 2005

Wiggins

After working with Colorado Conservationists, Musgrave votes for recovery

Congresswoman helps advance Endangered Species bill through House

Washington, DC: Today, Representative Marilyn Musgrave helped pass the Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act (TESRA), a bill that updates and modernizes the 30 year-old Endangered Species Act. This legislation emphasizes species recovery through greater involvement of local groups and private land owners as well as sound scientific standards, rather than knee-jerk reactions and loose interpretations of regulations.

"Shoot, shovel, and shut up." This is a phrase known by farmers and ranchers who encounter endangered species, because it may be better to hide the evidence than to endure the enormous burden the federal government imposes in protecting such species found on their property" said Musgrave. "Thirty years ago, when Richard Nixon was president, this act was signed into law. Since, nearly 1,300 species have been listed as endangered, yet, roughly 10 have been recovered."

The success of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) is abysmal. According to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service data:

- **Less than 1%** (10 of roughly 1300 species) have recovered in the Act's history.
- **39%** of all listed species are classified in "unknown" status.
- **21%** of all listed species are classified as "declining."
- **3%** (or roughly 2 dozen species) are believed to be extinct.
- **Only 6%** of all listed species are classified as "improving."
- **77%** of all listed species have only achieved 0-25% of their

Last year, Congresswoman Musgrave held an official hearing in Greeley with the House Subcommittee on Conservation, Credit, Rural Development and Research that investigated the costs and impacts of the ESA on farmers and ranchers, as well as the successes of local conservation programs using sound science, peer-reviewed data, and common-sense. The witnesses who testified at this congressional hearing were actively involved in species preservation and Colorado's agriculture industry. They each called for congressional reform of ESA.

Earlier this year in Colorado, one failure of ESA regulations was illustrated by the enormous challenges associated with the Preble's meadow jumping mouse being on the endangered list. Astonishingly, upwards of \$8 million of local funds were wasted to collect additional research simply because insufficient data was originally collected. Only three samples of mice resulted in the species original listing. It is now clear the mouse population is much larger than previously stated. In addition, the power behind local conservation by experienced land managers, not federal regulations, was the power behind the de-listing of this mouse.

The Congresswoman co-sponsored the TESRA because it places a new emphasis on recovery with new recovery teams and recovery tools; replaces the critical habitat program with a more integrated recovery planning process. It requires the Secretary of the Interior to strengthen the law's scientific underpinnings and it places greater emphasis on participation of private property owners.