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## Science News

# National conservation network urged

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FAIRBANKS, Alaska, Oct. 22 (UPI) -- A national conservation-support network should be formed to combat habitat loss and effects of climate change, U.S. wildlife biologists and policy experts say.

Writing in the journal BioScience, the group said in the face of major reductions in funding a state-based national support network should be established.

"We surveyed wildlife managers from every state and territory to assess the state of the wildlife conservation system," said co-author Brad Griffith, a wildlife biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey and the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

"We kept hearing 'We don't have the maps we need' and 'We don't have current tools.' It was clear after listening to all these folks that better coordination of resources and planning among states, across regions and nationwide could make our conservation efforts more effective and efficient."

The proposed network would have five goals, the scientists said: establish a common habitat classification map, identify at-risk species, coordinate planning opportunities, disseminate planning information and document new conservation data tools.

"Individual state wildlife action plans provide a strong foundation for biodiversity conservation, but a state-by-state approach does not protect ecosystems and habitats that extend across state borders and occur at regional and national scales," Griffith said.

"A national conservation-support network could work to identify large-scale conservation challenges and facilitate their resolution."

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