

Using Economic and Regulatory Incentives to Restore Endangered Species: Lessons Learned from Three New Programs

Utilización de Incentivos Económicos y Normativos para Restaurar Especies en Peligro: Lecciones Aprendidas de Tres Programas Nuevos

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Abstract

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Abstract: *We studied three new incentive-based programs for restoring endangered species on private lands in the United States: safe harbor, Environmental Defense's Landowner Conservation Assistance Program, and conservation banking. For each program, we gathered data on the number of participating landowners, the number of species targeted for assistance, and the cumulative acreage of enrolled land. Measured in this way, both safe harbor and the Landowner Conservation Assistance Program have been remarkably successful. Landowners are drawn to three aspects of these programs: (1) the removal of regulatory burdens associated with attracting endangered species to their property; (2) technical guidance on how to restore habitats for endangered species; and (3) cost-share assistance for habitat restoration. Technical guidance appears to be more important than either regulatory relief or financial assistance in securing the cooperation of some landowners. Assessing the success or failure of conservation banking proved more difficult, given the relatively small number of banks created to date and the lack of any centralized database on them. However, nearly half of the 47 endangered-species conservation banks we surveyed have sold credits, indicating some success in either acquiring or restoring essential habitats.*

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