



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

California Condor Recovery Program

Facts About the Condor

The California condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*), with a wingspan of 9.5 feet and weighing up to 25 pounds, is the largest flying bird in North America. These majestic creatures historically ranged from California to Florida and Western Canada to Northern Mexico. By the mid-twentieth century, condor populations had dropped dramatically, and by 1967 the California condor was listed as "endangered" by the federal government. In 1982, only 23 condors survived in the world. By 1987, all remaining wild condors were placed into a captive breeding program. Thus began an intense recovery program to save the California condor from extinction. Since 1992, when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) began reintroducing captive-bred condors to the wild, the USFWS and its public and private partners have grown the population to more than 320 birds.

California Condor Recovery Program

The California Condor Recovery Program (Recovery Program) is a multi-entity effort, lead by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to recover the endangered California condor. Cooperators include the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Arizona Game and Fish Department, California Department of Fish and Game, San Diego Wild Animal Park, Los Angeles Zoo, Oregon Zoo, Santa Barbara Zoo, Chapultepec Zoo, Peregrine Fund, and Ventana Wildlife Society, among others.

The Recovery Program is currently focusing its efforts on the captive-breeding and reintroduction of California condors to the wild with the goal of establishing two geographically distinct self-sustaining populations of condors in the wild, with a third population retained in captivity. Each population should number 150 individuals, with 10-15 breeding pairs within each group.

Currently, there are more than 80 California condors flying free in Central and Southern California, more than 70 in Arizona and Utah, and 15 in Baja, Mexico. In 2008, the Recovery Program reached an important milestone, with more California condors flying free in the wild than in



Hopper Mountain NWRC is home to the Service's California Condor Recovery Program. (photo:USFWS)

captivity for the first time since the program began. A total of more than 170 birds are flying free in the wild and 150 are in captivity.

For more information about California condors and the Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge Complex, visit: <http://www.fws.gov/hoppermountain>. For information about the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service activities in California, please visit <http://www.fws.gov/cno>.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Michael Woodbridge • (805) 644-5185 •
michael_woodbridge@fws.gov

Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge Complex
California Condor Recovery Program
P.O. Box 5839, Ventura, CA 93005 • (805) 644-5185
• Fax (805) 644-1732