

Administrative Draft  
Indicator Species in the INRMP Report

**Executive Summary**

This report is the second of four being prepared by El Dorado County as a part of Phase I of the County's Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP). The County's General Plan requires the INRMP as a mitigation measure to help compensate for impacts on wildlife habitat from development in western El Dorado County.

This particular report recommends indicator species that can help identify potential core habitat areas within the County, and describes how the indicator species can be used to evaluate ecosystem conditions. The primary benefit of using Indicator Species is that they can characterize the potential and/or actual ecological values of a particular place or habitat type. However, selecting too few or non-representative plant and animal species in an area risks misinformation on habitat conditions. A balance must be struck between choosing too few or too many Indicator Species to help ensure representation of non-selected species as well as to meet planning goals and objectives. An ideal indicator species will inform management decision-making that affects the species, other species, and the habitats in which the species live. It is anticipated that the Indicator Species selected will accomplish this goal when planning processes begin in Phase 2 of the INRMP.

To select appropriate indicator species, a list of selection criteria was first developed with the assistance of two county Advisory Committees: the Plant and Wildlife Technical Advisory Committee (PAWTAC), and the INRMP Stakeholders Advisory Committee (ISAC). Once the criteria had been established and applied a complete list of potential indicator species appropriate for the study area was created.

Over one hundred species of plants and animals were initially selected among the five habitat types in the study area. Each of the species on the list was then evaluated in terms of how well they met the selection criteria. 'Availability of data' was a key consideration to take advantage of existing information and to limit the need for extensive monitoring to be performed by the County in Phase 2 of the INRMP. For each habitat type, those species that best met the selection criteria were then chosen as recommendations for use for the INRMP. Threatened or endangered species were not chosen as the needs of those species will be addressed elsewhere in the INRMP.

A descriptive report was then generated for each selected species, which includes a description of the species, why the species is important to the ecosystem and the INRMP, which criteria for indicator species selection are met by this species, and a map showing the species distribution within the study area. The individual reports for the selected species are included as an Appendix to this document.

Following County acceptance of the indicator species, the selected species will be used for consideration in completing the remaining tasks associated with Phase 1 of the INRMP. This effort includes evaluating wildlife movement corridors and developing alternative approaches for Phase II of the INRMP work program. In Phase 2, the selected species may be used as tools to evaluate changes in habitat conditions so that appropriate planning decisions can be made.