



# SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES

Publisher of Journal of Herpetology, Facsimile Reprints in Herpetology, Herpetological Review,  
Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles, Herpetological Circulars,  
Contributions to Herpetology, and Herpetological Conservation

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Sept, 9, 2009

Dr. John Holdren, Director  
Office of Science and Technology Policy  
Executive Office of the President  
725 17th Street Room 5228  
Washington, DC 20502

Dear Dr. Holdren:

On behalf of the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles (SSAR), I write to express strong support for the Natural Science Collections Alliance (NSC Alliance) proposed Executive Order for issuance by President Obama to promote the preservation and use of scientific collections.

Our nation's natural science collections, whether at the Smithsonian Institution, an independent or university-affiliated natural history museum, or a science department at a small liberal arts college, are irreplaceable resources that enable us to understand the world in which we live. These specimen and data collections not only help us understand the biological and physical history of earth, they also are essential to our ability to understand how earth systems function today and how they may function in an ever changing world. The field of herpetology builds, heavily uses and depends on our nation's scientific collections of amphibians and reptiles.

SSAR is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1958 to advance research, conservation, and education concerning amphibians and reptiles. It is the largest international herpetological society, with a membership of 2,500 and is recognized worldwide for having a diverse program of publications, meetings, and other activities. We publish two journals quarterly (*Journal of Herpetology* and *Herpetological Review*) and a number of other well-respected publications on a regular basis. We are strong advocates of student herpetologists and have particularly active committees focusing on Conservation and Education.

The proposed Executive Order sends a strong message to the natural science collections research and education community. In short, it would demonstrate that the Obama Administration is aware of the important role our institutions play in the nation's scientific research and education enterprise. Moreover, it would demonstrate that federal support and use of data from scientific collections has been hindered by inadequate coordination of planning and budgets. The Executive Order would establish a formal mechanism by which federal agencies could ensure wise and strategic investments in this important and irreplaceable part of our research infrastructure.



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Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Brian Crother  
President, Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles  
Department of Biology and  
Assistant Dean  
College of Science and Technology  
Southeastern Louisiana University  
Hammond, LA 70402