



THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

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2 October 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 Director Holdren:

The Wildlife Society would like to express its strong support for the Executive Order proposed by the Natural Science Collections Alliance (NSC Alliance), which promotes the preservation and use of scientific collections. The Wildlife Society was founded in 1937 and is a non-profit scientific and educational association of over 8,000 professional wildlife biologists and managers, dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education. Our mission is to represent and serve wildlife professionals—the scientists, technicians, and practitioners actively working to study, manage, and conserve native and desired non-native wildlife and their habitats worldwide.

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 proposed Executive Order sends a strong message to the natural science collections research and education community. Its issuance would demonstrate that the Obama Administration is aware of the important role such collections play in the nation's scientific research and education enterprise. Moreover, it would demonstrate recognition 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.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact William Brown, NSC Alliance President at (215) 299-1016, or Robert Gropp, NSC Alliance Director of Public Policy at (202) 628-1500 x 250 if you have any questions concerning the proposed Executive Order.

Sincerely,

Bruce Leopold, President