

Jerry Warrick

February 11, 1983

Mr. Harvey K. Nelson
Regional Director
U. S. Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
Federal Building, Fort Snelling
Twin Cities, Minnesota 55111

Attention: Ron Refsnider

AFF(FA) Michigan
E-1
E-1-13

Dear Mr. Nelson:

Enclosed are the proposals for our 1983 endangered species funding (see enclosed priority list). The Kirtland's warbler habitat work is absolutely the first priority. Without that work, of course, the entire recovery program is jeopardized. The Kirtland's warbler census, protection, and plan development work is needed to support the habitat work.

The eagle work is high priority. We have been funding some eagle work through our state forest wildlife funds. However, the severe state budget problems will cause cutbacks which would threaten this work as well as preclude switching Kirtland's warbler census and planning work to state funding.

Of these first five priority items, all but the eagle work are presently being funded by Section 6 money. We sincerely hope that all of the first five will be funded.

Priority six and seven items are definitely needed to make the habitat work more effective and efficient. Work can go on without them, but we will accomplish much more in the future if we are able to fund these items.

The orchid work covered in item eight is sorely needed. This species' range is confined to the Lake States and appears to be shrinking rapidly.

Our wolf work was given relatively low priority because we have few, if any, wolves and little prospect of improving their range without a massive amount of money. However, it would be cost effective if we could fund the Wisconsin team to census wolves in areas adjacent to known Wisconsin wolf populations.

The cross-fostering and sonogram studies are certainly going to be important elements in the expansion of the warbler range. However, we placed them at the bottom of our priority list because they are not absolutely essential to the immediate recovery. The problem will arise if, when these techniques are needed, they have yet to be explored. If we do not fund the sonogram study, it may be several years before an appropriate researcher is again available to do the work.

Mr. Harvey K. Nelson

-2-

February 11, 1983

I have attached all of our Kirtland's warbler proposals to our present Kirtland's warbler study regardless of priority ranking. This will allow everyone to be aware of the umbrella study under which our warbler jobs operate. I did not attach the other proposals to any of our past studies. If this would be helpful, I can supply those write-ups.

I hope this quick compilation is satisfactory. If you have any questions, please call.

Sincerely,

WILDLIFE DIVISION

Keith L. Heezen
Federal Aid Coordinator

KLH:mh

cc J. Taylor
S. Taylor

MICHIGAN PRIORITY LIST OF ENDANGERED
SPECIES PROPOSALS FOR FY 1983

<u>State Priority</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Job Number for Presently-Funded Jobs</u>
1	Implementing the Kirtland's warbler work plan	601.2
2	Monitor breeding population of Kirtland's warbler	601.5
3	Annual inventory and mapping of bald eagle breeding areas with summer nest checks	
4	Provide protection and public relations for Kirtland's warbler	601.4
5	Development of Kirtland's warbler work plan	601.1
6	Analysis of prescribed burning methods for Kirtland's warbler	
7	Habitat use by Kirtland's warbler fledglings and post-breeding adults	
8	A comprehensive survey for <u>Platanthera</u> <u>leucophaea</u> in Michigan with recommendations for recovery action	
9	Survey of timber wolf numbers and distribution in the western Upper Peninsula	
10	Experimental cross-fostering of a wood warbler species	
11	Analysis of songs of the Kirtland's warbler: A method of identifying individuals	

KLH:mh
2/11/83

State: Michigan

Project Number: E-1
Study Number: 601

Study Title: Management of the Kirtland's Warbler

Problem: The Kirtland's warbler, a federally designated endangered species, nests only in a small area in northern Michigan. Its breeding population remains critical and numbered only 232 singing males in the spring of 1981 (down from an estimated 1,000 plus in 1961). Failure to protect the nesting population and to provide for its needs may result in the extinction of this species. If the Kirtland's warbler is to be saved from this fate, efforts must be intensified to maintain, improve, and expand nesting habitat and to increase protection against disturbances. These include human disturbances and parasitism of the nests by cowbirds. Efforts to develop management opportunities in new directions are being hampered now by our lack of more detailed knowledge about the parameters that make up the special habitat that the Kirtland's warbler needs and by our lack of success in developing economical silvicultural techniques for jack pine regeneration on Grayling Sand.

Another problem hampering efforts to come to the aid of rare, threatened, and endangered species is the lack of techniques with which to help them. Techniques previously developed to employ in various disciplines (wildlife management, fisheries research, forest inventory, etc.) were dependent upon a large number of subjects to which they were applied. Species with very low population numbers require different techniques--very few of which have yet been developed.

Objectives: 1) to develop and implement a recovery plan to produce a breeding population of 1,000 pairs of Kirtland's warblers; 2) to quantitatively document factors limiting the recovery of the Kirtland's warbler population.

Justification: The true value of the Kirtland's warbler cannot be easily assessed. Science is unable to qualify the contribution of a single species to the ecosystem, and in the case of the warbler (where few direct economic benefits occur) it is even more difficult. The preservation of a species headed to extinction (due to man's influence) is the greatest benefit to be derived.

Of direct benefit to the bird itself, this project will result in an expansion of acceptable breeding habitat--one of the major factors limiting the population. Currently only 4,000 to 5,000 acres of good productive habitat is available, however, 30,000 to 36,000 acres are needed to produce and maintain the goal of 1,000 pairs.

Paralleling the management efforts to expand suitable habitat for the Kirtland's warbler, research projects within this study have been included with the intent of finding ways to improve the quality of the habitat and to enhance utilization of existing habitat by the warbler. These findings will then be incorporated into the recovery plan.

