

Environmental News Network

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Endow-Bio, Inc., the First National Endowment for Biodiversity

Please help us to publicize our young, all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) public charity.

Our current crises of nature, conservation and culture call for an audaciously hopeful response in the form of this new public charity. Our mission is to further conservation of biodiversity of native species and their habitats in the U.S., to expose the full breadth of our environmental problems, to show there are good-hearted people working to solve these problems who would benefit from more support, and to provide a simple and inexpensive social mechanism to provide such support. Our essential goal is to increase public participation in conservation here in the U.S., in the broadest sense. Endow-Bio, Inc. operates wholly within the U.S. Currently, about 2% of charitable giving in the U.S. supports conservation. We think this level of funding should be much higher and we are doing something about it.

Endow-Bio, Inc. is engaging the public to join us in supporting other organizations' efforts relating to conservation through rare species management, scientific research, environmental education, environmental law, land acquisition, habitat management, advocacy, wilderness, wildlife rehabilitation, family planning and other social issues relating to conservation of biodiversity.

Each year, our board selects a group of organizations working to solve our crisis of biodiversity in any of these various ways and with their cooperation we raise money to support particular projects of these organizations. At year end, we send each of them a check. These organizations might be 501(c)(3) public charities; colleges and universities; or agencies of federal, state, county, or tribal governments. In order for us to do this, we are building a huge and ever-expanding directory of suitable organizations, and we post this on our website where it is freely available to the public. Anyone can quickly link to the website of any organization in this file we call, "Organizations We Recommend". We hope this online directory, which can easily be sorted by state or by category of interest, will help people find other organizations of interest to them. We urge the public to support these other organizations directly with financial support and through volunteering.

Endow-Bio is a very simple business, and we aim to keep it that way. This means we can function with a membership fee of as low as \$1.00, which empowers everyone to participate who cares to do so. This we call grassroots philanthropy. What we want most is participation. We want more people to become involved in conservation, including well-meaning poor people, young children and youth. Because the future belongs to the young, we are trying to stimulate their sense of empowerment in the context of conservation.

Donations are split three ways: 70% goes to Program funds to be given away at year end. All interest earned supplements Program funds. We set 15% aside to build the First National Endowment for Biodiversity, the purpose of which is limited to generating income to supplement Program funds. And we set aside 15% for Operations. Once we get established, we expect this last category will require less funding and more can be shifted to Program and Endowment.

We offer members the right to vote on where our Program funds at year end should go — what percentage each of them would allocate to each of the organizations for which we have been fundraising all year. Anyone can learn about the organizations we are currently fundraising for on our website, and members can vote online. Membership is for the current calendar year only. Votes must be cast before the end of the year to be counted. Members who wish to change their vote can simply vote again, as the only ballot counted for a member is that member's last ballot cast.

This crisis of biodiversity is the distillate of all of our environmental problems, all worsened as human population increases. There are now more than seven billion people alive. The commonly heard notion of an ever-expanding economy supporting ever more people is simply a crazy idea. We support family planning and advocate for a shrinking human population. But we do not fund abortion and can never do so as our Articles of Incorporation forbid this and this cannot be changed. Money raised that goes to our Endowment will never lead to abortion funding. We believe that fewer abortions are preferable to more abortions, that family planning is the best way to achieve fewer unwanted pregnancies, and so we offer this position as middle ground in this hot cultural controversy. Most conservation organizations and many foundations funding conservation shun this sphere as too controversial, but we believe this human population issue is absolutely fundamental to resolving our many other problems.

Endow-Bio, Inc. points of interest:

1. Our mission is very broad because Endow-Bio helps other nonprofits and government agencies further their varied and generally rather narrow missions.
2. Endow-Bio is built on a cooperative, rather than the familiar competitive, business model. We think that if cooperation were held in higher esteem in our society, and competition were valued a bit less, then we'd all be happier.
3. Endow-Bio is an all-volunteer nonprofit. Most other conservation nonprofits have paid staff, which drives their costs of operation up and erodes the percentage of your gift that goes to do what you want done.
4. Endow-Bio nurtures democratic values. Our members vote on where our Program funds at year end go — the percentage that goes to each of several organizations for which we have been fundraising throughout that year. Why does this matter? We've set up this structure so the richest person has no greater influence on the outcome than the poorest person. We empower the common person, which we take to be the quintessential democratic ideal.

5. We have chosen egalitarianism. Endow-bio has no membership fee schedule according status and privileges to varying levels of donor support. We treat every member with the same respect and offer the same privilege to every member. You can participate fully in Endow-Bio with the sacrifice of as little as \$1.00. We challenge you to find that dollar before year end!
6. Endow-Bio is the First National Endowment for Biodiversity. With every gift, our members are contributing to an endowment to allow us to do yet more in the future, even as we are doing something today. The current crisis of biodiversity is the distillate of all our environmental problems, all worsened as human population increases. At Endow-Bio, we value biodiversity itself. It is morally wrong to cause species to go extinct. And let's save something for our children's children — some wild places and as many species as possible to enrich their lives with beauty, wonderment and ideas! This biocentric value and this anthropocentric value have both underlain conservation since its beginning. No doubt there will be much work to do in the future so we are preparing, today, to support that future work.
7. Endow-Bio does not offer promotional items such as mugs or hats to lure donations because this costs something, and so it dilutes the value of each donation. We use more of your money to do the work that prompted your donation.
8. Simplicity is a virtue. By keeping our business very simple, we believe we can accomplish a great deal more than if we let our operations become complicated.
9. In 2011, we disbursed \$2730.85 among Bat Conservation International, Catalina Island Conservancy, Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest, and Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation.
10. In 2012, we disbursed \$5085.03 among Center for Biological Diversity, Conservation Fisheries, Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness, Mississippi Valley Conservancy, and Vermonters for a Sustainable Population.
11. In 2013, we disbursed \$6019.89 among California Wildlife Foundation, Great Plains Restoration Council, Rocky Mountain Nature Association, and Teton Raptor Center.
12. Over 2014, we are fundraising for Center for Coastal Studies, Citizen Powered Media, Genoa National Fish Hatchery, and Prairie Biotic Research.

Learn more at Endow-Bio.org.

Our success is the establishment of a simple and inexpensive social mechanism to promote greater civic involvement in conservation. How much we can accomplish is largely up to you.