ABSTRACT

TITLE:	A Cat, a Fish, and a Flower: Endangered Species and Urban Development
AUTHOR(S):	Dudash, Jessica
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ABSTRACT: The Endangered Species Act (ESA) is one of the most recognizable pieces of environmental policy. Despite the Act's widespread reach, many species are still facing the threat of extinction, particularly due to development. One out of every three endangered species in the United States faces extinction due to urban development. This project examines the Florida panther (Puma concolor), coho salmon (Oncorhynchus kisutch), and Navasota ladies tresses (Spiranthes parksii) as examples of organisms who face continual threats from urban development despite their listing status as endangered species. I find that the ESA has not adequately prevented habitat from becoming fragmented, considered metapopulation dynamics, and most importantly, protected critical habitat in the cases of these three examples. I discuss and recommend that designating critical habitat for these three species may better prevent them from future threats of urban development as well as provide protection for greater ecosystems as a whole.