

EL TORO WILDERNESS FACTS

On January 19, 2006, US Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns marked the designation of the first tropical rain forest wilderness in the Western Hemisphere, the *El Toro Wilderness*, part of the El Yunque National Forest in Puerto Rico.

"The *El Toro Wilderness* represents an area of unique ecological and biological diversity," said Johanns. "This wilderness designation will help to protect critical habitat for generations to come and preserves the natural condition of the land, providing outstanding opportunities to enjoy an unconfined wilderness experience."

Luis Fortuño, the Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico, sponsored the Caribbean National Forest Act of 2005 that was signed into law by President Bush on December 1, 2005.



El Toro Peak (3,524 feet in height)

United States
Department of Agriculture
Forest Service

El Toro Wilderness

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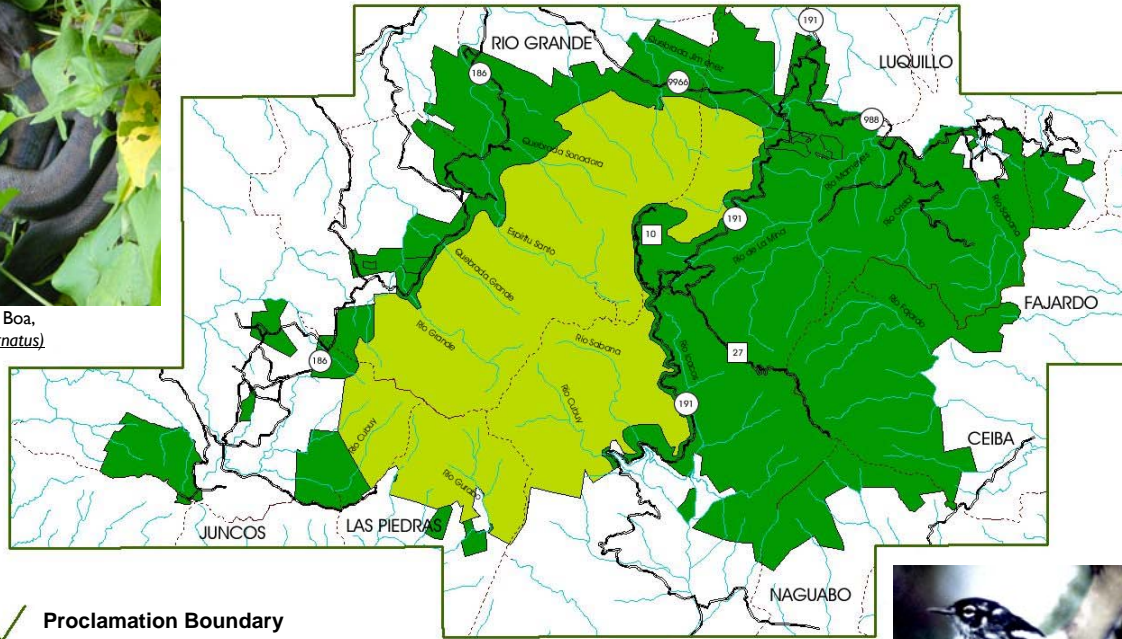
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"Caring for the Land
and Serving People"



Puerto Rican Boa, (*Epicrates inornatus*)



-  Proclamation Boundary
-  Roads
-  Rivers
-  Municipal Boundary
-  El Toro Wilderness
-  El Yunque National Forest Lands

The Caribbean National Forest Act of 2005 designated nearly 10,000 acres of the El Yunque National Forest and the Luquillo Experimental Forest as a wilderness area, more than one-third of the forest's 28,000 acres. Located 25 miles east of San Juan on the western side of the Luquillo mountain range, the area is named after the highest peak (3,524 feet) in the



Puerto Rican Parrot, (*Amazona vittata*)



Dwarf Coquí, (*Eleutherodactylus unicolor*)



Elfin Woods Warbler, (*Dendroica angelae*)

forest. In addition to being the first wilderness area in a tropical rain forest, it is also the first wilderness area in Puerto Rico. The *El Toro Wilderness* area is home to the endangered Puerto Rican Parrot, one of the most vulnerable species listed under the Endangered Species Act. Other endangered wildlife species include the Puerto Rican Sharp-shinned and Broad-winged Hawks and the Puerto Rican Boa. The forest also features 240 native tree species -more than any other national



"Pega Palma" Vine, (*Marcgravia sintensis*)

forest. Federally listed endangered plants grow in the forest, such as the Miniature Orchid (*Lepanthes eltoroensis*) and Palo de Jazmín (*Styrax*

portoricensis) as well as several other rare plant species.

A wilderness area designation by Congress under the Wilderness Act of 1964 is the greatest protection afforded to federally managed areas.



Miniature Orchid, (*Lepanthes eltoroensis*)

The act protects some of the most natural and undisturbed places in America, prohibiting activities such as road construction and the operation of motorized vehicles, while promoting uses that leave no visible human trace on the land.

The El Toro Wilderness' 10,000 acres joins the more than 105 million acres of National Wilderness Preservation System land already established by Congress.