CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE

June 23, 2009

H.R. 1454
Multinational Species Conservation Funds
Semipostal Stamp Act of 2009

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources on June 10, 2009

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 1454 would have no significant discretionary cost to the federal government. Enacting the bill would affect direct spending, but such costs would not be significant. This legislation contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

H.R. 1454 would direct the United States Postal Service to issue a special postage stamp for first-class mail that would cost participating customers at least 25 percent more than the regular rate. Any amounts collected from the special stamp (called a semipostal), after accounting for the Postal Service's administrative costs, would be transferred to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for expenditure on programs to support endangered species. The Postal Service would have 12 months after enactment to make the semipostal available to the public, and the program would terminate no sooner than five years after that.

Payments of amounts above the regular first-class postage rate (currently 44 cents) would be treated as offsetting collections (that is, negative outlays) of the Postal Service. Based on sales of other semipostals in recent years, we expect that the increase in offsetting collections would be less than $1 million annually. Payments of those funds to the USFWS would be outlays of the Postal Service and offsetting collections to the USFWS, which would spend those amounts mostly in the same year. CBO estimates that the net change in outlays of the Postal Service (which is off-budget) and the USFWS (which is on-budget) would not be significant in any year.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Mark Grabowicz. The estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.