



November XX, 2022

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and Minority Leader McCarthy,

Our coalition of diverse organizations, businesses, professional societies, state fish and wildlife agencies, and tribal nations collectively represent millions of Americans. We are writing to respectfully **request your support for passage of the *Recovering America's Wildlife Act (H.R.2773/S.2372) this year, including as part of a funding package.*** This bill was introduced by Sens. Heinrich (D-NM) and Blunt (R-MO) and Congresswoman Dingell (D-MI) respectively in the 117th Congress. Recent public polling demonstrates that more than 70 percent of Americans support this bill and less than 5 percent oppose.

The *Recovering America's Wildlife Act* would immediately address the biodiversity crisis by helping to recover and conserve species at risk by investing \$1.3 billion annually for states and territories and \$97.5 million for tribal nations for on-the-ground conservation projects. The legislation funds the implementation of congressionally mandated State Wildlife Action Plans, which outline specific, science-based conservation actions necessary to recover and sustain healthy fish and wildlife populations. Similarly, tribal nations will be able to expand successful conservation efforts on their lands, which provide vital habitat for hundreds of fish and wildlife species, including more than 500 species that are listed as threatened or endangered. It also will support much needed investments in continued economic growth and job creation in Tribal communities. The *Recovering America's Wildlife Act* would be the only federal conservation program that provides sustained funding to tribal nations and state fish and wildlife agencies for the proactive conservation of at-risk species.

One-third of the fish and wildlife species in the United States are at risk of becoming threatened or endangered. The challenges facing our nation's fish and wildlife are daunting, but this legislation provides a solution. The *Recovering America's Wildlife Act* will provide state and territorial fish and wildlife agencies and tribal fish and wildlife managers with dependable, dedicated resources to address more than 12,000 species in need of proactive, voluntary conservation before a listing as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act is warranted.

This legislation represents a smart, future focused investment that will also strengthen the economy and create a significant number of jobs that help grow the \$862 billion outdoor economy and bring support to key sectors such as agriculture and forestry – all while supporting the conservation of America’s fish, wildlife, and the habitats they depend on. This common-sense, fiscally responsible solution passed the House of Representatives with a bipartisan vote in June and has 42 bipartisan Senate cosponsors and was passed out of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works with a bipartisan vote in April. Now is the time to pass this widely supported transformational legislation.

Taking measures to conserve species before they are on the brink of extinction and ensuring healthy populations will help save taxpayer dollars and prevent these species from needing costly “emergency room” measures under the Endangered Species Act – truly an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Rather than defaulting to regulation and litigation, this bill saves America’s imperiled wildlife through collaborative and constructive voluntary partnerships. This collaborative approach to conservation is good for wildlife, good for taxpayers, good for landowners, good for business and good for America. Further, this bill builds on the successful restoration track records of state fish and wildlife agencies which for more than eight decades have successfully managed game species.

Congress passed the Pittman-Robertson Act in 1937 and the Dingell-Johnson Act in 1950 to restore iconic game species such as deer, elk, striped bass, and wild turkey. Passage of the *Recovering America’s Wildlife Act* would complete the safety net so state fish and wildlife agencies and tribes have resources to conserve all fish and wildlife species. This Congress can join the legacy of the 75th and 81st Congress’s to ensure our nation’s rich fish and wildlife legacy is sustained for future generations.

Over 100 million Americans participate in some form of wildlife recreation. Increasingly, Americans from all walks of life have turned to the outdoors and nature to improve physical and mental well-being. Creating thousands of jobs immediately, restoring natural resources infrastructure, increasing access to the outdoors, and reducing long-term costs through enactment of the *Recovering America’s Wildlife Act* will unify Americans and elected officials that represent diverse constituencies.

Thank you for your consideration of our request to support passage of the *Recovering America’s Wildlife Act* this year. We thank you for your support of America’s fish and wildlife and look forward to working with you to enact this groundbreaking legislation.

Sincerely,