



# The Wildlife Society's Conservation Affairs Network

October 2016, Volume 2, Issue 5

## Take Action!

**Wildlife funding legislation** - The “Recovering America’s Wildlife Act of 2016” ([H.R. 5650](#)) was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives on July 6. This legislation would dedicate \$1.3 billion annually in existing energy development royalties to state conservation programs, following [recommendations](#) from the [Blue Ribbon Panel](#) on Sustaining America’s Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources that were released in March. TWS representatives and other organizations have met with several Congressional offices to garner support for this legislation.

*Staff Contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

- Who should act: U.S. Chapters and Sections
- Action to Take: Contact your region’s House delegations to encourage them to co-sponsor this legislation
- Deadline for Action: December 2016
- Resources: [TWS News Article](#)  
[BRP Final Report](#)

**Sage-Grouse conservation plans** – The [Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership](#), which includes The Wildlife Society on their [Policy Council](#), is circulating a petition that supports the continued implementation of federal sage-grouse conservation plans. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [decided a year ago](#) that the greater sage-grouse did not require protection under the Endangered Species Act, in part because of strong, effective federal and state conservation plans. [Riders in current spending bills](#) aim to require federal agencies to rely *only* on state plans for sage-grouse conservation. *Staff Contact:* [Cameron Kovach](#)

- Who should act: TWS Members and other interested individuals
- Action to Take: [Sign TRCP’s Petition](#) to urge Congress to allow for continued implementation of federal sage-grouse conservation plans.
- Deadline for Action: ASAP
- Resources: [TRCP’s Petition](#)  
[TWS and partner letter, 2015](#)  
[TWS letter, 2016](#)

## CAC Activities

**TWS provides testimony at National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board Meeting** - Keith Norris, TWS Government Affairs and Partnerships Director and Chair of the [National Horse and Burro Rangeland Management Coalition](#), provided testimony at the Board’s meeting in Elko, Nevada in September. [The testimonies](#) urged for increased management options to reduce wild

horse and burro populations on rangelands, including: increased removals, unrestricted sale, surgical sterilization, and humane euthanasia. *Staff Contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

***New Mexico Chapter sends letter supporting landscape-level planning*** - The New Mexico Chapter of TWS [sent letters](#) to the BLM and U.S. Forest Service New Mexico regional offices regarding land management plans. The Chapter urged both agencies to plan for cooperative, large-scale habitat management across agency boundaries to avoid habitat fragmentation. *CAC Contact:* [Brian Hanson](#)

***Minnesota Chapter works to prevent transfer of public lands*** – The Minnesota Chapter is working on a letter to members of Congress in support of retaining federal public lands. The Chapter plans to express support for maintaining federal management on current federal lands, and recognizes the value that federal, state, and county public lands have for our public trust wildlife resources. *CAC Contact:* [Jodie Provost](#)

***Minnesota Chapter hosts Wetland Habitat workshop*** – The Minnesota Chapter recently hosted a [workshop](#) for resource managers, biologists, and conservation partners to discuss wetland policies, ecology, and restoration strategies. The workshop was attended by over 140 professionals from a wide range of agencies and organizations. *CAC Contact:* [Jodie Provost](#)

## Issue Spotlight

***USFWS finalizes revisions for ESA petitioning process*** - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service [finalized a rule](#) on Sept. 27 that modifies standards for petitions to list, delist, and reclassify species under the Endangered Species Act. The rule places burden of evidence on the petitioner, who is now required to provide information that both supports and contradicts the petition's claims. This and other major changes aim to enhance the content and quality of petitions to help improve the Services' ability to review petitions efficiently and meet ESA-mandated deadlines. *Staff Contact:* [Cameron Kovach](#)

***Congress holds oversight hearing on wolf management*** - On Sept. 21, the House Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held an [oversight hearing](#) to discuss the federal government's management of wolves. The management of gray wolves, red wolves, and Mexican wolves was discussed, and state versus federal management of different species was analyzed. Three members from TWS's Government Affairs and Partnerships Program were in attendance at the hearing. [Read more.](#) *Staff Contact:* [Cameron Kovach](#)

## Policy Partnerships

***LWCF Coalition seeks organization sign-on to permanent reauthorization letter*** – A large sign-on letter is being coordinated by The Wilderness Society that expresses support for permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Consider [signing your](#)

*Increasing the Society's effectiveness through communication and collaboration*

[Chapter or Section to the letter](#), and encourage the House of Representatives to bring permanent reauthorization forward for a vote. *Staff Contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

## **On the Horizon**

***TWS 2016 Annual Conference - Registration extended!*** - Registration has been extended until Oct. 10 for TWS' 2016 Annual Conference in Raleigh, NC from October 15-19. This year's conference will offer the chance to experience more than 600 wildlife science and management education opportunities, field trips, workshops, and more than 40 networking events. Visit the [conference website](#) for more information.

***Conservation Affairs Network Annual Meeting*** – A meeting has been set up for Tuesday, October 18, 2016 during TWS' conference in Raleigh, North Carolina. This meeting will be a great opportunity to hear updates from CACs and discuss policy issues and activities. A [draft agenda](#) has been created – please send in agenda suggestions. *Staff Contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

***National Wildlife Refuge Week*** - Next week is [National Wildlife Refuge Week](#). From October 8-15, many refuges across the country will host special events to celebrate, including races, scavenger hunts, birding events, and festivals. Several refuges are also participating in [The Big Sit](#), an international birding event that is held during this week every year.

## **TWS Policy News**

***TWS announces Spring 2017 policy internship*** - Applications are now being accepted for TWS' Government Affairs & Partnerships program's [Spring 2017 Wildlife Policy Internship](#). Interns will assist the Government Affairs & Partnerships team with article writing, policy briefs, coalition activities, and congressional meetings. This paid internship runs from January - June 2017. Applications close November 6, 2016. *Staff Contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

***TWS GAP participates in MD/DE Chapter Meeting*** - The Maryland/Delaware Chapter of TWS hosted their chapter meeting on Sept. 22. The meeting included presentations by wildlife professionals, a poster session for undergraduate and graduate research, and elections for next year's chapter officers. TWS Government Affairs & Partnerships staff were on-site to discuss several TWS initiatives, including the Conservation Affairs Network and certification programs. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

***Nominations Open for Climate Adaptation Leadership Award*** - [The National Fish, Wildlife, and Plants Climate Adaptation Strategy](#) is seeking nominations for their Climate Adaptation Leadership Award for Natural Resources. The award will recognize those who have worked to address climate change-based threats to America's Natural Resources. View the [nomination form](#) for more information. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

## **Toolbox**

***Policy Library Development - Section and Chapter Letters Requested*** - TWS staff continue to develop an online database that will provide searchable access to letters, comments, and other policy outputs from TWS. A database for content sent at the Section and Chapter levels is also in the works, but we need your help! TWS sections and chapters: **please send any letters, comments, and position papers** submitted by your organization regarding legislative or regulatory matters to [cmurphy@wildlife.org](mailto:cmurphy@wildlife.org) to help build this online database. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

## **Communicate Your News**

Do you need assistance with a wildlife conservation policy issue? Does your CAC have a success story to tell? Is a new partnership developing? Be sure to send it in! Let the CAN hear about it all and help you in your work. *Staff Contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

**Please be sure to keep sending your policy activities around the Network – between the Chapters, Sections, and TWS Headquarters. Keep your Section CAC Chairs updated on activities so they can help you and others be effective.**