



The Wildlife Society's Conservation Affairs Network

June 2017, Volume 3, Issue 1

Take Action!

Support USGS Climate Adaptation Science Centers - TWS, the National Wildlife Federation and other are distributing a [letter](#) in support of adequate funding for USGS National and Regional Climate Adaptation Science Centers (CASCs) (formerly known as the National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center and the Department of the Interior Climate Science Centers). This program is slated for a 34% cut under the proposed FY18 budget. This proposal would gut regional cooperative research capacity by cutting the program's eight existing Regional CASCs down to four. These science centers provide fish and wildlife managers working on the front lines with climate adaptation research tailored to their specific regional needs. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

- Who Should Act: U.S. Chapters and Sections
- Action to Take: Sign-on to the letter by emailing Colton Naval (navalc@nwf.org) with your organization name and name/title of individual representing the organization unit
- Deadline for Action: 16 June 2017
- Resources: FY18 POTUS Budget Request
[Letter for sign-on](#)

Support Dedicated Wildlife Funding - TWS and the National Wildlife Federation are circulating a letter that calls on members of the U.S. Congress to support dedicated funding for fish and wildlife conservation; it is designed to build support for the [Recovering America's Wildlife Act](#), which will be reintroduced in the coming months and will direct \$1.3 billion in federal funds to states for implementing state wildlife action plans. TWS has long been supportive of this concept - we'd like to express that support throughout the organization to be able to relate to each congressional district in this letter. *Staff Contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

- Who Should Act: U.S. Chapters and Sections
- Action to Take: Sign-on to the letter by filling in [this form](#)
- Deadline for Action: ASAP
- Resources: [TWS News Article](#)
[NWF Fact Sheet](#)

CAC Activities

Wyoming Chapter submits letter opposing greater sage grouse egg collection bill - A bill was introduced (and ultimately passed) that would allow for certified game bird farm licensees to collect up to 1,000 greater sage-grouse eggs from the wild for captive rearing and release. On Feb. 21, the [WY Chapter sent a letter](#) urging state Senators to vote against Wyoming House Bill 271, Game Bird Farms - Greater Sage-grouse. *CAC Contact:* [Tony Mong](#)

Illinois Chapter sends letter opposing TNR Senate Bill - A bill was introduced that would facilitate trap, neuter, and release programs in the state of Illinois. On Feb. 14, the IL Chapter sent a letter to the state Senate to oppose page of S.B. 0641. The letter included TWS' [Issue Statement](#) on Feral and Free-Ranging Domestic Cats. *CAC Contact:* [Scott Meister](#)

Manitoba Chapter sends climate change letter - The Manitoba Chapter sent a [letter](#) to the Province's Minister of Sustainable Development concerning the development of a provincial Climate Change and Green Plan. The letter referenced TWS' [Position Statement](#) on Global Climate Change and Wildlife. *CAC Contact:* [Jonathan Wiens & C-Jae Breiter](#)

Manitoba Chapter partners with local organization to oppose TNR - The Manitoba Chapter partnered with local organizations, Nature Manitoba and Bird Studies Canada, to [send a letter](#) to the Mayor of Winnipeg opposing trap, neuter, and release programs. The letter referenced TWS' [Issue Statement](#) on Feral and Free-Ranging Domestic Cats. *CAC Contact:* [Jonathan Wiens & C-Jae Breiter](#)

Issue Spotlight

Interior and EPA advisory board undergo review - On May 5, the U.S. Department of the Interior announced that meetings for its more than 200 advisory councils, boards, committees, and panels — designed to advise agency officials by providing independent recommendations and diverse opinions on behalf of the public — will be postponed while they undergo a [review process](#). The review was instituted following a recent executive order requiring the review of existing regulations, orders, guidance documents, policies, and agency actions that “potentially burden the development or use of domestically produced energy resources” — including resources on federal lands. On the same day, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency informed 12 scientists from their Board of Scientific Counselors (BOSC) that their terms would not be renewed. Many were under the impression that they would continue to serve another term on the board, as has been common practice for BOSC. There have also been several efforts during this session of Congress towards reform of EPA's Scientific Advisory Board. *Staff Contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

Court affirms ruling on interstate commerce of injurious species - On April 7, the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed a [ruling](#) in favor of the U.S. Association of Reptile Keepers (USARK), lifting restrictions on interstate commerce of injurious species listed under the Lacey Act. The ruling extends beyond the snakes in question, restricting USFWS from regulating interstate transport of any injurious wildlife species. USFWS will continue to have the authority to regulate international transport of injurious species into the U.S. as well as between the jurisdictions named in the shipment clause of the Lacey Act (the District of Columbia, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico). The final ruling took effect on May 31. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

On the Horizon

Federal appropriations - The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017 ([H.R. 244](#)), authorizing appropriated funds through the remainder of [fiscal year 2017](#) (FY17), was signed into law by President Trump last month. The administration has since released the [President's budget requests](#) for FY18, which begins on October 1. The document outlines proposed spending across the government along with a plan to reduce government spending by \$3.6 trillion over the next ten years. The final, implemented budget will be created by Congress. TWS has submitted [written testimony](#) concern the FY18 budget to both the U.S. House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, as well as the Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture. Budget discussions for FY18 are expected to continue in Congress through July. *Staff Contact:* [Cameron Kovach](#)

TWS 2017 Annual Conference and CAN Annual Meeting - Registration Open - Registration is now open for TWS' 2017 Annual Conference in Albuquerque, NM from September 23-27. This year's conference will feature workshops throughout the week, in addition to the usual Saturday workshops. The Conservation Affairs Network will have a meeting during the conference - more details forthcoming. Visit the [conference website](#) for more information. *Staff Contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

Policy Partnerships

National Horse & Burro Rangeland Management Coalition - [NHBRMC](#) kicked off the new year by sending a [letter and transition document](#) to then-President-elect Donald J. Trump. In the document, the Coalition introduced their ongoing work addressing wild horse and burro overpopulation on public rangelands in the western U.S. and offered the new administration their assistance in improving BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program. NHBRMC provided Trump's transition team with horse and burro population statistics, scientific analysis of the growing problem, and effective management solutions. Following the release of the President's FY18 budget request, the Coalition released a [statement](#) supporting the Administration's request for the removal of appropriations language that restricts the BLM from using all management options authorized under the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971, as amended. *Staff Contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

Multi-organization letter sent to Congress in support of USFS R&D funding - Several organizations, led by The Wildlife Society and the Society of American Foresters, [sent a letter](#) to both the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies. The letter urges Congress to increase funding for U.S. Forest Service Research and Development (R&D) — focusing on Forest and Rangeland Research program areas outside of Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) — for fiscal year 2018 to at least \$303 million. *Staff Contact:* [Cameron Kovach](#)

National Environmental Coalition on Invasive Species - On Jun. 2, NECIS [sent a letter](#) to U.S. EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt urging the agency to immediately suspend or cancel the registration of Kaput feral hog bait. The letter addresses Coalition concerns of potential negative impacts on non-target wildlife and public health until formal agency consultation is conducted. The Center for Invasive Species Prevention, National Wildlife Federation, The Wildlife Society, and American Bird Conservancy, all member organizations of NECIS, signed on to the letter. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

TWS Policy News

TWS endorses AFWA recommendations for 2018 Farm Bill - On Apr. 20, The Wildlife Society sent a [letter](#) in support of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' (AFWA) Policy Priorities for the 2018 Farm Bill to AFWA President Nick Wiley. AFWA developed these recommendations through a collaborative process that included input from a diverse array of partners and professional societies -- including TWS. In the letter, TWS emphasizes the need for incorporating AFWA's recommendations into the next Farm Bill as a way to enhance private lands conservation. TWS will also host a Farm Bill symposium at the [TWS 2017 Annual Conference](#) in Albuquerque, NM, that explores various perspectives on Farm Bill conservation and examines recent scientific developments in fish and wildlife responses to Farm Bill conservation programs. *Staff Contact:* [Cameron Kovach](#)

TWS GAP welcomes new members of Congress - On Jan. 19, staff of The Wildlife Society's Government Affairs & Partnerships team traveled to Capitol Hill to hand-deliver a [welcome letter](#) and transition document to the offices of each freshman member of the 115th Congress. In the letter, TWS offers the scientific expertise of our professional membership network to seven Senators and over 50 Representatives as they begin to navigate the federal policymaking process under the Trump administration. *Staff Contact:* [Cameron Kovach](#)

Toolbox

Policy Library Development - Section and Chapter Letters Requested - The [TWS Member Portal](#) now includes a Policy Library where members can search for policy documents generated by headquarters staff since 2010. Section and Chapter letters and policy activity need to be added to the Policy Library, but we need your help! Please send any letters, comments, and position papers submitted by your organization regarding legislative or regulatory matters to cmurphy@wildlife.org to help build this online database. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

Use Mobile App to Educate Public on Risks Posed by Balloons - #mcd - For those passionate about keeping garbage out of our open spaces, there is a new tool in the fight against balloon waste! #mcd (Must Come Down) is a [new citizen science project](#) whose purpose is to collect geotagged data through the app Litterati to educate the public about the fate of air- and helium-filled balloons released outdoors, and the inevitable fact that when balloons are released, singly

or en masse, they must eventually fall to earth. To learn more about this project, visit <https://balloonsmcd.wordpress.com/> or contact [Matthew Bettelheim](#).

Request for Submissions

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

CAC Contact Information

Update TWS HQ on Conservation Affairs Committee Point of Contacts – As your Sections and Chapters have new elections and appointments of officers, board members, and other organizational unit volunteers, be sure to update TWS GAP staff of your new CAC Chairs. Email keith.norris@wildlife.org with the new contact information to ensure continuity of communications in the Network.