



The Wildlife Society's Conservation Affairs Network

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CAC Activities

Illinois Chapter members comment on feral cat TNR legislation – 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 S.B. 0641. Since then, the bill passed the Senate by a vote of 47-3-0 and passed the House by a vote of 73-37-1. On Jun. 28, the bill was sent to the Governor for signature. The Governor has 60 calendar days to sign it, or to return it with his veto. If the Governor does nothing, the bill will automatically become a law after the 60-day period. *CAC Contact:* [Scott Meister](#)

North Dakota Chapter submits letter on SOSM of wetland delineation – [Federal Register Docket NRCS-2016-0012-0001](#) includes intended revisions to the State Offsite Methods (SOSM) for use in Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota State Technical Guides. The SOSM is used in completing wetland determinations for USDA program eligibility purposes. On Jul. 24 the North Dakota Chapter [sent a letter](#) to the Natural Resources Conservation Service outlining concerns over the proposed changes, which would have significant implications for the wetland resources of North Dakota and the U.S. Prairie Pothole Region. *CAC Contact:* [Kory Richardson](#)

Oregon Chapter submits letter supporting Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund – A bill was introduced that would create a funding framework to sustain Oregon's fish and wildlife heritage for future generations. On Jun. 15, the [Oregon Chapter sent a letter](#) urging the Joint Committee on Ways and Means to support Oregon House Bill 2213-A – Establishes Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund. *CAC Contact:* [Stephen Kafoury](#)

Western Section submits letter on National Monuments and Marine National Monuments – In response to Executive Orders 13792 and 13795, the U.S. Department of the Interior is considering abolishing or reducing the size of 27 National Monuments and Marine National Monuments designated or expanded since 1996 under the Antiquities Act of 1906. The Western Section, in collaboration with and with support from its member Chapters, [submitted a letter](#) opposing this effort and requested that these National Monuments be retained in their current size and protection. The Section encourages its Chapters to revise the letter to adapt it to their specific geographic area and submit it on behalf of their Chapter, as well as revising and submitting it for your own personal comment (as a scientist, outdoorsman, parent, etc.) *CAC Contact:* [Kelly Holland](#)

Wyoming Chapter submits comments on Chapter 60 Regulations – “Raising Sage-grouse on Private Game Bird Farms” – [Enrolled Act 91](#) requires the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to promulgate rules to regulate commercial activity relating to greater sage-grouse by Sept. 1. On Jul. 24 the Wyoming Chapter [sent a letter](#) to the Wyoming Game and Fish Department with recommendations to improve Chapter 60 (Draft 5-22-17.12): Regulation Governing Greater Sage-grouse Raised on Private Game Bird Farms. This action by the Chapter follows [their action opposing legislation](#) that allows certified game farms to collect sage-grouse eggs. CAC Contact: [Tony Mong](#)

Issue Spotlight

TWS/Professional Societies included in House Appropriations report language – The U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Committee took fairly major action during the week of Jul. 17 in support of The Wildlife Society and other natural resource professional societies. In the [Committee's report](#), which accompanies the FY2018 Interior Appropriations bill, there is a section on page 7 titled “Professional Societies” which provides strong support for Department of Interior agency, EPA, and U.S. Forest Service employees to be engaged with The Wildlife Society and other natural resource societies. This language will be helpful to TWS and its members on a number of fronts, particularly in highlighting the Society to the upper levels of agencies and for encouraging employee participation in sections, chapters, and/or working groups. Staff Contact: [Keith Norris](#)

On the Horizon

Federal appropriations – The U.S. Congress is currently in the midst of negotiating federal appropriations for FY2018. Prior to the beginning of the August recess, the House passed four out of the 12 appropriations bills; the remaining bills have been approved by the House Appropriations Committee, but have yet to receive a full floor vote. None of the bills have been taken up for debate yet in the Senate. As with most fiscal years, Congress will likely not meet the deadline to have a budget signed by the President by Oct. 1 (the beginning of the fiscal year). If this deadline is not met, Congress may pass a Continuing Resolution (CR) to avoid a government shutdown. Read TWS' new [Policy Brief](#) for more information on the United States Congressional Appropriations Process. Staff Contact: [Caroline Murphy](#)

TWS 2017 Annual Conference and CAN Annual Meeting – Registration is still 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 – Tuesday, September 26 from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm. Visit the [conference website](#) for more information. Staff Contact: [Mariah Simmons](#)

TWS Policy News

Sage Grouse – On Jun. 8 Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke signed Secretarial Order 3353 that established a Sage-Grouse Review Team to work on improving greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) conservation efforts and enhance collaboration between state and federal conservation agencies and organizations. On Jul. 20 TWS [sent a letter](#) supporting the efforts to enhance cooperation and collaboration on this issue, but emphasized that practices such as captive breeding have no scientific role in the science-based management of the greater sage-grouse. As highlighted in a [letter by the Wyoming Chapter](#), using captive breeding is not an approach currently supported by the scientific literature for this species. The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies recently produced two white papers concerning the issues surrounding greater sage-grouse management – one on [science-based management](#) and one on [captive breeding](#). *Staff Contact: [Keith Norris](#)*

Federal Policy Issues

HELP for Wildlife Act – The Hunting Heritage and Environmental Legacy Preservation for Wildlife Act (HELP for Wildlife Act), S.1514, introduced by Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY) at the end of June, is [making its way through the Senate](#). The bill seeks to reauthorize several programs that contribute to conservation of wildlife. The bill also includes provisions to clarify language in other pieces of legislation to address concerns with baiting migratory birds, gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) management, and public target ranges. *Staff Contact: [Caroline Murphy](#)*

Recovering America's Wildlife Act – The “Recovering American Wildlife Act” is slated to be reintroduced early this autumn. This bill, which was first introduced in the 114th Congress, would [dedicate \\$1.3 billion annually to state fish and wildlife agencies](#) to help them implement their State Wildlife Action Plans, in addition to conservation education and law enforcement efforts. TWS has been working alongside the [National Wildlife Federation](#), the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, and the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation to help move this bill forward. The [Alliance for America's Fish & Wildlife](#) is the branded coalition campaign behind this effort. Be on the outlook for ways you can support this legislation later this year. *Staff Contact: [Keith Norris](#)*

Regional Policy Issues

Alberta's new wildlife permitting system – Alberta has a [new, online system](#) for applying for Wildlife Research Permits and Collection Licenses. Recently, the system was expanded to allow wildlife researchers doing work anywhere in the province to apply for their permits/licenses online rather than requiring paper applications. Relative to the previous system, the new system aims to streamline both the application process and the review process and make most amendments and renewals simpler. *Contact: [Delinda Ryerson](#)*

Ecosystem based management sessions in Alberta – [Three dialogue sessions](#) will be held throughout the upcoming months, asking for feedback from a range of stakeholders about how ecosystem-based management is being applied, and future opportunities and challenges with this approach to land management. The results from the session will be used to collate a report on stakeholder perspectives and will be shared with interested forestry companies, government policy makers, etc. The initiative is coordinated by the Healthy Landscapes program at fRI Research. Alberta Chapter members are encouraged to share their views on modern approaches to resource management. *Contact:* [Delinda Ryerson](#)

Toolbox

Tracking Congress Votes – Track Congress votes on each bill/amendment using [govtrack.us](#) and [votesmart.org](#). GovTrack makes it easy to look up a bill and see who voted for or against it, and also lets you know if a new piece of legislature has been introduced. VoteSmart allows you to search the voting record for a specific congressperson. *Staff Contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

NABCI State of the Birds report – The U.S. Committee of the North American Bird Conservation Initiative ([NABCI](#)) released the [State of the Birds 2017: Farm Bill Special Report](#) on Aug. 3. The Report is a collaborative effort of government agencies, conservation organizations, and bird initiatives showcasing the benefits of Farm Bill conservation programs for birds, farmers, and rural communities. The Report and the State of the Birds 2017 website outline NABCI's priorities to be considered in development of a new Farm Bill. *Staff Contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

Policy Briefs updated – [TWS' Policy Brief Series has been revised and expanded](#). Several policy briefs have been updated, including the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act Policy Brief and the Lacey Act Policy Brief. The Farm Bill Policy Briefs, which were previously divided among three documents, are now combined into one. In addition, there are several new policy briefs, such as the Endangered Species Act Policy Brief and the United States Congressional Appropriations Process Policy Brief. *Staff Contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

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:* [Mariah Simmons](#)

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 staff of your new CAC Chairs. Email

Mariah Simmons at MSimmons@wildlife.org with the new contact information to ensure continuity of communications in the Network.