



# The Wildlife Society's Conservation Affairs Network

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## Member Input Opportunity

**DOI Reorganization Plan** – TWS headquarters is seeking member questions, concerns, or ideas regarding the U.S. Department of the Interior's [proposed reorganization plans](#). Please fill out this [Google form](#) to submit anonymous member input. CAC contacts can also consider distributing this link to chapter and section membership. Member comments will be collated and guide TWS' communications with DOI officials on this subject. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

## CAC Activities

**Manitoba Chapter submits letter to Manitoba Hydro** – The [Manitoba Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) sent a [letter](#) to Manitoba Hydro on April 20, 2018, along with Nature Manitoba and Bird Studies Canada, expressing concern about the proposed Birtle Transmission Project and the potential negative environmental impacts that the routing decisions may have. The [project plan](#) is a new 230-kV transmission line from Birtle Station, south of the community of Birtle, to the Manitoba–Saskatchewan border. *CAC Contact:* [Brian Kiss](#)

**Illinois Chapter submits letter on supplemental feeding of deer** – The [Illinois Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) sent a [letter](#) to the Senate Agriculture Committee of the Illinois General Assembly on April 6, 2018 opposing [SB243](#) – “Wildlife CD-Deer Feed.” SB2493 amends the Wildlife Code to allow a person to feed deer outside of the hunting season, which the Chapter stated could result in increased risk to the state's wildlife populations by undermining efforts to prevent the spread of disease. *CAC Contact:* [Scott Meister](#)

**San Francisco Bay Area Chapter drafts letters on proposed border wall** – The [San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) developed an example letter for individual Chapter members to submit to their state representative(s) [expressing professional concerns with the wildlife impacts of the Administration's proposed Border Wall](#). *CAC Contact:* [Jeanne Chinn](#)

**Organization units draft letters in support of Recovering America's Wildlife Act** – Chapters and sections are continuing to push their congressional delegations to sign on as cosponsors to the [Recovering America's Wildlife Act \(H.R. 4647\)](#). Most recently, the Northeast Section of The Wildlife Society sent request [letters](#) to the NJ Congressional delegation regarding potential cosponsorship and sent [thank you letters](#) to member offices that had already signed on. The NE Section is now in the process of working with other chapters to coordinate efforts throughout the rest of the section. Other organization units, such as the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of The

Wildlife Society, have provided a [form letter](#) for their membership to send along to their congressional delegation.

CAC Contact: [Eric Schradling](#) (NE Section), [Jeanne Chinn](#) (SF Bay Area Chapter)

**TWS submits Interior, Agriculture appropriations testimonies** – The Wildlife Society submitted FY2019 House and Senate testimony in support of robust funding for specific [Interior](#) and [Agriculture](#) programs relevant to the work of federal and federally-partnered wildlife professionals. These programs include the USFWS [State & Tribal Wildlife Grants](#) Program (\$70 million TWS request), USFS Research and Development Program (\$307 million TWS request), USGS Cooperative Research Units program (\$24 million TWS request), and Wildlife Services Wildlife Damage Management program (\$110 million TWS request). TWS will continue reaching out to Congressional offices via written and oral correspondence as appropriators work to draft FY2019 spending bills. Staff Contact: [Caroline Murphy](#)

## Federal Updates

**2018 Farm Bill language released** – Draft language for the 2018 Farm Bill, also known as the “Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018” ([H.R. 2](#)), was [released by the House Agriculture Committee](#) in mid-April, and is expected to be voted on by the full House the week of May 14. [Title II](#) of this legislation, which deals with funding and reauthorization of USDA private lands conservation programs, is slated for big changes from the last farm bill [finalized in 2014](#). The changes proposed include an acreage cap increase to the Conservation Reserve Program, a sunset of the Conservation Stewardship Program, and an increase in funding to the Environmental Quality Incentive Program. The bill in its current form is unlikely to ever see the President’s pen, with the House version still needing to undergo floor debate and the Senate expected to draft its own version. Ultimately, disagreements over issues including proposed modifications to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, will likely result in a one-year extension of the 2014 Farm Bill before it expires at the end of September.

Staff Contact: [Caroline Murphy](#)

**Senate Dear Colleague Letter finishes with 45 signatures; thank you!** – The Senate Dear Colleague Letter, led by Senators Whitehouse (D-RI) and Crapo (R-CA), requesting fellow members of Congress support robust funding for the [State and Tribal Wildlife Grants](#) program has finished up with 45 Senators as signatories. Thank you to all organization units and members that sent in requests to Senate offices to sign this letter. The push to sign-onto this letter coincided with an April 11 congressional fly-in supporting STWG in which several state agency staff and TWS members advocated on behalf of the program. Staff Contact: [Caroline Murphy](#)

**Recovering America’s Wildlife Act soon to drop in Senate** – With 45 representatives and counting signed-on as cosponsors of the [Recovering America’s Wildlife Act \(H.R. 4647\)](#), we are expecting companion legislation to drop in the Senate within the next week or so. Keep your

eyes peeled for email guidance coming out from TWS headquarters on Senate messaging once we have confirmation of the legislation dropping. Also be sure to keep checking back to the [Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife](#) Google Drive [toolkit](#) and the TWS [Dropbox](#) for more resources and organization unit updates. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

***BLM Releases Wild Horse and Burro Management Plan*** – A [report](#) by the Bureau of Land Management's Wild Horse and Burro Management program detailing four proposed options to reach ecologically sustainable levels of on-range horses and burros over the next 6-12 years was sent to Congress in late April. This plan came only after the Bureau endured the continued scorn of Congress for failing to meet the deadline for submitting the report, which was initially tasked to the Bureau in the FY 2017 spending package. TWS headquarters staff will be evaluating the options provided and talking with partners in order to figure out next steps as Congress digests the report language. *Staff Contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

## Tools

***Draft position statement released for member review*** – TWS Council has released a new Draft Position Statement for member review titled [Incorporating Wildlife Needs in Land Management Plans](#). Organization units and individual members are encouraged to submit suggested edits and comments on this draft position statement during the 60-day member review period. Any comments submitted will be compiled and considered by TWS Council before the final position statement is published. Comments are due to [laura@wildlife.org](mailto:laura@wildlife.org) by **June 29**. *Staff Contact:* [Laura Bies](#)

## Opportunities

***Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board Call for Nominations*** – The [Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board](#), which provides recommendations to the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture on the management of free-roaming horses and burros on BLM and USFS lands, is [seeking nominations](#) to fill the board positions of public interest, wild horse and burro advocacy, and veterinary medicine. **Nominations are due by May 29. Please confer with TWS headquarters staff if your organization unit has an individual they would like to nominate.** *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

***Duck Stamp Contest Submissions Open*** – Starting on June 1, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will once again be accepting submissions for its Federal Duck Stamp [contest](#). The [Federal Duck Stamp](#) is required to be purchased annually by waterfowl hunters ages 16 and older. The contest has historically had a variety of guidelines for the artwork submitted, including the need for it to be a live portrayal of one of five pre-selected waterfowl. This year, the Service has [modified](#) the guidelines to also require that submissions “include a hunting-related accessory and/or portray the theme [of] Celebrating Our Waterfowl Hunting Heritage.” Submissions can be submitted to the Service between June 1 and August 15.

***CWD Program Standards Comment Period Extended*** – USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services recently announced an [extension](#) of the comment period for its revised Chronic Wasting Disease Herd Certification Program Standards until **May 30**. APHIS’ Herd Certification Program is a voluntary program that states and captive cervid owners participate in with the goal of minimizing the risk of transmission of Chronic Wasting Disease. The original program standard [review period](#) only lasted for 30 days until April 30. In response, TWS alongside several conservation organizations [requested an extension](#) to the comment period. TWS headquarters is looking to submit comments on these revised standards in the coming days, and encourages organization units and members to reach out to headquarters with input.  
*Staff Contact: [Caroline Murphy](#)*

## **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 organization 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 organization unit volunteers, be sure to update TWS staff of your new CAC Chairs. Email Mariah Simmons at [MSimmons@wildlife.org](mailto:MSimmons@wildlife.org) with the new contact information to ensure continuity of communications in the Network.