



The Wildlife Society's Conservation Affairs Network

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Member Input Opportunities

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](#)

Draft position statement member review – The Wildlife Society's Council recently approved the draft position statement [Incorporating Wildlife Needs in Land Management Plans](#) for member review. We are asking members to send along their comments on the draft position statement for consideration within the final position statement by **June 29 COB**. Comments can be sent to laura@wildlife.org. *Staff contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

CAC Activities

Illinois Chapter submits additional letters on supplemental feeding of deer – The [Illinois Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) submitted [letters](#) to the [Illinois Agriculture and Conservation Committee](#) and the [Illinois House of Representatives](#) on May 21 and May 22, 2018, respectively, opposing [SB2493](#) and House Amendment No. 1 – “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 diseases. *CAC Contact:* [Scott Meister](#)

Manitoba Chapter submits letter on Bill 7, The Sustainable Watersheds Act – The [Manitoba Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) [provided comments](#) to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs on May 7, 2018 with respect to Bill 7 – The Sustainable Watersheds Act. While supportive of Bill 7 overall, the Chapter's comments focus primarily on Part 4 – the Water Rights Act. The Bill includes several clauses that are important to wetland conservation and protection, which are noted in the letter. The Manitoba Chapter commended the government for showing leadership with this important legislation. *CAC Contact:* [Brian Kiss](#)

North Carolina Chapter submits letter to protect Sandy Bottom Preserve – The [North Carolina Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) [submitted a letter](#) to the North Carolina Department of Transportation on May 29, 2018. The Department is currently proposing a project to widen NC 191 to multiple lanes through part of Sandy Bottom Preserve in western NC. The North Carolina

Chapter has requested that the NCDOT project manager consider using a spanned elevated highway to protect the preserve. The Chapter encourages all members to write their own letters to the project manager as the more letters of concern the NCDOT receives, the more likely they will take heed to the Chapter's suggestion. *CAC Contact:* [Rachael Urbanek](#)

Southwest Section and Western Section submit joint letter on proposed border wall – The [Southwest](#) and [Western](#) Sections of The Wildlife Society [submitted letters](#) to members of Congress from their region on May 12, 2018. The Sections [expressed](#) their concerns regarding the ecological impacts of the proposed border wall and requested that border security be implemented with consideration for the impacts to important wildlife species and their habitats, reiterating several policy recommendations that are included in The Wildlife Society's position statement on "[The Impact of Border Security Measures on Wildlife.](#)"

CAC Contacts: [Jim Ramakka](#), Southwest Section, and [Kelly Holland](#), Western Section

TWS coordinates with working groups to submit CWD Herd Certification Program Standards comments – The Wildlife Society worked alongside the [Wildlife Diseases](#) and the [Hunting, Trapping, and Conservation](#) Working Groups to submit [comments](#) on [proposed changes](#) to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's Chronic Wasting Disease Herd Certification Program Standards. The CWD Herd Certification Program is a national program that works with states, tribes, and captive deer farms to meet a set of voluntary standards in order to allow for transfer of cervids across state lines and minimize the risk of CWD transmission. TWS' concerns include inadequate fencing, quarantine, and captive animal identification requirements.

Staff Contact: [Caroline Murphy](#)

Texas Chapter submits comments on CWD Herd Certification Program Standards – The [Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) also submitted [comments](#) on the proposed changes to the CWD Herd Certification Program Standards. These comments emphasized the importance of wild cervids to the state of Texas and detailed several concerns with the proposed changes. Many of these concerns aligned with comments made by TWS and the sportsmen and women's community, including concerns with herd depopulation standards and disease testing requirements. *CAC Contact:* [Romey Swanson](#)

TWS leads letter in support of USFS R&D - The Wildlife Society and Society of American Foresters submitted [letters](#) in support of [adequate funding](#) for US Forest Service Research and Development program areas in FY 2019. The letters sent to House and Senate appropriators include sign-ons from multiple professional societies and conservation, forestry, and sportsmen and women's organization. This broad base of support underscores the many applications for USFS R&D, including drought resilience, invasive species management, and wildlife disease prevention. The House appropriations language [recently released](#) by the House Interior

Appropriations subcommittee includes \$297 million for USFS R&D, \$10 million below the request detailed in this letter. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

Federal Updates

Recovering America's Wildlife Act Cosponsor List Grows – The [Recovering America's Wildlife Act \(H.R. 4647\)](#) has now reached 57 cosponsors in the U.S. House of Representatives. Please continue thanking cosponsors via email and [social media](#) correspondence using the hashtags #RAWA and #RecoverWildlife. See below for a list cosponsors added since May 1:

Rep. Sinema, Kyrsten (D-AZ)

Rep. DeFazio, Peter (D-OR)

Rep. Radewagen, Amata Coleman (R-AS)

Rep. Curbelo, Carlos (R-FL)

Rep. Cartwright, Matt (D-PA)

Rep. Marshall, Roger (R-KS)

Rep. Costello, Ryan (R-PA)

Rep. Schiff, Adam (D-CA)

Rep. Smith, Jason (R-MO)

Rep. Stivers, Steve (R-OH)

Rep. Knight, Stephen (R-CA)

Rep. Bergman, Jack (R-MI)

TWS and our partners are actively working to increase the number of House cosponsors with the goal of reaching 100 cosponsors. This will put the legislation in a comfortable position that encourages a full House Natural Resources Committee hearing. Please consider **sending a letter of support from your organization unit** to Representatives in your area that have yet to [cosponsor](#) (See examples from other organization units [here](#)). TWS staff is available to provide the email addresses of environmental staffers in Congressional offices for ease of sending letters. In addition, your unit can easily show their support for this legislation by [signing onto](#) the National Wildlife Federation's [letter of support](#). There are currently more than 30 organization units signed onto this letter.

We are awaiting introduction of a bill in the Senate. When that happens, chapters and sections are encouraged to take [action encouraging support in the Senate](#).

It is also helpful to Congressional offices to [hear directly](#) from their constituents. You can help in this effort by sending along a request for members of your organization unit to send constituent letters of support (see examples from other organization units [here](#)).

TWS will also be participating in a Congressional briefing on the [Reversing America's Wildlife Crisis](#) report on **June 21 from 9 am to 10 am**. This [report](#) details the successes in proactive conservation programs and the need for additional funding to on-the-ground conservation through the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

FY 2019 Appropriations Bills Advancing – The end of FY2018 is rapidly approaching with Congress aiming to have a FY2019 appropriations package completed before the new year

begins on October 1. The House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee [released](#) its FY2019 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies [language](#), which is set to go through full House Appropriations Committee markup this week. The legislation and accompanying [report language](#) include level funding for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program (\$63.5 M), a \$1.9 million increase for the USGS Cooperative Research Units program (\$18.6 M), and a \$2 million increase for North American Wetlands Conservation Act grants (\$42 M). The Senate Interior Appropriations language has yet to be released, but a markup is expected in the chamber within the next few weeks. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

2018 Farm Bill language fails to pass House – The 2018 Farm Bill [failed](#) to pass the U.S. House of Representatives in late May by a vote of 198-213. Political lines sunk the legislation, with all Democrats and 30 Republicans voting against it. Most Democrats and moderate Republicans who voted against it had concerns with changes the legislation would make to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, while some conservative Republicans hoped to sink the legislation in order to extract a vote on immigration reform out of House leadership. The withholding of votes appears to have been successful, with House leadership hoping to vote on immigration packages within the next couple weeks before taking another turn at the House’s Farm Bill language. The Senate’s version of the 2018 Farm Bill is expected to be released as early as this week. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

Organization Unit Opportunities

Sage grouse EIS comment periods open – The Department of the Interior has just [released](#) six draft Environmental Impact Statements and accompanying resource management plan amendments to modify the 2015 greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) conservation plans. These plans, which resulted in a decision to [not list](#) the species under the Endangered Species Act in 2015, underwent an amendment process as a result of a secretarial order released by Secretary Zinke, which ordered a review of the plans to ensure they were compatible with state efforts. Comments on the [Oregon](#), [Colorado](#), [Idaho](#), [Utah](#), [Wyoming](#) and [Nevada and Northeastern California](#) EIS drafts are due by **August 2**.

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 with the new contact information to ensure continuity of communications in the Network.