



The Wildlife Society's Conservation Affairs Network

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CAC Activities

Illinois Chapter supports successful veto of SB2493 – The [Illinois Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) previously sent several letters to Illinois Governor Rauner, urging him to veto [SB2493, legislation that would allow deer feeding](#). The Chapter was concerned that it could result in increased risk to the state's wildlife populations by undermining efforts to prevent the spread of diseases. The Governor [vetoed the legislation on September 26](#). CAC Contact: [Scott Meister](#)

Organization units continue push for RAWA – Several organization units have begun or continued outreach to their members of Congress requesting cosponsorship of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act ([H.R. 4647](#); [S. 3223](#)). Recent organization unit engagement to Senators requesting support for the legislation with the addition of a dedicated conservation funding component include the [New Jersey Chapter](#), the Northeast Section ([thank you letter](#); [request letter](#)), the [Arizona Chapter](#), and the [Maryland-Delaware Chapter](#). In late September, the Maryland-Delaware Chapter additionally sent along [requests](#) to their state's House delegation requesting cosponsorship. Previous House engagement conducted by the [Maine Chapter](#) has also directly resulted in a new House cosponsor – Representative Chellie Pingree (D-ME). CAC Contacts: [Lisa Clark](#) (NJ); [Eric Schradling](#) (NE Section); [Jon Hanna](#) (AZ); [Rob Gano](#) (MD-DE); [Rodney Kelshaw](#) (ME)

Nebraska Chapter objects to the Application for the Platte Republican Interbasin Transfer Project – The [Nebraska Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) [submitted a letter](#) to the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources Director Jeff Fassett on August 15, 2018, expressing their objection to this project. The Chapter supports responsible water decision-making in Nebraska to provide habitat for fisheries and wildlife, but has concerns regarding insufficient consideration given to environmental and recreational impacts of this transfer in the analysis provided with the application. CAC Contact: [Eric Zach](#)

TWS submits ESA comments in coordination with CAN, Working Group leaders – The Wildlife Society submitted [comments](#) in response to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service regulatory [proposals](#) to modify the listing, delisting, critical habitat designation, and interagency consultation processes of the [Endangered Species Act](#). The creation of these [comments](#) was done in coordination with several Section, Chapter, and Working Group leaders, including several Section CAC Chairs that worked to collate expert comments from members in their unit. Staff Contact: [Caroline Murphy](#)

Increasing the Society's effectiveness through communication and collaboration

Federal Updates

Recovering America's Wildlife Act reaches 100 cosponsors – The House version of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act has now [reached the milestone](#) TWS and organization units have been working towards since the beginning of this year – [100 cosponsors](#). This cosponsor count puts the legislation in a better position for the post-election lame duck session of Congress. The House is expected to be on recess until November 13, providing all members time to campaign. Congressional outreach during this time is still incredibly important though, as it provides the opportunity for more cosponsors to be added to the legislation prior to any deals that may occur during the lame duck. *Staff contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

Fiscal Year 2018 ends, LWCF, Farm Bill, FY19 Appropriations still to come – Both the [Farm Bill](#) and the [Land and Water Conservation Fund](#) expired on September 30 at the end of FY2018, with Congress failing to pass new authorizing packages. Ongoing private land conservation programs in the now-expired Farm Bill will not see dramatic differences in function as these programs are funded through the end of this year; new leases and contracts will be put on hold, however.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund lapse does not stop existing funds from going to local, state, and national projects, but will prevent new funds from being deposited into the LWCF account. The House Natural Resources Committee made a surprise move to vote in support of permanent reauthorization of LWCF in September, and the Senate Energy & Natural Resource Committee voted on Oct. 2 to also reauthorize LWCF – with the addition of dedicated funding.

With many of the FY19 [appropriations bills](#) still to be finalized, Congress approved a Continuing Resolution to provide current levels of government funding for most agencies through December 7. *Staff contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

P-R Modernization Passes House – The “Modernizing the Pittman-Robertson Fund for Tomorrow's Needs Act” ([H.R. 2591](#)) passed the U.S. House of Representatives in mid-September. The bill allows states to use [Wildlife Restoration Account](#) funds to build and maintain shooting ranges, and for communications and marketing efforts aimed at recruiting and retaining hunters and recreational shooters. The Wildlife Society has expressed [concern](#) with this legislation due to its [potential effects](#) in siphoning already limited resources for science-based management and conservation efforts. *Staff Contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

GYE Grizzly Bears back on Endangered Species List – The U.S. District Court for the District of Montana has ruled against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's 2017 [decision](#) to delist the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem population of grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*). The court found that USFWS exceeded its authority when it delisted the population due to potential impacts not considered to the remainder of the listed grizzlies throughout the rest of the country.

This is a similar legal argument to the one that has been playing out over gray wolf management. A USFWS attempt to delist the western Great Lakes population of the gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) was [struck down](#) by the U.S. Court of Appeals due to delisting of the population not being adequately considered for the overall conservation efforts of other wolf populations.

Staff Contact: [Caroline Murphy](#)

Tools

AFWA Adopts CWD BMPs, Reno Conference Resolution – The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies has [adopted a new resource](#) entitled “[Best Management Practices for Prevention, Surveillance, and Management of Chronic Wasting Disease](#)”. AFWA, TWS’ [Wildlife Disease Working Group](#) and the American Association of Wildlife Veterinarians will present a [symposium](#) at TWS’ [annual conference](#) this month about these best management practices.

At their annual conference in September, AFWA also passed a [resolution](#) encouraging participation in the first-ever joint conference of TWS and the American Fisheries Society taking place next [September-October 2019](#) in Reno, NV. *Staff Contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

Member and Organization Unit Opportunities

TWS 2018 Annual Conference and CAN Annual Meeting – The Conservation Affairs Network will have a meeting during The Wildlife Society’s Annual Conference in Cleveland, Ohio – Monday, October 8 from 8:00 am – 10:00 am. Download the agenda [here](#) and if there are items your organization unit would like included for discussion on the agenda please let Mariah know. Visit the [conference website](#) for more information. *Staff Contact:* [Mariah Simmons](#)

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.