



The Wildlife Society's Conservation Affairs Network

November 2018, Volume 4, Issue 11

CAC Activities

New Jersey Chapter submits letter on changes to bear hunting on state-owned land – The [New Jersey Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) sent letters to [Governor Murphy](#) and [Commissioner McCabe](#) on September 27 requesting reconsideration of the closure of state-owned lands to bear hunting. The state's bear season opened October 8, and a recent Executive Order by the Governor closed bear hunting on state-owned lands. *CAC Contact:* [Lisa Clark](#)

Northwest Section sends RAWA support letters to congressional delegation – The [Northwest Section of The Wildlife Society](#) has submitted [House](#) and [Senate](#) letters to members of their congressional delegation that have yet to cosponsor the [Recovering America's Wildlife Act](#). The Section also sent letter templates and relevant congressional email addresses to chapters in the NW Section looking to get engaged in this effort. *CAC Contact:* [Becca Much](#)

Conservation Affairs Network meets at TWS Annual Conference – The Conservation Affairs Network met on Monday, October 8 from 8:00 am – 10:00 am during The Wildlife Society's Annual Conference in Cleveland, Ohio. View the meeting minutes [here](#).

Units submit input on TWS 2019-2021 policy priorities – Several chapters, sections, and working groups submitted ideas to help guide TWS' policy priorities for January 2019-January 2021. TWS Council's Policy Priorities ad hoc Committee will review this input and make final recommendations to TWS' Council in the coming months. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

Federal Updates

New USFWS leadership named – President Trump recently [announced](#) his intent to nominate [Aurelia Skipwith](#) to be Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Skipwith is the current Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks at the Department of the Interior, an office that oversees broad policy and management decisions of USFWS and the National Park Service. The USFWS Director position, which requires Senate confirmation, has been vacant since the beginning of the Trump Administration. Margaret Everson, currently the chief policy officer at Ducks Unlimited, has been selected as the next principal deputy director at USFWS. This [currently vacant](#) position does not require Senate confirmation, and Everson will begin this post in mid-November. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

USFS opens comment period on proposed sage-grouse plan revisions – The U.S. Forest Service opened a comment period on its [proposed revisions](#) to the agency’s 2015 greater sage-grouse [management plans](#). These plans were [first finalized](#) in 2015 by USFS and the Bureau of Land Management, contributing to a decision to not list the species under the Endangered Species Act. Proposed modifications to these plans have occurred as a result of a June 2017 [Secretarial Order](#) that prompted a reevaluation of the plans and their compatibility with state management efforts. The comment period for the USFS proposal is [open](#) until **January 3, 2019**. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

Recovering America’s Wildlife Act outlook – The House version of the [Recovering America’s Wildlife Act \(H.R. 4647\)](#) has hit 110 cosponsors as we approach the post-election “lame duck” session of Congress. This session, which will start on November 13 and last until the holidays, provides a chance for last-minute deal-making to occur on existing bills. At the end of this session, all bills not signed into law will be considered dead on the floor, and will need to be reintroduced in the next Congress. The most likely scenario for the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act to succeed in the lame duck is to wrap it into a larger natural resources package alongside language that would reauthorize the [Land and Water Conservation Fund](#) and provide [maintenance backlog funding](#) to the National Park system.

The [Senate version](#) of the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act ([S. 3223](#)) will be the subject of a hearing in the Environment and Public Works Committee on Thursday, November 15. This is a notable step for the legislation, and TWS and partner organizations will be continuing discussions with relevant Senate offices to stress the [importance](#) of including a *dedicated* funding mechanism in the Senate bill as currently exists in the House bill. Units that have yet to do so should **consider sending [letters](#) to your Senators requesting support for this legislation and support for a dedicated funding mechanism – especially if one of more of your Senators is on the [Environment and Public Works Committee](#)**. Ensuring that the need to include dedicated funding is understood by these Senators prior to November 15 will greatly increase its prospects for inclusion within the bill text. Requests for relevant Senate email addresses can be sent to cmurphy@wildlife.org. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

Tools

Council approves new position statement on land management – TWS Council held its annual fall meeting at The Wildlife Society’s 25th Annual Conference, during which time they approved a new position statement – [Incorporating Wildlife Needs in Land Management Plans](#). It was approved after incorporating member comments provided during a 60-day review period and has been posted on wildlife.org/position-statements. *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 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.