



The Wildlife Society's Conservation Affairs Network

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CAC Activities

Canadian Section of TWS submits documents on neonicotinoids – The [Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society](#) submitted a [letter](#) to the Pest Management Regulatory Agency on November 13, providing their perspective and recommendations on the Agency's decision to phase out certain neonicotinoid pesticides. The Section commends the Government of Canada for taking these steps and offered several recommendations to help ensure these decision-making processes are supported by science. The Section's Conservation Affairs Committee also developed a [briefing document](#), which provided background information and guidance for the Section to consider when deciding how to best engage. *CAC Contact:* [Chris Smith](#)

Illinois General Assembly motion to pass Senate Bill 2493 fails – The [Illinois Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) has been heavily engaged in the activity surrounding [SB2493](#) which would, in part, allow residents to feed white-tailed deer and thereby facilitate disease transmission and threaten the overall health of the deer herd. In mid-November, a motion was filed in the state senate to override the Governor's veto of the legislation. The Chapter responded, and on the next day the motion failed - with 34 yeas, 5 nays, 1 present, and 19 no-votes - as it did not meet the required three-fifths majority. The bill is now dead for this session. *CAC Contact:* [Scott Meister](#)

Oklahoma Chapter submits comments on CWD – The [Oklahoma Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) submitted a [letter](#) to the Director of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation concerning the ODWC and the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry (ODAFF) Chronic Wasting Disease Response Strategy. The Chapter expressed their appreciation of the efforts of the ODWC and ODAFF to address this serious issue and also offered several recommendations that could potentially improve the prevention and management of CWD. *CAC Contact:* [Vicki Jackson](#)

Student chapters join Texas Alliance, RAWA efforts – Several student chapters have advocated for Recovering America's Wildlife Act, including the [Stephen F. Austin State University Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) in Texas. The student chapter was recently highlighted in their [school newspaper for their engagement and support of this important legislation](#). *CAC Contact:* [Romey Swanson](#), *Student Chapter Contact:* [Hope Shannon](#)

TWS and partners send letter in support of Invasive Fish and Wildlife Prevention Act reintroduction – The Wildlife Society alongside eight other organizations within the National Environmental Coalition on Invasive Species sent a [letter](#) in support of Representative Stefanik

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and Senator Gillibrand's recent reintroduction of the Invasive Fish and Wildlife Prevention Act ([S. 3210](#); [H. R. 6362](#)). This legislation would create a streamlined process for listing species as injurious under the [Lacey Act](#), provide USFWS with the explicit authority to regulate wildlife diseases, and create a live animal import fee in order to assist in funding invasive species prevention and response efforts. These bills are not expected to gain traction during the waning days of this Congress, but are intended as marker bills for reintroduction earlier in the next Congress. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

Federal Updates

Senate Environment and Public Works Committee holds hearing on wildlife conservation funding needs – The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee recently held an [oversight hearing](#) entitled “[Examining Funding Needs for Wildlife Conservation, Recovery, and Management](#)”. All of the witnesses at the hearing spoke broadly to the overarching need for increased wildlife conservation funding at the state and federal level. Two pieces of legislation brought up at the hearing included the [Recovering America's Wildlife Act \(S. 3223\)](#) and the Modernizing the Pittman-Robertson Fund for Tomorrow's Needs Act ([S. 1613](#)). TWS submitted testimony expressing support for S. 3223 and requested the addition of a dedicated funding mechanism within the bill text during any preceding committee markup. TWS' comments on S. 1613 also expressed support with a request that language permitting states to use up to 25% of Section 4(b) wildlife restoration funding for hunter recruitment and shooting range development be removed from the bill before further advancement through the Senate.

Staff Contact: [Caroline Murphy](#)

CWD funding bill introduced in Senate – Senators John Barrasso (R-WY), Doug Jones (D-AL), and Michael Bennett (D-CO) introduced the [Chronic Wasting Disease Transmission in Cervidae Study Act \(S. 3644\)](#). This legislation is a companion package to [H.R. 6272](#) introduced earlier this year in the House. The bill calls for the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a study on the spread and potential to prevent chronic wasting disease. The Wildlife Society previously expressed [support](#) for the House version of this legislation as well as other pieces of legislation that work to address the CWD crisis. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

Pending Legislative Business – There are still several pieces of legislation at play in Congress before the body adjourn for the year. Chief among them are the seven of twelve Fiscal Year 2019 [appropriations bills](#) that have yet to be resolved. Funding for a large chunk of the U.S government runs out on December 7, and expectations are that Congress will pass a Continuing Resolution package later this week that will continue existing funding levels until December 21. While the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies bill appears to be relatively noncontroversial, disagreements over the inclusion of funding for a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border have resulted in a prolonged legislative process, and uncertainty on whether or not President Trump will veto the package if the wall funding component is deemed unsatisfactory.

The 2018 [Farm Bill](#) appears to be on a much rosier track. The proposed final bill text, prepared by House and Senate negotiators, is expected to be released this week, with a vote planned as soon as possible. The previous Farm Bill, and the conservation programs included in it, [expired](#) at the end of FY2018.

Congressional schedules are being delayed due to the death and remembrance of former President George H.W. Bush. At this point in the session, attaching legislation to must-pass appropriations bills is one of the last political maneuvers available to get a bill across the finish line. Other noncontroversial bills that have a broad bipartisan base of support may also be able to get through via unanimous consent. This leaves efforts to pass the Recovering America's Wildlife Act ([H.R. 4647](#); [S.3223](#)) and other natural resource bills such as reauthorization of the [Land and Water Conservation Fund](#) and funding for the [National Park Service maintenance backlog](#) up in the air. To ensure that the Recovering America's Wildlife Act is able to start the next Congress from as strong of a position as possible, TWS encourages organization unit [engagement](#) with members of Congress on this legislation through the remainder of the session. If you have questions on outreach to specific members, please email cmurphy@wildlife.org.
Staff Contact: [Caroline Murphy](#)

Tools

TWS staff is in the process of reviewing organization unit feedback on TWS' policy priorities for 2019-2021. A final decision on policy priorities will be made by Council by early January 2019. *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 with the new contact information to ensure continuity of communications in the Network.