Conservation Affairs Network Policy Toolkit

INTRODUCTION

The mission of The Wildlife Society is to inspire, empower, and enable wildlife professionals to sustain wildlife populations and habitats through science-based management and conservation. The Society works toward that mission, in part, by engaging in the policy arena to ensure wildlife-related policies enacted by governmental agencies and legislatures are scientifically-based and further the wildlife profession's objective of conservation.

The Wildlife Society has long been engaged in the policy arena. TWS Bylaws were revised in 1957 to permit Council the authority to develop resolutions on wildlife policy concerns. Staff at TWS has been involved in tracking wildlife legislation at the federal level since 1972. The membership approved the hiring of the Society's first Policy Director in 1991. These actions laid the foundation for what has now become the Government Affairs program.

The Government Affairs program has a primary objective of ensuring that wildlife professionals and the knowledge they provide, play an active role in the formation of wildlife management and conservation policies, laws, and regulations, thereby ensuring that these are scientifically-based and practical. Part of the process for achieving this goal is engaging our membership in policy issues – at the national, regional, and local scales.

Policy activities and initiatives pursued by TWS and our members are grounded in wildlife science. We utilize the vast scientific knowledge and expertise within our membership to write letters, submit comments, and otherwise advocate on behalf of all wildlife professionals and advance the goal of the wildlife profession – the conservation of our wildlife resources.

This policy toolkit is intended to provide our TWS members, and in particular those engaged within the Conservation Affairs Network, with some guidance and knowledge regarding policy advocacy. With this understanding, our members will be better able to engage in the policy arena and do their part to advance the mission of TWS.

It is our hope to periodically add to and revise the information in this document to make it most useful to our membership. If you have suggestions for content, or any questions about engaging in policy activities or the Conservation Affairs Network with your TWS Chapter or Section, please contact TWS Government Affairs staff at policy@wildlife.org.

This toolkit will provide you with a basic knowledge of the policy process and advocacy techniques to ensure you are ready to effectively engage and make the voice of wildlife professionals heard.

Several sections of the first edition of this guide were adapted from the CHADD Advocacy Manual, with additional perspectives from TWS Government Affairs staff and multiple other sources.

2022 POLICY TOOLKIT REVISION SUMMARY

This revised edition of TWS' Conservation Affairs Network (CAN) Policy Toolkit reflects eight years of growth and development of the CAN, originally launched in 2014. Revisions to the original toolkit reflect the collective expertise of TWS staff, as well as members across North America who have lent their time and professional expertise to advance wildlife conservation policy issues. The information below summarizes content included in the revisions to the Policy Toolkit.

- **Additional tools to support the formation and operation of Conservation Affairs Committees (CACs).** Section 1 of the toolkit has been expanded to include a new chapter providing guidance on establishing a new Conservation Affairs Committee within TWS organization units. Chapter 1.3 has also been updated to include suggestions for engaging unit members and students in CAC activities. A template CAC Terms of Reference is included in a new toolkit appendix.
- **Expanded suggestions for setting policy priorities for your CAC.** Chapter 2.3 now provides information on the steps TWS takes to set federal policy priorities, and how those steps can be applied at the local or regional level to help focus CAC policy engagement.
- **Enhanced guidance for engaging with decision makers and taking action on wildlife conservation policy.** Section 3 has been expanded to include guidance on effective virtual meetings with decision makers, as well as two new chapters providing tips and scripts to use when calling legislative offices and suggestions for effective commenting on agency rulemaking.
- **Additional information on TWS' policy resources.** Section 4 now includes background information on TWS' Policy Library and Action Centers, as well as suggestions on how to incorporate these resources into your CAC's policy engagement.
- **Step-by-step guidance on Canadian federal policy processes.** Section 5 includes two new chapters crafted in collaboration with Canadian Section CAC members focused on the Canadian federal legislative and budgeting processes, as well as suggestions on how CACs can engage with these processes.
- **New and updated supplemental resources in the Policy Toolkit Appendices.**

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SECTION 1: CONSERVATION AFFAIRS NETWORK FRAMEWORK

1.1 CONSERVATION AFFAIRS NETWORK OVERVIEW

Increasing the Society's effectiveness in wildlife conservation policy through communication and collaboration

The Conservation Affairs Network engages and unifies the efforts of The Wildlife Society, its 200+ units, and more than 15,000 professional wildlife biologists, managers, and educators dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship.

The Network creates a venue for streamlined communication, collaboration, and cooperation on policy matters important to wildlife professionals. This initiative gives wildlife professionals an effective method for bringing their valuable and crucial perspectives into the policy process, to impact decisions made by legislatures and agencies for the betterment of wildlife conservation, the wildlife profession, and TWS members.

The Network operates through Conservation Affairs Committees (CACs) established within TWS Sections and Chapters. These committees are charged with identifying and addressing policy priorities within their region, and communicating their activities and policy needs to other CACs and TWS Staff. CACs and TWS Staff support each other in their policy activities, lending experience and expertise to enhance efforts.

Through the Conservation Affairs Network, you have the strength and support of TWS' entire network of wildlife professionals behind you in order to promote policies that are soundly based in the scientific understandings and principles of wildlife ecology.

You can become involved in the Conservation Affairs Network by contacting your TWS Chapter or Section Conservation Affairs Committee (CAC) or Executive Board. If your unit does not yet have a Conservation Affairs Committee, you can learn more about establishing a new CAC in Section 1.2.

The Wildlife Society's
Conservation Affairs Network

Chapter CACs

Subunits

Section CAC

Communicate regularly within and between via:

- Bi-monthly Newsletters
- TWS-CAN Website
- Emails, Conference Calls
- Annual Conference Workshop
- WPN, Wildlifer, TWP, Action Alerts

TWS GAP program

Collaborate and coordinate in these activities at local, regional, and national levels

- Identification of current and upcoming wildlife conservation policy issues
- Development of Position Statements regarding wildlife conservation issues
- Taking policy actions: writing letters, delivering testimony, meeting with decision makers, etc.
- Engagement of membership in policy activities
- Establishment of partnerships and coalitions to further TWS policy positions

Collaboration & Coordination:

- Unified TWS voice
- Efficient and effective policy actions
- Stronger engagement at all levels of gov't

Greater impact on decisions made by legislatures and agencies for betterment of wildlife conservation, wildlife profession, and TWS membership

1.2 CONSERVATION AFFAIRS COMMITTEES

Conservation Affairs Committees (CACs) within TWS Sections and Chapters help maximize unit members' expertise and efforts when advocating for wildlife policy. The success and effectiveness of the Conservation Affairs Network relies on the integration and activities of Conservation Affairs Committees within TWS Sections and Chapters. The integration of unit CACs into the overall framework of the Conservation Affairs Network allows TWS staff to distribute essential communication and provide coordination assistance on policy issues and activities across North America.

CAC engagement in the Conservation Affairs Network is a mutualistic relationship – an individual CAC benefits from the larger network of support, experience and policy knowledge while also providing support, experience, and knowledge to other CACs. The end result is more effective involvement in wildlife policy topics at all levels of government.

Roles and Responsibilities of a CAC

Conservation Affairs Committees are established by TWS organization units at both the Section and Chapter level. Most CACs are charged with:

- Tracking major policy issues at state/provincial, regional, and national levels
- Advising their local unit's executive committee on recommended policy advocacy actions and/or taking policy actions as directed by the executive committee
- Participating in state/provincial and/or regional level partnerships and coalitions and related advocacy events
- Drafting position statements or resolutions to be approved by their executive committee
- Communicating with and engaging their TWS organization unit membership in policy activities

Establishing a CAC

There are several options available to Sections and Chapters looking to establish a formal CAC as part of their operations. Suggested approaches and relevant template language are included below and in the appendices of the Toolkit. Importantly, the duties, procedures, and framework of CACs are not one size fits all. Members interested in formally establishing a CAC within their local organization unit should consider the needs, interests, and expertise of other unit members. Prior to, or in lieu of, revisions to unit bylaws, a CAC may also be established as an ad-hoc committee or group within the unit. Under these scenarios the CAC will still benefit from a clear framework (e.g. a terms of reference document) to guide policy activities.

Incorporating a CAC into Unit Bylaws

If your unit's officers would like to create a CAC within unit bylaws:

1. Prepare a copy of your unit bylaws with proposed changes to create your CAC included in track changes (see suggested template language below).
2. Send Mariah Byers (msimmons@wildlife.org) a copy of your proposed revisions to your bylaws to ensure they're in compliance with the model bylaws approved by TWS Council.

3. Notify unit members of the proposed changes to bylaws at least 30 days prior to voting on the bylaws.
4. After voting, if changes to the bylaws are approved, send them to Mariah to issue an approval letter on behalf of TWS Council. Revisions to bylaws must be approved by the Society before becoming effective.

Template bylaws language to create a Conservation Affairs Committee:

> Article VII: Committees
> Section 2: Duties of Standing Committees
> Clause AA: Conservation Affairs Committee – This Committee reviews legislative proposals, administrative regulations, environmental assessments, impact statements, and other subjects or issues affecting wildlife, wildlife habitat, and wildlife professionals within the organizational areas of the [Section/Chapter], and makes recommendations to the Executive Board for any action that should be taken by the [Section/Chapter].

CAC Terms of Reference

You may choose to develop a Terms of Reference document to better define the duties, objectives, and procedures relevant to your organization unit's CAC. This type of document allows for more detailed information on a CACs background and operations than is typically included in a unit's Bylaws or Operations Manual, and ensures that CAC objectives and priorities remain consistent over time. A template Terms of Reference is included in Appendix A, and can be modified as needed to meet the needs of individual CACs and their respective organization units.

CAC Framework and Member Roles

Suggested CAC positions and their associated duties are provided here, but CACs should feel free to customize their committee structure to fit the needs of their unit members. For some organization units, a single member willing to serve as CAC Chair may be sufficient. Other organization units will benefit from a team of members with specific expertise in a given geographic area or policy issue. Most importantly, you do not need to be a policy expert to play a role in your unit's CAC! Your expertise as a wildlife professional and your interest in advocating for wildlife conservation policy issues make you a valuable member of the Conservation Affairs Network. TWS staff are available to assist in determining the appropriate structure for your CAC.

Section CACs

Section CACs are typically led by a Chair and Vice Chair, and are composed of Chapter CAC Chairs and other members and topical experts interested in organizing on their region's policy issues. Section CAC Chairs (or Co-Chairs) serve as the liaison between Chapter CAC representatives and the executive officers of the Section. Regular duties of a Section CAC Chair include:

- Facilitating regular meetings and regular communications with Chapter CAC representatives
- Attending regular meetings with TWS staff to provide updates on policy issues/actions from across the Section, and conveying updates from TWS staff on national policy issues to Chapter CAC representatives
- Tracking priority policy issues within the defined scope of the Section

- Overseeing the process of creating and distributing comments, statements, policies, etc. in accordance with the bylaws and operations standards of the Section

The Section CAC's Vice Chair (or Co-Chair) assists the Chair in the operations of the CAC. They may serve in the Chair's capacity during meetings with Chapter CACs and/or TWS staff if the Chair is unavailable. Depending on the unit bylaws and/or Terms of Reference governing the CAC, the Vice Chair may be the immediate successor of the Chair. A Vice Chair or Co-Chair is not required for Section-level operations, but can be extremely beneficial in divisions of work load and ensuring adequate regional coverage.

Chapter representatives to the Section CAC are often the Chair of their Chapter's CAC, but may also be a member of the Chapter's Executive Board or another designee. They are expected to engage regularly with the Section CAC to provide updates on locally-relevant policy issues.

Chapter CACs

Chapter CACs are typically led by a Chair and are composed of topical and/or geographical area representatives and other interested members. The Chapters CAC's Chair (or Co-Chair) may be appointed by the Chapter's Executive Board or be a designated member of the Executive Board. Regular duties of the Chapter CAC Chair include:

- Serving as a liaison between the Chapter's Executive Board and the Section CAC on relevant policy issues and actions
- Participating in regular meetings of the Section CAC
- Maintaining regular communication with Chapter CAC members/representatives
- Tracking priority policy issues within the defined scope of the Chapter
- Overseeing the process of creating and distributing comments, statements, policies, etc. in accordance with the bylaws and operations standards of the Chapter

Chapters which support members from a large geographic area may consider a CAC structure that incorporates area representatives (e.g. a Rhode Island Representative to the New England Chapter). These representatives are responsible for keeping the Chapter CAC informed on policy issues within their geographic area and helping to identify subject matter experts within that area as needed. They should also serve as a lead when developing comments/statements/letters affecting their geographic area.

For Chapters with explicit policy priorities (see Section 2 for information on defining policy priorities), the CAC may also include designated topical representatives. These members are responsible for monitoring a specific policy issue that fits within the Chapter's policy priorities and keeping the Chapter CAC Chair updates on these issues. They should also serve as a lead when developing comments/statements/letters pertaining to their designated policy issue. A mix of geographic and topical representatives may also suit the needs of some Chapter CACs.

1.3 ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR CONSERVATION AFFAIRS COMMITTEES

Communicating Within and Among CACs

Communication is key to the strength of the Conservation Affairs Network and is what makes this initiative effective. Through regular communication, we are able to leverage the strength, expert knowledge, and policy experiences of other CACs and wildlife professionals across the entire TWS membership.

It is recommended that both Chapter and Section CACs have regular (monthly or bi-monthly) conference calls in order to coordinate policy activities and alert each other to policy actions. Regular email communication is also encouraged; you might consider establishing an email listserv or using digital messaging platforms such as Slack, Discord, or WhatsApp in order to facilitate quick communication among your committee.

CACs should also regularly communicate with TWS Government Affairs staff. TWS staff should be made aware of any policy activities that CACs undertake in order to provide assistance when necessary, ensure compliance with TWS policy positions, and share the work of your CAC with other units. TWS staff hosts a bi-monthly conference call between all Section CAC Chairs to facilitate communication and coordinate action between regions. The calls also provide an opportunity for CACs to stay up to date with national policy actions and needs. Policy updates and engagement opportunities are also broadcast across the CAN through a monthly newsletter. TWS staff are available to provide advice and assistance, and help coordinate the involvement of other wildlife experts – use this resource!

Be sure regular communication is a part of your CAC to maximize your efficiency and effectiveness in addressing policy concerns in your area.

Document Sharing and Editing Techniques

Development of position statements, letters, comments, etc. often necessitates rounds of editing by members of the entire committee. Committees need to ensure that each member is working on the most up-to-date version of the document. Several programs are available that assist with document sharing. Below are some ideas to help you organize and coordinate document sharing and editing when using Microsoft Word:

1. Use Track Changes: Microsoft Word allows users to use "track changes" and add comments to the document. This enables changes to be proposed without actually changing the document until they are accepted by the author.
2. Initiate "Track Changes" under the "Review" tab in Microsoft Word.
3. Reply-to-All: When emailing documents, and providing edits or comments, it is important that you choose the "Reply to All" function in your email. This will ensure that all interested parties receive and are aware of the most updated version of the document and will help keep editing and other communications efficient.
4. Naming files as YYYY.MM.DD_TOPIC_ DRAFT/FINAL_editorinitials.docx: Saving files with this manner will allow for easy sorting of all editions of the file, and can bring the most up-to-date version to the top of the list.
5. Example: 2014.06.30_CANToolkit_DRAFT_KN.docx

6. This style quickly indicates the most recent date the document was edited, what the document is, whether or not the document is finalized, and who provided the edits.
7. Use a file sharing program: Several programs are available that enable you to seamlessly share files without the need of email. Essentially, these programs create a shared hard drive between all of those users permitted access. When a file is added or updated by one user, it becomes instantly available to other users on the same shared folder.

   Suggested software includes:

   - Dropbox: operates like any other folder, allows you to share the folder with others. Multiple users can edit files, but only one user can have a file open for editing at any given time. Free, with limited file storage. Available for download: https://www.dropbox.com
   - Google Drive: operates through a Google account; allows you to upload and share files, or simply create files online. Multiple users can access and edit shared files simultaneously. Free, with limited file storage: https://www.drive.google.com
   - Microsoft OneDrive: functions in a similar manner to Dropbox. Free standalone access with limited file storage: https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/onedrive
   - Microsoft SharePoint: a program that offers a suite of file sharing and group organizing functionality; cost $5 per user per month: https://www.office.microsoft.com/en-us/sharepoint
   - Microsoft Teams: combines file sharing with group messaging and video conferencing capabilities. Free, with limited file storage: https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software

Engaging Unit Members in CAC Activities

Conservation Affairs Committees benefit from the engagement and expertise of broader unit membership in policy advocacy activities. Below are ideas and suggestions on how to communicate opportunities to engage with your CAC to TWS organization unit members in your area.

1. Provide a summary of CAC activities for publication in relevant Chapter and Section newsletters. This could include updates on local policy priorities, calls for member action on policy concerns, training opportunities, etc.
2. Host webinars or in-person meetings open to all unit members highlighting policy concerns in your area, or providing training on policy engagement for interested wildlife professionals. TWS staff is available to provide training opportunities for members in subject areas such as communicating with decision makers, engaging in the federal appropriations process, and providing comments on agency rulemaking.
3. Solicit feedback from unit members when composing letters and/or comments on rulemaking and priority policies.
4. Inform unit members of engagement opportunities in TWS' Action Center.

Supporting Student Member and Student Chapter Engagement with CACs

There are over 140 TWS Student Chapters across North America and Europe comprised of student members. Students and early career professionals have unique perspectives to offer on the impacts of policy issues affecting wildlife and wildlife professionals. Student Chapters are also well-positioned to engage in advocacy for campus-level policies that overlap with TWS' policy priorities (e.g. Lights Out initiatives and bird-safe building design on college and university campuses).

CACs may consider identifying student contacts at the Chapter or Section level to help disseminate information on policy engagement opportunities to other student members. Several TWS Chapters and Sections have a student affairs or relations committee which is responsible for maintaining communications with all Student Chapters in that area. Organization units may also have a Student Chapter representative on their elected board of officers. CACs may consider working with Student Chapter faculty advisors to develop policy engagement opportunities targeting the interests of their Chapter members. A current list of TWS Student Chapters can be found online.

Conservation Affairs Network Policy Toolkit

SECTION 2: POLICY ENGAGEMENT FOR THE WILDLIFE PROFESSIONAL

2.1 YOU ARE THE EXPERT AS A WILDLIFE PROFESSIONAL

Engaging in policy advocacy can often be an intimidating concept. It is not unusual to feel a bit anxious or nervous about the idea of asserting your opinion to those individuals who make big decisions that impact our country every day. You might think, "Why should they listen to me?"

But you are exactly the person policy creators and decision-makers want to hear from. As a wildlife professional, **you are the only one capable of explaining the realities of how their policies and decisions impact on-the-ground situations in wildlife conservation.** TWS advocates for the appropriate use of science in decision-making processes and supports its members' use of wildlife, ecological, and conservation science when engaging with policy issues. You have the specialized knowledge and information regarding wildlife science that legislators and agency administrators want – *and need* – to hear.

You do not need an in-depth understanding of the legal concepts and frameworks in order to be an effective advocate on behalf of your TWS Section or Chapter. Don't be intimidated by the legal jargon and processes that are inherent in public policy situations. A basic understanding of policy processes and legal frameworks (see Section 5) will enable you to be an effective advocate for wildlife conservation and the wildlife profession. **Providing your real-world knowledge and experience is all you need to do to educate policy makers** so they can make the best decisions possible for our wildlife resources.

You carry the single most powerful tool for policy advocacy with you – your personal story. Nothing is as effective as the person who can communicate their story and give a face to an issue for a policymaker – and you are the one with the effective story regarding the wildlife conservation and our profession. Once your issue gets the personal attention of an elected official or the press you have a much better chance of getting appropriate action.

Generally, policy makers are not going to know much about wildlife issues or what is important to you or the wildlife profession. If you aren't there to bring attention to the issue and grab their personal interest with your own story, who else will do it?

You might have some concerns about being an advocate for wildlife and the wildlife profession. You might feel that you…

- *Don't know enough about the issues.*

  Odds are that you know a lot more than you give yourself credit for, especially when compared to the legislative and agency personnel you will be talking to about the issue. There are ways to address this concern:

  1. TWS has resources available at wildlife.org that can help you learn more about current policy topics.
  2. Discuss the issues with other wildlife professionals to obtain a broader understanding of the issues. TWS Chapter and Section Conservation Affairs

Committees (CACs) can be excellent places to test arguments on behalf of your position.

- *Don't know the ropes at the Legislature or in Agencies.*

  You need not be intimidated by people serving in the legislature or agencies – the people you will be meeting with and interacting with are just that – people. Do not be afraid to talk with them, even if you don't feel like you "know the ropes". Plus, other sections in this document provide you with a basic understanding that will help you get on your way.

- *Don't have the necessary contacts.*

  Finding out who to talk with about your issue is pretty simple. Much of the information about who serves on specific legislative committees or in administrative posts in agencies is available on the web. If you still aren't sure, ask! TWS Staff are here as a resource to help your policy efforts.

- *Are only one voice.*

  One voice can – and does – make a difference! You are the only one who can tell your story – your story and knowledge about wildlife conservation is what policy makers need to hear. Remember that other members of the Conservation Affairs Network and TWS staff are here to support you in your efforts.

- *Cannot engage with policy as a government-employed wildlife professional.*

  TWS' members include natural resource management agency employees from all levels of government. Governmental agencies typically have formal policies on how their employees can interact with professional societies and with policy advocacy in a professional and personal capacity. Members who are government employees and are interested in taking a leadership role in their unit's CAC may require supervisor approval; consult with your employer's policies as needed. Importantly, your professional expertise is ***always*** of value to your CAC, the Conservation Affairs Network, and TWS' advocacy for wildlife and wildlife professionals.

- *Don't have the needed skills.*

  Practice makes perfect! Get out there and do your part – you will learn what you need along the way, and this document will help you with the basics.

- *Don't have the budget.*

  While money could help with just about everything, you can have a big impact without spending lots of dollars traveling or launching big campaigns. Simply making a phone call or sending a letter are less expensive ways of getting involved that can really make a difference in the outcomes for policy. Many decision makers are also very open to meeting virtually. For more on how to prepare for a virtual meeting with decision makers, see Chapter 3.2.

Many organizations advocate for the general concept of wildlife conservation. But remember –

You are the Expert!

As a professional in the wildlife field, you have a unique and valuable perspective that can truly advance the issues. You have the on-the-ground information legislators and agency administrators need to improve wildlife management policies.

2.2 RULES FOR SUCCESS

An effective advocate is largely determined by how well one can communicate their issue(s) or position(s) to policy makers. Numerous communication techniques are available, but there is no one best method to achieve your goals. There are, however, some basic things you can do to enhance your advocacy efforts. These basic rules are mostly common sense, common courtesy, or both.

- **Understand the basics of the legislative process.** This will help you speak intelligently in regards to proposed solutions or ways of moving forward with your issue. See Section 5 for an overview federal legislative processes in the U.S. and Canada.
- **Be able to provide a concise, clear description of the issue.** Realize that most legislators likely do not know the details about wildlife issues. You need to be able to provide a quick explanation of the issue and why it is important to their constituents. Trying out your pitch on individuals that do not have an understanding of the issue can be helpful in honing your argument.
- **Develop a powerful personal story.** You are the one with the first-hand knowledge of how these policies impact your ability to manage and conserve wildlife – use that to your advantage.
- **Know how to win – and lose – with grace.** Be respectful of those who agree and disagree with your position. You won't win every battle, but how you lose one battle might impact your ability to win the next.
- **Be generous in your thanks and praise.** Take the time to express appreciation and support to legislators and agency members that make tough decisions in your favor. This will assist in relationship building with these parties.
- **Find common ground on issues.** Work to find issues in common with other people and speak with one voice on the issues whenever possible. Partnerships with other organizations can really help strengthen your arguments and elevate your issues in the eyes of decision-makers.

2.3 SCOPE OF INVOLVEMENT

Effective engagement in the wildlife policy arena in an official capacity for your Chapter or Section of TWS requires that you pursue issues for which you have a perspective backed by sound wildlife science. We advocate for the use of science in policy making - you need to be sure to ground your policy statements in scientific facts.

Involvement of your Conservation Affairs Committee (CAC) will depend on the specific charge and goals established by your Chapter or Section's Executive Board and or the CAC's Terms of Reference. Generally speaking, issues that 1) involve the ability of wildlife professionals to conduct their work, 2) impact wildlife populations, 3) impact wildlife habitats, or 4) impact how wildlife or their habitats are managed by an agency may warrant your committee's involvement.

Defining your CAC's Policy Priorities

Defining and planning for a pre-determined set of policy priorities can help your CAC be proactive and keep your focus on vetted topics supported by your memberships. Though other issues of direct impact to the wildlife profession will come up in your region, prioritization of priorities will allow your unit to make quick, as-needed decisions on whether diverting limited CAC capacity and resources to a non-priority topic is worthwhile for your broader unit. Policy priorities vetted by a unit's leadership can also help streamline the process of obtaining approval to issue correspondence on a policy issue, as the priority has already been agreed to.

Use the considerations and resources provided below to help define the scope that best fits the interests and expertise of your CAC's members:

Regional Priorities

These are rules and policies of concern within your organization unit's jurisdictional boundaries. Decision-making at the regional level can have an extremely varied and potentially faster pace compared to the national level, making it important to have an understanding of:

- The schedule of your state or province's legislative body (see Appendix G for links to state and provincial legislative websites)
- The process of rule development within relevant commissions or other bodies overseeing your state or provincial natural resource agencies

National Priorities

Rules and policies with federal-level oversight in which decision makers from within your unit's jurisdictional boundaries (e.g. a state's federal congressional delegation or Members of Provincial Parliament [MPPs]) have buy-in. The Wildlife Society has established policy priorities that help dictate our engagement with U.S. federal policies. TWS updates its U.S. federal policy priorities every two years to align with the start of a new session of Congress.

Policy resources are updated and made available to TWS members following this cycle to help inform organization unit engagement with these policies.

CACs may consider stepping down TWS' U.S. federal policy priorities to a regional focus. For example, TWS's priority of "securing dedicated funding for State Wildlife Action Plan implementation through the passage of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act" can be tailored to a regional priority, such as working to secure cosponsorship of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act by members of Congress in the unit's region.

Establishment of Priorities

Priorities for the Section or Chapter CAC can be identified in several ways. Consider surveying your unit's membership for issues they feel are of current and future importance or discussing policy topics with members of your Executive Board. Below are steps that your CAC and/or Section/Chapter can take to set its own policy priorities.

1. ***Assemble your policy prioritization team.*** A unit's CAC can be an excellent place to begin discussions of policy priorities and determine a process for soliciting feedback from unit members. If your unit does not have an existing CAC, suggestions for creating one can be found in Chapter 1.2. Consider including other unit members (e.g. elected officers, members with relevant subject matter expertise, etc.) from outside the CAC to either participate in or provide review of the prioritization process.

2. ***Reflect on prior policy engagement.*** Before engaging in the prioritization process, take time to reflect on your CAC/unit's previous policy engagement. Questions to consider include:

    - What issues have you engaged with in the past? What type of input was your unit able to provide to those discussions?
    - What issue areas do your unit's members have expertise in?
    - What are the biggest issues impacting the ability of wildlife professionals to perform their job in your unit's jurisdiction?
    - What coalitions and partnerships do you currently engage with? Progress towards your desired policy objectives cannot be accomplished by operating in a vacuum. How can you best leverage the expertise and capacity of partners in support of your goals?

3. ***Conduct outreach to solicit unit member feedback.*** Input from unit members is invaluable during the policy prioritization process. By soliciting feedback from outside your policy prioritization team, you're accessing more diverse perspectives on policy items deserving of unit engagement and increasing buy-in on future engagement efforts. Your outreach may be broad (e.g. an email to the unit's listserv asking for any/all relevant policy items that members would like included in the prioritization process) or targeted (e.g. a poll including a list of priorities pre-selected by the

prioritization team and ranking options to assess the relative importance of each item). Make sure to record whatever process you decide on for soliciting feedback so that you can repeat and improve upon this approach year after year. Your unit can also consider outreach to existing coalitions and partners to determine community priorities and how a professional society may appropriately play a role.

4. ***Compile feedback and finalize priority policies.*** The process of coming to a final list of priority policies will vary between CACs or units. Remember, use your previously-defined scope of policy engagement, considerations from past engagement, and expertise and feedback from the membership of your unit to guide you. Additional considerations that may help you finalize your policy priorities include:

    - *Urgency*: Where is action needed immediately to prevent undesirable impacts (or ensure positive impacts) to wildlife and/or wildlife professionals?
    - *Impact versus effort*: The "bang for your buck" consideration; what policy issues have you identified that allow your unit to maximize its impact relative to the amount of effort required to meet priority objectives?
    - *Capacity*: What time and resources are available to your CAC and unit members to engaging with the priority policies your team has identified?

5. ***Conduct outreach on finalized priorities.*** Your prioritization team should make a point of thanking everyone who feedback provided during the process of developing policy priorities, and be sure to provide the list of finalized priorities to all unit members so they are up to date on where policy engagement efforts are likely to be focused in the near future. You may also find it useful to conduct a second round of outreach and solicit feedback on any objectives that should be associated with each of your identified policy priorities. More on establishing these objectives can be found in the next section.

Creating Effective and Actionable Unit Priorities

Your CAC, and more broadly your unit, will benefit from creating policy priorities that are specific and actionable. It can be difficult to determine clear next-steps or actions to address policy priorities that are general or overly broad. For example, "secure cosponsorship and build partner support for the Recovering America's Wildlife Act in our region" is a specific policy priority that easily lends itself to the development of actions for your CAC.

Once your policy priorities are established, it may be helpful for determining some objectives for those priorities to direct your actions and give you a goal to work toward. This can enable your CAC to be more proactive, and work toward certain policies, rather than reactive and constantly responding to policies already in action. Objectives that correspond to the example policy priority above could be:

1. Submit letters requesting cosponsorship for the Recovering America's Wildlife Act to all members of Congress in our unit's jurisdiction who are not current cosponsors.
2. Work with regional partners to set up and participate in meetings with local congressional offices to seek support for the Recovering America's Wildlife Act.
3. Develop regular communications to unit membership highlighting individual-level opportunities to engage with members of Congress in support of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

The establishment of objectives may be supported by the formation of policy position statements that are developed by your committee (see Chapter 4.1). The more specific you can make the objectives, the better.

2.4 STEPS FOR NON-PRIORITY INVOLVEMENT

When interacting with issues outside of the scope of your policy priorities, consider the steps below:

1. If identified wildlife issues fall outside the scope of an existing policy priority (see Chapter 2.3), it may be appropriate not to engage with the issue at this time. If determined that the unit has the bandwidth to proceed on the non-priority issue, proceed with next steps.
2. Determine if the identified wildlife issue falls within scope of a current TWS or organization unit position statement. If yes, proceed with step 4. If no, proceed with step 3.
3. Determine if policy issue relates to larger wildlife conservation issue that directly impacts professionals. If no, you may consider not getting involved in this issue. If yes, proceed to step 4.
4. Engage with your unit's leadership to seek authority and develop buy-in for action on the issue. If buy-in exists, proceed with remaining steps.
5. Determine if the policy issue involves any existing or potential partnerships or coalitions you may have. Involve other groups in the issue where possible and practical – there is strength in numbers.
6. Use relevant TWS or TWS Chapter/Section position statements to frame your actions on the current issue. Determine what action would be best; which action is best is likely based on the content of the issue and at what step in the policy process the issue is currently (See Section 5). Potential options include:
    - Develop a unit position statement for distribution to relevant stakeholders (see Chapter 4.1)
    - Submit a letter to legislature or executive agency administrators
    - Write a Letter to the Editor of a local newspaper or other media outlet
    - Submit comments on proposed agency rules
    - Meet with agency or elected officials to discuss the issue
    - Refer to Section 3 for in-depth guidance on these potential actions
7. Engage membership in your actions, if applicable. Actions taken with congressional representatives, in particular, can be heavily influenced by the involvement of your members that live in their districts. Be sure to keep your members aware of the work you are doing on their behalf.

8. Follow-up on your actions. Thank members of the legislature or agency for meeting with you and listening to your concerns. If they made a favorable decision, express your support, and consider doing it publicly.

2.5 LOBBYING FOR NONPROFITS

Lobbying is an attempt to influence legislation, including bills, referenda, and Constitutional amendments. Lobbying activities can be either direct or indirect.

> **Direct lobbying**: any attempt to influence any legislation through communication with any member or employee of a legislative body or with any government official or employee who may participate in the formulation of the legislation and grassroots lobbying
>
> **Indirect lobbying**: any attempt to influence any legislation through an attempt to affect the opinions of the general public.

In the United States, nonprofit organizations like TWS and our organization units are legally allowed to lobby. However, we must remain within certain restrictions in order to maintain our tax-exempt 501(c)(3) status designated by the IRS.

Funds expended on lobbying efforts must be reported to the IRS. For example, hiring someone to represent your unit or spending money to travel to your legislator's office are expenses that must be reported.

The IRS determines whether or not an organization's lobbying activities constitute a substantial part of its overall activities using the substantial part test. This considers the time and funds dedicated to an activity to determine whether the lobbying activity of the organization can be considered substantial. If more than 5% of all unit resources are spent on lobbying, then you need to complete Form 5768. If you file this form, your unit can spend 20% of the first $500,000 of annual expenditures on lobbying. If less than 5% of all subunit resources are spent on lobbying, all expenses must still be reported on Schedule C of Form 990 or Form 990EZ each year.

Organizations (other than churches and private foundations) may elect to use the IRS' expenditure test to measure lobbying activity as an alternative to the substantial part test. Guidance on the limits around lobbying under the expenditure test can be found here.

Lobbying does not include:

- Actions by volunteers that otherwise meet the definition of lobbying, as long as there is no expenditure of funds by the organization.
- Contact with the executive or legislative branches in support of or opposed to regulations.
- Communicating a position in support of or against legislation to members of the organization, as long as the communication does not ask members to take action.
- Providing testimony requested by a legislative body.
- Making available the results of legislative analysis.

- Discussion of policy issues, as long as the merits of specific legislation are not part of the discussion.

The Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society (CSTWS) was incorporated with charitable (not-for-profit) status under the Incorporation Acts of Canada in 2020. Following incorporation, similar stipulations around lobbying apply to CSTWS and other units in the Canadian Section that have not-for-profit status. The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) enforces limitations on lobbying activities for charitable organizations in Canada, as established in the federal Income Tax Act. More information on policy activities allowed under charitable registration in Canada can be found here.

Conservation Affairs Network Policy Toolkit

SECTION 3: TAKE ACTION ON POLICY

3.1 CRAFTING YOUR MESSAGE

There are many ways to take action on policy or legislation development, but it all starts with a clear, consistent, and concise message crafted for the right audience. Use the guidelines below to help craft your message for maximum impact. Many of these guidelines are targeted at engagement with legislative offices, but can also be used when interacting with other decision makers and partners.

Use these questions as a guide to forming your messages:

- ***What do you want the decision maker to do?***

  See if you can summarize it in just one sentence. Be as concrete and specific as possible.

- ***How do you want them to do it?***

  Be clear and specific about what you think the appropriate course of action entails.

- ***How does this issue relate to you?***

  What effect has this issue had on your job as a wildlife professional? Remember that the point of telling your story is to put a face on the issue and to educate the policy maker on the impact of the issue on your life and our public trust wildlife resources.

- ***Are others affected by this issue? If so, how?***

  Describe how this issue impacts others who enjoy, rely upon, or are otherwise impacted by our wildlife resources. Relate the issue back to the broader constituency, and explain how it will impact ecosystem services, the economy, private landowners, wildlife recreationalists, etc. Consider any of the possible links to the issue below:

  - This is an area of personal interest to the decision maker (they enjoy wildlife)
  - For legislators, they serve on a legislative committee that would cover this issue
  - There is the possibility of getting positive press coverage
  - A large number of constituents in a legislative district or administrative region are affected

- ***List the key points that the decision maker must know to understand the issue and its impact.***

  Try to limit your key points to no more than three on any issue. Remember that your time and their interest are limited.

Policy Consultation for CACs

TWS staff is available to provide consultation assistance to CAC's to help determine the best ways to engage with wildlife policy issues, or to help determine the most effective ways for organization units to support TWS' advocacy efforts at the federal level. If you're interested in policy consultation, contact policy@wildlife.org.

3.2 MEETING WITH DECISION MAKERS

Meeting with legislators and agency administrators can be a very effective method of advocacy. While more time-consuming than simply writing a letter, in-person meetings provide several advantages; face-to-face time with decision makers and/or their staff is extremely valuable to your efforts.

Benefits of a Meeting

Meetings with decision makers provide four main benefits:

1. ***Personal conveyance of your position on the issue to decision makers***

   A face-to-face meeting allows you to have an actual conversation about the topic. You will be able to express your passion and personal insights from working in the wildlife field. These meetings allow prompt discussion about specific details, concerns, and potential solutions.

2. ***Raise attention for the issue in that decision maker's office and provide valuable education on the subject***

   Meetings may aid greatly in raising the profile of the wildlife policy issue in the office. They will take the time to listen to you and will do their best to understand the issue. Meetings enable you to educate the office on the topic and leave behind additional information.

3. ***Obtain a better understanding of the decision maker's perspectives, priorities, opinions, and approach regarding your policy issue.***

   A meeting allows you to have a two-sided conversation. Rather than simply being able to state your perspectives as you would in a letter, you will also get a chance to ask about and listen to the thoughts and perspectives of the decision maker. This provides valuable insights into how they feel about the subject, whether or not they might support your efforts, and whether or not they really see this as a priority item that warrants pursuit.

4. ***Establishment of a trusting relationship with the decision maker's office.***

   Trust is built over time – and trust can go a long way in the policy world. Face-to-face meetings allow you to really make progress in building a working relationship with the office. Meeting discussions build understanding and allows for open dialogue – through relationship building, you can start to find ways to work together to address the issues.

Which Offices to Meet

Since face-to-face meetings require more of your time and potentially more of your resources, you want to be sure to make them as worthwhile as possible. To do that, you need to strategize on who would be the best person or best office to meet with. Remember, while you may be meeting with office staff as opposed to legislators or decision makers, these individuals are still helpful in building support and influencing the position of their employer. Look to meet with someone who:

1. Is in a position of power that can move your issue forward
2. Has the potential to support your issue, but doesn't currently
3. Supports your issue, but could use some encouragement to continue doing so or address it in a new way

Generally speaking, it is not overly helpful to spend time meeting with people who are adamantly opposed to your issue and have made several public statements opposing your desired action. These individuals will be a tough sell in getting them to switch their positions publicly. But if you have the extra time it doesn't hurt to try to change their minds!

People in powerful positions within legislatures usually include Majority and Minority Leaders and Committee Chairs and Ranking Members. You also have some good leverage when meeting with your own elected representative, as you are their constituent. If you are initiating a new concept, or want to have a general meeting, try meeting with a legislator who has a personal connection to wildlife in some way (hunter, birder, hiker, etc.) that will likely be supportive of your efforts.

For federal-level offices (i.e. the House of Representatives and Senate in the U.S., and the Senate and House of Commons in Canada), you should meet with offices that overlap directly with the geographic footprint of your TWS unit.

Within a government agency, you should try to meet with someone as high up as possible that oversees the wildlife management or policy regulation you wish to discuss. This will likely include program directors, agency chiefs, operations managers/directors, assistant/deputy directors, etc.

Arranging a Meeting

There are several opportunities and venues by which you may choose to meet with your elected representatives. Which method you choose will likely depend on your overall goals of the meeting and how formal of a discussion you wish to have with the office. You can attend a "town hall" meeting as a constituent, schedule an in-person meeting in their home district office, attend public functions hosted by the representative, invite the policy maker to your group's meeting, or choose to meet them at their state or federal capitol office.

You can schedule a meeting with a legislator simply by calling or emailing their office and asking to speak with their scheduler. Let them know what you wish to discuss with their office and provide them with a couple of days that you are available to meet. They will likely assign you to a meeting with a staffer. Alternatively, you can email the staffer directly to request a meeting. **TWS headquarters staff has access to relevant contact**

information of U.S. federal legislative offices and is happy to assist units in determining an appropriate point of contact.

When scheduling a meeting with legislators, consider scheduling around events on the annual and congressional calendar. It may be best to meet:

- ***Between congressional sessions or during other recesses:*** Elected officials may be easier to meet within their home districts when Congress is not in session; their staff is also usually less busy during these times. Floor calendars for the U.S. Congress, Canadian Senate, and Canadian House of Commons are available online.
- ***When a bill has been introduced, prior to committee markup or hearing:*** It might be beneficial to meet and discuss a particular bill after that bill has been assigned to a committee, prior to the committee's markup or hearing on the bill.
- ***Start of a new legislative session:*** This is a good time to meet new members of the legislature and introduce yourself, your organization unit, and your unit's policy priorities. Legislative sessions vary between state legislatures: refer to your state legislature's website for the specific dates of their legislative session(s). U.S. federal legislative bodies begin a new Congress in January of odd-numbered years. Sessions of the Canadian Parliament typically last for one full calendar year with several periods of adjournment. A new legislature is elected in Parliament at least once every five years, although elections can occur more frequently.
- ***Start of the budgeting process:*** If your issue involves the budget, you may want to meet with the legislature after the Executive Office has released their proposed budget and prior to action by the legislature's appropriation committee(s). The U.S. federal budgeting process usually begins in February of each year with the release of the President's budget. Canada's annual federal budget cycle begins following a recess of Parliament in June of each year.

More information on when to become involved in federal policy processes in the U.S. and Canada is available in Section 5.

Preparing for the Meeting

You want to go into the meeting well prepared, with a well identified purpose, a solid understanding of your main points, and some insight into where the individual(s) you are meeting with stands on the subject.

Prepare for the meeting by briefly researching the decision maker's background. Try to get an understanding of their history with related issues; their political affiliations and what that might mean regarding potential support or opposition to your issue; any relevant committees that the decision maker may sit on; what their constituency is like; what the primary concerns are in their district; and how your issue may relate to their constituency. Legislative member webpages and social media accounts are good places to start.

Be sure to also look into the decision maker's staff. Odds are high, particularly with legislators, you will ultimately meet with the staff member in charge of subject matter related to your topic rather than the legislator. Even if you do meet directly with the legislator or agency director, you can count on their staff being a part of the meeting. You might be able to find some insightful background information on these people as well that will help you understand their perspectives. LinkedIn pages of the relevant staff are often good places to begin.

Use your first-hand wildlife experience and understanding of the issue as well as insights gained in your background research of the policymaker to develop a few key points you want to make on the topic. Be sure to make these very clear and fairly concise – these are the "take-home" messages you want the decision maker to remember. See Chapter 3.1 for additional information on crafting your message.

You may consider creating a packet of some educational and informational materials to leave with the decision maker's office on the subject, particularly if this is a new topic or an issue they are otherwise unfamiliar with prior to your meeting. Letters your TWS unit or partners have written on the subject, bulleted fact sheets, brief handouts of your main points, and related agency budget information all may be good things to include in the packet. Plus, having these materials can help prompt talking points during your discussion – you can point to figures and photos on these handouts that help explain the issue and make your points. Be sure to keep any sheets concise and to the point; lengthy handouts are likely to not get read and will not serve your purposes well.

Don't forget to plan your attire for the meeting. Looking professional helps add merit to your arguments and makes you look prepared and well thought through on the issues. Typically, you should plan to wear business formal clothing to the meetings; this might vary a bit depending on the subject and location of the meeting.

What to Expect at the Meeting

Timing: You should plan to arrive at the meeting 5-10 minutes early. If other partners or individuals from your unit are joining in on your meeting, you might consider arriving a little earlier in order to have time to review your talking points and, if attending as a group or with partners, your roles and responsibilities for the meeting.

Don't be surprised if your meeting begins a little late, particularly in a legislator's office. The staff in these offices are often very busy and have several (10 to 20+) meetings and other events per day. As such, their schedule may fall behind. Along those same lines, don't expect to have a long meeting. Staffers often need to keep a fairly tight schedule, which might make you feel rushed. Expect about 15-20 minutes of total time to discuss the issue and make your points, so be concise and clear. The request of the decision maker should be made clear at the beginning of the meeting.

Where you will meet: If going to a meeting in a legislative office, you can likely anticipate meeting in one of several small meeting rooms. Depending on the time of year and legislative calendar, the office may become overbooked; in that case, don't be surprised to find your meeting taking place in the hallway or on the couch in the receptionist area.

In an agency meeting, you can anticipate meeting in a conference room or at a table in a private office.

Who you will meet: When meeting with a legislative office, your meeting will likely be placed on the schedule of a staffer in charge of that subject matter. In an agency, you might meet with mid-level or operational managers or other assistants. Don't let this disappoint or discourage you – these are very competent people who work on these issues every day - and don't underestimate the power of a decision maker's staff to influence actions and bring attention to an issue.

Discussion content: Expect the discussion to be friendly and respectful, and do your best to keep it that way. You should plan to provide a solid background on the subject– don't overestimate what the decision maker or their staff may know about the specifics of the issue.

You can likely expect the office to avoid taking any real stance on the issue, particularly if this is a new subject to them. They will want a chance to become more informed and potentially hear from other parties on the topic.

Meeting Process

When you enter an office for a meeting, introduce yourself to the receptionist and let them know you are there for a scheduled meeting with person X. If you have a business card, plan to give it to them – they keep this in their records of the meeting and it allows the receptionist to remind the staff who they are meeting. If you are representing your unit and do not feel comfortable relaying the specifics of your job, simply providing TWS unit affiliation is acceptable.

At the start of the meeting, be sure to introduce yourself and let them know you are there representing your TWS Section or Chapter. Remind them what you wanted to discuss during this meeting. If you have a packet to give them, hand this to them at the start of the meeting. This allows them to follow along with your points and see some of the figures and photos that might be included in the information you provided.

If this is your first meeting with a given office, you might make the focus simply an introduction of who you are (a TWS organization unit), what your organization's mission is, and what sort of specific issues your TWS unit is concerned about. Make them aware that your organization exists and offer yourself up as a resource for issues related to wildlife; provide a few examples of issues with which you could assist, including any identified priorities of your unit or TWS headquarters. You can lead that introduction into arranging a future meeting regarding a specific topic you wish to discuss.

Keep small talk and tangential chit-chat to a minimum. Time during the meeting is valuable, and you don't want to waste it getting side-tracked on other bits of conversation. Keep your discussion to the point, but also friendly. Use this meeting to build your relationship with the office, and keep communication respectful.

When the staffer asks you questions you don't know the answer to, do not provide an answer! Simply let them know you are uncertain of the answer and commit to getting back to them after you have confirmed the facts. This shows that you are dedicated to the proper facts of the situation and gives you an opportunity to connect with the office again regarding your issue – more connections and communication about an issue likely translates into more potential for action.

Provide specific solutions to an issue, where possible. Offer draft language to revise legislation, provide reasons for budget increases, outline ways the agency should change its policies to improve wildlife management

Delivery of your "Ask"

You meeting likely has an end goal – in addition to making your ask clear at the beginning of your meeting, you may want a commitment of support from the individual regarding a certain policy at the conclusion of the meeting. Near the end of your discussion, it might be appropriate for you to ask a question like, *"**Can I count on you to support this issue?**"* Politely press for a commitment, unless they are clearly against the issue.

Ending the Meeting

When the meeting is ending, shake hands and thank the individual for their time. Express your desire to have their (continued) support and how you look forward to connecting with in the future to further wildlife policy issues (if applicable). Leave them the materials you brought with you along with your contact information and be sure to collect their contact information. Offer yourself as a resource for them on issues related to wildlife conservation. Re-emphasize that you will be in touch with them regarding any unanswered questions they may have had.

Follow-Up

In the next day or two after your meeting, send an email directly to the person you met. In the email, thank them again for taking the time to meet with you to discuss issue X. Then remind them of your main points in the issue, and again make yourself available as a resource for them.

The follow-up email is also a good time to send them additional information on the subject and answer any questions you needed to do additional research on. You can attach files or send links that will provide them with more in-depth information on the topic. If your meeting was face to face, be sure your email includes soft copies of your resources provided.

Virtual Meetings with Decision Makers

Virtual meeting platforms have become increasingly commonplace since the first edition of this toolkit was published, and are used regularly to facilitate meetings with decision makers. Two common platforms for virtual meetings are Zoom and Microsoft Teams. Virtual meetings can be an excellent option if you're seeking an opportunity for a personal interaction with decision makers and/or their staff but are restricted in your ability to travel to visit their offices. In general, all of the guidance provided above still applies regarding preparing and delivering your message. However, there are some limitations and considerations unique to this type of meeting.

Attire and surroundings*:* You may be calling into a virtual meeting from your office or even your home. Regardless of your location, plan to dress in professional attire. Set aside time before the call to preview your background; most virtual meeting platforms offer a "blur background" feature that you can use if your background is too busy, or if you're in a common space where others may be walking in and out of view. Check your lighting and make sure you can be seen clearly and aren't in an area that's too dark or backlit. If you'll be calling from a shared workspace where your microphone may pick up noise from others, these platforms also offer an option to filter out background noise.

Practice to limit technical difficulties*:* If this will be your first time using a particular meeting platform, make sure it's installed on your computer and fully-functional well in advance of your meeting. Ask a friend or co-worker to join in on a practice call to make sure you're comfortable with the basic functionality of the meeting platform. Use the "test audio" and "test speakers" options within the platform to make sure that you'll be able to hear and be heard during the call. Be sure to check that your internet connectivity is sufficient to prevent any lag or poor audio/video quality during your meeting. If quality issues arise during the call, make the suggestion that participants turn off their video or use the dial-in option provided by the meeting platform for audio access.

Eliminate distractions: Make sure that you've muted all sources of notifications (e.g. email alerts, digital messaging platforms, texts or phone calls) that could distract from the message you're trying to convey.

Educational Materials: Any resources you would have otherwise delivered in person to the decision maker can be included in the follow-up email at the conclusion of the virtual meeting. If you are looking to use a resource as a prop in a congressional meeting, you can consider sharing your screen with the individual(s) to highlight that resource. In general though, meeting attendees should keep the messaging clear and concise, and utilize educational resources as a tool for following up with the offices.

3.3 WRITING A LETTER

Writing a letter is an efficient and effective way of delivering your message to influence legislators, agency administrators, or other decision makers. Letters can carry a lot of weight, particularly when from organizations and constituents within the legislator's district, or if they involve several diverse organizations.

Consider writing a letter:

- *When the issue is not particularly urgent* – letters can take some time to write, approve, send, and read. Therefore, letters may not be the best approach for an urgent issue.
- *When you want to educate the decision maker* – letters provide a written record that can be referred to frequently as a resource document on the issue, particularly when you include sound wildlife science in support of your issue.
- *When you are presenting complex material* – letters allow your thoughts to be logically and clearly organized. They can also be re-read and referred to in order for the policymaker to learn about the issue and understand the topic more clearly.
- *To thank a decision maker for supporting your issue* – decision makers need to know when they are doing something you like and who their friends are on certain issues. Writing a supporting letter encourages them to keep on track and reminds them that you are involved and watching what is going on with the issues.
- *As a follow-up to a visit* – use the letter to thank them for their time in meeting with you and to re-emphasize your main points.

Outline of a Typical Letter

An effective letter will flow logically and concisely explain the issue and provide information that supports the action you believe the policy maker should take to address the issue. See Appendix C for an example of an effective letter.

First Paragraph should state the purpose of the letter. Clearly indicate the issue on which you are writing. If the issue relates to a specific piece of legislation, then include the specific bill number. Explain your concerns or position on the issue and what action you hope they will take.

Second Paragraph should introduce your organization. Explain that you are a Section or Chapter of The Wildlife Society and you represent wildlife professionals. State the mission of the organization, and as a result why you are interested in this issue. This paragraph shows the policymaker your credentials and helps bolster your opinion on the matter.

Next Paragraphs explain the scientific-based concerns you have regarding the proposed or ongoing legislation or agency actions. Keep these statements clear and concise and ensure they support your central idea – the action you want taken.

Closing Paragraph should restate your concerns, and draw a bigger picture of the effects of the action. Restate the action you hope they will take about the issue.

Sign-off of the letter can be done by your unit's President, the Executive Board, or your CAC Chair. Who you choose may depend on your unit's operations manual and/or the specific issue being addressed. Units may also choose to delegate the task of signing a document if the typical signatory has a professional conflict with the issues discussed in the letter.

Tips for Letter Writing

Include the official letterhead of your unit. This provides an official look and feel to your letter.

Short letters are ideal. Say what you need to say, but be as brief as possible; longer letters that are repetitive are less likely to get read or be impactful. If possible, keep the letter to one page of text.

Focus on one issue in the letter. If you have other issues you are concerned about, write another letter. Letters that involve more than one issue may become more convoluted and lose their impact.

Use a sincere and respectful tone. You can be stern, but don't be disrespectful.

Express your appreciation for their consideration. Policymakers are often very busy, and may get inundated with people trying to influence their decision in multiple ways. Express your thanks that they took the time to read through your letter.

Provide your contact information. Policymakers or their staff may be interested in obtaining more information from you regarding the issue; make it easy for them to do this by ensuring your contact information is included somewhere on the letter – either in the letterhead or in your signature.

Be as specific as you can be. Provide specifics on the changes you would like to see happen, whether that be specific language to include in a regulation or bill, or specific values to include in a program budget. This makes it easier for the decision maker to address your concerns.

Sign-on Letters

You may consider circulating your drafted letter around to other wildlife and natural resource conservation related organizations for them to sign-on. Allowing other organizations to sign-on to your letter helps bolster a broader network of support behind your issue. Letters that have multiple, well-known organizations supporting them carry a large amount of influence behind them.

You may also be asked to sign-on to another organization's letter. Consider doing so if the policy issue and advocated position are within the support of your unit. This activity helps build and reinforce valuable partnerships.

Letters to the Editor

This guidance was adapted from the National Wildlife Federation Action Fund's Advocacy Toolkit

A letter to the editor is less formal than letters sent to decision makers and allows your unit to voice an opinion on a current issue in a public forum. The news outlet you submit your Letter to the Editor to will typically provide their own requirements on formatting and content. Keep this type of letter brief (typically 200 words or less) and focus on key impacts to wildlife and/or wildlife professionals. You can include visual aids like charts or figures if they help support your opinion on an issue. If your letter is published, consider including a copy as a supplementary resource to any letters you send to decision makers to emphasize the importance of the issue with their constituents.

Sending Letters via Email or Mail

For letters to policymakers - you can choose to send your letter via email or regular mail, though email is most often preferred by offices. Both methods have their pros and cons; you may consider using multiple methods with the same letter to ensure the letter reaches its intended target effectively.

> ***Regular mail***
> *Pros:* tangible, personal letter is delivered to the policymaker
> *Cons:* slow process; letter may be delayed by security measures, less likely to end up with relevant staff member
>
> ***Email***
> *Pros:* quick, effective delivery
> *Cons:* impersonal; lost in heavy email traffic, challenges in determining appropriate point of contact

Submit Letters to TWS Staff

Letters submitted to policymakers on behalf of your unit should also be sent to TWS Government Affairs staff. This allows staff to be aware of and assist with policy activities, ensure consistency among TWS policy actions, and maintain a database of policy actions that can be used to inform and support the work of other units. Submit finalized letters and other policy actions to policy@wildlife.org. If your unit is looking for input on correspondence prior to sending, TWS staff are also happy to help with review of and alignment to TWS priorities.

3.4 ISSUING A PRESS RELEASE

Press releases provide an avenue for your unit and your partners to share information with the broader public by sending a concise readout on an issue to members of the media for reporting purposes.

Press releases can be sent far and wide to relevant partners and decision makers, but members of the press and media are the intended target of this information distribution tool. Media contacts targeted should be within your unit's geographic boundaries in order to have the biggest impact.

Before committing the time to a press release, be sure to consider the goal of drafting and distributing such a document. Press releases will only be successful if they are received by your target media outlets. If you do not have these contacts, check with partners to see if they have contacts to share or other resources to leverage. You may find it worthwhile to issue a joint press release with one or more partner organization. If media contacts are not known within your unit's geographic area, consider other mechanisms for getting information out to public, such as webinars or social media engagement.

Consider drafting a press release when:

- *Your unit has a clearly stated position on an issue* - Support for legislation, legislative action, or regulatory action are common and straightforward uses of press releases. Press releases should not be used when trying to relay complex or nuanced positioning on an issue.
- *You are showcasing a new resource* - Press releases can be used when you are trying to raise the profile of a new unit resource, such as new position statements or educational resources.
- *Attempting to raise the profile of unit engagement* - Press releases can be used when a unit is trying to elevate a new partnership they founded or joined, or an event the unit participated in (such as engaging in a fly-in, providing testimony to a committee, or speaking at a public event).

Outline of a Typical Press Release

A press release should be drafted in plain language and include information at the top of the release on the date, location, relevant points of contact (phone and email), and the organization(s) publishing the release. The title of the release can be up to a sentence in length and should clearly state the organization's position. See Appendix E for an example of a TWS-issued press release.

First Paragraph should only be one to two sentences, and should echo and expand upon the title of the release.

Body Paragraphs typically provide background on the issue or initiative that you're highlighting.

Quotes should be included from each organization represented on the release, and are typically no more than 2 to 3 sentences long. Any quotes included should be attributed to someone in a leadership position in your unit or partner organizations, and should state the title for that individual (e.g. Chapter President).

If the press release is from one organization, include the quote somewhere in the body of the release. The quote should be able to stand on its own in relaying your organization's position, and should not include any acronyms or phrases that would confuse a reader if the quote were to be viewed in any press coverage as a result of the release. If multiple organizations have signed onto the release, it is acceptable to include multiple quotes at the conclusion of the release.

Mission Statements from all organizations and/or coalitions included on the press release should be included at the end of the press release. This can also include reference to your unit/organization's website where members of the media can go to find additional information.

Send a Copy of Press Releases to TWS Staff

Press releases issued by TWS organization units will be archived for reference in the TWS Policy Library. Staff is also available to assist with drafting and review of press releases. Send press release materials to Policy@wildlife.org.

3.5 PHONE CALLS WITH DECISION MAKERS

Phone calls are an excellent way to engage your unit's membership in policy activities. Phone calls provide individual members the ability to affect change without the added time or expense of setting up and attending a meeting. When calling legislators, staff members keep a log of all incoming calls to their office, and the volume of calls received on a particular issue is important. High call volumes related to an issue may result in a staffer devoting time to research that item in more detail and the legislator forming a position on the issue.

Tips for Successful Phone Calls

Focus your call efforts where they're likely to have the greatest impact. If you're calling a member of your U.S. federal congressional delegation, it is better to call their D.C. office as opposed to an office in their district. If they have a staffer specifically focused on environmental issues, they're most likely based in the D.C. office.

Research your decision maker. Before your call, make sure you have a good understanding of a legislator/decision maker's history with your focal issue. How have they voted on the issue (or similar issues) in the past? Are they a cosponsor of the legislation you're calling to discuss? This research will help you anticipate how your call is likely to be received, and how to address any questions that a staffer may ask you during the call.

Be polite and concise. Understand that it's unlikely you'll be speaking directly with your decision maker, or even their environmental staffer. It is likely the individual you speak to will be someone just getting their start in policy. Be kind and straightforward in your messaging, and most importantly, don't be intimidated. You are the expert in this scenario!

Personalize your message. Feel free to adapt resources or call scripts to fit your experience with an issue. State or jurisdiction-specific examples of the impacts of a policy are especially powerful. See Chapter 3.1 for additional ideas.

Follow up in writing. If interested, end your call with an offer to follow up with an email or letter addressing the issue that you discussed. You may be asked to provide additional information or responses to questions in writing by the individual you speak to during your call. Follow-up with the office is not required, and should not be viewed as a barrier to engagement in this grassroots tactic.

Phone Call Script

In this example, you are requesting a legislator's support for the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. Feel free to adapt this script to fit whatever issue you're engaging with currently.

Office staff: Senator X's office, how can I help you?
You: Good [morning/afternoon], my name is [Your Name], and I'm a constituent and a natural resources professional calling to request Senator X's sign on as a cosponsor to the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, also known as S. 2372. Can I count on the senator's support?
Office staff: Thank you for calling. Can I get your name again and your address?
You: Yes. My name is . . . and my address is . . .
Office Staff: I will let the senator know you called.
You: Thank you for your time.

It is possible that the staffer will allow you time to provide additional information on the legislation and/or why it matters to you that the legislator show support for/cosponsor the bill, in which case consider adding some state-specific examples as mentioned above. Otherwise **it is most important that you make your constituency and your request to the decision maker known, including with information on the title and number of the legislation if applicable.**

3.6 COMMENTING ON U.S. FEDERAL AND STATE AGENCY RULEMAKING

Wildlife professionals have the opportunity to ensure that the best possible science and their firsthand experiences are accounted for in rules affecting wildlife by participating in the commenting process associated with rulemaking at the state and federal levels.

Just as your engagement with the legislative process should be governed by the scope of your CAC's policy priorities, engagement with rulemaking can be tailored to the interests and expertise of your CAC and unit membership. The scope and detail of your comments should also align with the different phases of rulemaking, which are outlined below. These phases are largely similar at the state and federal level, although the title and timing associated with each phase may differ between agencies and levels of government.

Phases of Rulemaking

Proposed Rulemaking

Opportunities to provide comments on proposed rulemaking are advertised to the public via Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR). Typically at this stage in the rulemaking process draft rule language is not available for review. The focus of this phase is *information gathering to inform eventual rule language*.

The information being sought during proposed rulemaking is often broad and may be conceptual in nature. Commenting during this phase presents a unique opportunity to provide early input in the structure and function of eventual rule language. Your comments during this phase should focus on:

- Sources of data that agencies should incorporate into future rulemaking efforts
- Key stakeholder groups who should be consulted during rulemaking and eventual implementation of the resulting rule(s)
- Suggested impacts of rulemaking based on available research and professional expertise
- Any specific questions posed by the regulatory body in the notice provided

The Public Scoping Process

Public scoping is a process similar to ANPRs, and provides federal regulators the opportunity to hear from stakeholders and the public on issues to be explored as the government seeks to develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Environmental Assessment (EA) on a proposed federal action under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In addition to providing an opportunity to submit written comments, public scoping meetings are often offered as part of the scoping process. Expertise on wildlife habitats and populations that fall within project-specific boundaries is especially valuable during the public scoping process; the comments your or your CAC provide will help determine the scope of resulting EISs or EAs, any additional environmental review requirements for the project, and the process by which the EIS or EA will be prepared.

Proposed Rule

At this stage in the rulemaking process, draft rule language is made available for review and comment as advertised via Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM; at the state level sometimes classified as Notice of Proposed Rule/NPR). Wildlife professionals are well-positioned to provide data and expertise relating to the impacts of the rule language that is provided for comment. Your input here is valuable and may result in changes to language in the final rule.

Final Rule

The end of the rulemaking process is advertised via Notice of Final Rulemaking. Although this phase is not typically accompanied by an opportunity to provide comments, it is important to note that rulemaking agencies include a date of rule implementation during this stage. Agencies may also include information on future rulemaking efforts of interest as part of their Notice of Final Rulemaking.

Recommendations for Successful Comments

Clearly introduce your organization and purpose for providing comments. Include a brief introduction in your comments highlighting the expertise of your CAC and broader unit membership as it relates to the rule you're providing comments on. Relevant expertise may include working experience in the geographic area impacted by rules, species-specific expertise, knowledge of permitting systems and/or processes, etc. It is also important that you include a reference to the specific notice that your comments are being submitted in response to.

Be as specific as possible. Vague comments are largely impossible for agencies to act on. For example, if you are commenting to provide suggestions on data sources to include in rulemaking, instead of

"The agency requires more data to inform future rulemaking activities"

A more effective alternative would be

"An analysis of databases X, Y, and Z should be conducted to establish baseline information on wildlife populations so that impacts to these populations by the proposed rule can be measured during and following implementation"

You should specifically reference the language from the notice that you are commenting in response to. If the regulatory body proposing the rulemaking provides specific questions for the public to consider, use these questions as a guide when drafting an outline. This ensures that regulators can easily pinpoint the section of concern.

Avoid opinion statements. Your comments and recommendations should be supported by a combination of data and the professional expertise of your CAC and unit members. TWS maintains reference lists of published science relating to the organization's policy priorities which are available to support your engagement with the rulemaking process.

Comments in support of rulemaking are just as valuable as those in opposition. Take the time to voice your support for rulemaking that successfully incorporates the best available wildlife science, or that will result in positive impacts to wildlife and wildlife professionals. Be sure to include justification for your support based on available data and professional expertise; agencies rely on these types of comments to help justify their rulemaking decisions to stakeholders who may be in opposition to the implementation of these rules.

Save the date(s). Rulemaking notices will specify a date by which all comments must be submitted.

Engaging Members in the Commenting Process

Preparing and submitting comments on agency rulemaking can be a daunting activity for any one individual, or even the members of a CAC to tackle. Consider soliciting feedback from your broader unit membership if you feel that you or your CAC are missing the expertise needed to best support your comments. Suggestions for soliciting feedback include:

- ***Communicate upcoming opportunities to provide feedback on your Section/Chapter listserv, newsletter, or social media channels.*** Be aware that broad requests for feedback (e.g. "We're interested in member thoughts on this rulemaking item") may be too vague resulting in limited member engagement. Consider providing prompts to accompany this type of outreach, or creating a one-page document that includes background information and resources to help support engagement.
- ***Host a webinar or meeting to generate discussion on the rulemaking item.*** Some members may be more interested in engaging if they have an opportunity to ask questions and provide informal feedback verbally as opposed to writing out formal comments. Similar to the suggestions above, you may wish to develop guiding prompts prior to the meeting/webinar to help members target their feedback to specific elements of the rule or proposed rulemaking.
- ***Create a survey to quantify member support or opposition for a rule and collect additional feedback.*** Your poll or survey may be broad (e.g. are there any comments you wish to provide on the proposed regulations included in the NPRM) or targeted (e.g. what changes should be made to the current definitions for the phrases "Geographic Area occupied by a Species" and "Physical or Biological Features" that would better support science-based wildlife conservation?). Google Forms and Survey Monkey are two commonly-used platforms for creating these types of surveys.

- ***Work with your Section/Chapter Executive Board to identify unit members with known expertise relating to the rule or proposed rulemaking.*** Some members may have professional expertise that relates directly to the rule that you're preparing comments on, but be unfamiliar with the commenting process or hesitant to engage. Reach out to them directly and see if they would be willing to review comments prior to submission and flag any relevant information you may have missed; this is a great entry point for future policy engagement.
- ***Reach out to TWS Working Groups for additional support and topical expertise.*** TWS Working Groups allow members to exchange information and promote science-based decision making on specific areas of interest within the field of wildlife management. Whether you lack expertise on a given topic within your unit's membership, or you're looking for additional support to improve the effectiveness of your rulemaking engagement, Working Groups have many resources to offer. TWS staff is available to coordinate engagement between units and working groups.

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SECTION 4: DEVELOPING POLICY RESOURCES

4.1 POSITION STATEMENTS

TWS and TWS organization units have a responsibility as scientific societies for professional wildlife managers and conservationists to address issues that affect the current and future of wildlife. The diligent development of authoritative, science-based statements on wildlife issues is essential for interjecting wildlife concerns into decision-making processes. Position statements issued by TWS and TWS organization units fill part of this role.

TWS Sections and Chapters are authorized to create their own position statements when 1) the statement addresses a topic upon which TWS does not currently have a position statement, or 2) when the statement would be consistent with existing TWS position statements (Article 7, Section 2 of TWS Bylaws). TWS Working Groups are encouraged to engage with the CAN and the process of crafting position statements by serving as sources of expertise when position statements overlap with their respective missions and goals.

Position statements are used to communicate the official position of TWS or a TWS organization unit regarding major issues in wildlife conservation. Statements are developed by TWS members based on their scientific expertise and perspectives of wildlife ecology and management.

Position statements should define the issue; present factual background data; describe the most probable biological, social, and economic results of alternative actions; and may also contain recommended courses of action. They should be relatively broad in scope, and address major areas of concern for wildlife conservation (e.g. spread of invasive species or energy development).

The formal approval process for position statements will depend upon your individual organization unit's bylaws, but may include approval by the Executive Board or the full organization unit membership. Depending on your bylaws, position statements may need to be reviewed and reapproved on a regular basis.

Draft copies of unit position statements should be submitted to TWS Government Affairs staff prior to approval to ensure consistency with TWS policy positions. Submit drafts to policy@wildlife.org.

See wildlife.org/position-statements for examples of TWS-approved statements.

4.2 FACT SHEETS

Fact sheets are communication tools used by TWS staff, organization units, and members to educate decision makers and other stakeholders on wildlife conservation issues - particularly those tied to current policy and/or management debates.

Sections and Chapters can develop their own fact sheets to elaborate on key issues relevant to their specific region or on issues that are not being covered by current TWS fact sheets.

Guidelines for Developing a Fact Sheet

1. Outline questions you want answered in the fact sheet, myths you want to dispel, and terms or acronyms you want to define. Decide on title and subheadings.
2. Thoroughly research the topic by consulting relevant peer-reviewed journal articles, current news articles, and laws or legislation pertaining to the topic. Look out for key numbers and dates that you'll want to include (i.e. current funding for the issue).
3. Draft and edit the text before placing onto a fact sheet template. It will be much easier to have the text finalized before moving around pictures and text in a template.
4. Format text and pictures into a fact sheet template. Most topics should cover 1 page back and front. Consider creating a template to use for all of your organization unit's fact sheets. Keeping your format consistent among all of your fact sheets can help your unit create a brand, be more recognizable, and simplify future fact sheet development.
5. Save the fact sheet as a PDF. A PDF is easier to send via email and post on the web.

Items to Include in a Fact Sheet

Introductory Section: Overview of the topic; include key numbers or facts that will engage the reader on the topic.

Call-out box(es): Quote, definition, or key question that you want to highlight (e.g. what is the difference between wild and feral horses?).

Pictures: Use images with creative commons licensing.. Many government agencies and individuals have copyright free photos available through Flickr accounts and Wikimedia Commons.

Pictures and captions should be able to stand alone. In addition to describing the picture, captions should include a source and a broader message about the fact sheet. Try to connect each caption to the central message of the fact sheet.

Literature Cited: Cite information in the text with footnotes and provide a "Literature Cited" section towards the end of the fact sheet.

Other Items to Consider

- *Graphs or charts* – visual representations of the central message can be effective

- *Timeline* – document the history of the legislation or issue
- *Maps* – what areas are being affected?

Tools for Creating Fact Sheets

There are several alternatives to word processor software (i.e. Microsoft Word) that will allow you to easily design visually-appealing fact sheets. If you already have access to Microsoft Office products, you may consider using Microsoft Publisher to draft your fact sheets. This software is only available for PC and will have a cost associated with access depending on your Microsoft Office or Microsoft 365 plan. Canva is a free design tool available online that can be accessed from your computer or your phone. This program allows for easy collaboration with team members and is already popular among TWS units for creating graphics and content for social media. More advanced tools are available through the paid version of the software called CanvaPro. If you are most familiar with Mac products, Apple Pages is a Mac alternative to Microsoft Publisher that can be accessed from any of your devices connected to the iCloud. Fact sheets and other documents created in Pages can also be exported as Word files.

Distribution of Fact Sheets

Fact sheets can be brought to meetings with decision-makers and stakeholders where the issue will be discussed. Fact sheets are an ideal document to leave behind for staff to have on hand (see Section 3). Members can print and distribute the fact sheets to educate the public on issues that affect wildlife.

4.3 TWS POLICY LIBRARY

The TWS Policy Library is available to all TWS members through their membership portal or via the policy resources tab on TWS' website. It serves as a tool for members to access correspondence on an array of wildlife policy issues. This includes sign-on letters, comments, and testimony issued by TWS, as well as advocacy and engagement documents created by TWS organization units.

Organization units considering engaging on a specific wildlife policy topic can use the Policy Library as both a research tool and a means to unify messaging across TWS organization units on similar issues. Past editions of the Conservation Affairs Network newsletter can also be accessed through the Policy Library. When exploring correspondence available through the Policy Library, you can filter results by:

- *Document origin:* Indicates if a document was created by TWS staff, a TWS organization unit, a coalition, or as part of a sign-on campaign
- *Document type:* Distinguishes comments, letters, testimony, recommendations, and other correspondence types
- *Issue:* Broad issue areas to help you refine searches (e.g. wildlife health, energy development and wildlife, etc.)
- *Scope Area:* Includes all TWS Sections, as well as the United States and an International scope area
- *Recipient:* Includes local, state/provincial and national legislative offices, regulatory/administrative offices, judiciaries, news media organizations, and non-profits
- *Keyword:* Allows you to search for specific issues (e.g. Chronic Wasting Disease, feral swine, Recovering America's Wildlife Act, etc.), and/or TWS organization units at the unit level
- *Date:* Allows you to refine searches by month and year

Policy correspondence originating from TWS organization units and their respective Conservation Affairs Committees should be submitted to TWS Government Affairs & Partnership staff to ensure the Policy Library stays up to date. Submit documents to policy@wildlife.org.

4.4 ACTION CENTERS

The TWS Action Center is a tool occasionally funded and utilized by TWS to provide TWS members and wildlife professionals an opportunity to engage with active wildlife policy campaigns. Campaigns in the TWS Action Center allow members and partners to access background information on the issue and instructions on how individual members and TWS organization units can contribute to TWS' involvement with the campaign. Campaigns also give you access to forms and easy template language allowing individual members to make direct contact with their members of Congress.

Targeted Action Center Content for Conservation Affairs Committees

As TWS headquarters funding allows, TWS' Government Affairs team is available to coordinate with Conservation Affairs Committees and organization units on the creation of targeted action centers to support priority federal policies. For example, a TWS Chapter may wish to create an action center targeting a specific member of their state's federal congressional delegation requesting their support for federal wildlife legislation. Action centers can also be adapted to target decision makers at the state level. **If your CAC is interested in pursuing this type of engagement, contact** policy@wildlife.org.

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SECTION 5: POLICY PROCESSES AND WHERE TO ENGAGE

5.1 U.S. STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROCESS AND HOW YOU CAN BECOME INVOLVED

Your advocacy efforts are key to helping shape both state and federal laws and budgets. There are many points in the legislative process at which you can become involved - from the drafting and introduction of a bill to its passage and enactment into law. The importance of getting involved cannot be overstated; most legislators know very little about wildlife related issues and the impact their policies can have on wildlife conservation and wildlife professionals. They have much to learn from you as a wildlife professional who is intimately familiar with the issues.

It is important to remember that your state and federal representatives work for you and the other constituents in their district. They are elected by a majority of their constituents and remain interested in local issues and how they can work to benefit the community. Most also want to be re-elected and recognize the need to keep constituents happy. At the same time, they must balance competing interests, including the need to support effective programs while remaining fiscally responsible.

The following is a summary of the typical legislative process for bills and suggestions on how you can become more involved in the process at each step. The legislative process is generally the same at both the state and federal level, with the obvious exception that the process ends with either the President (federal) or the Governor (state).

Please note there is variation in legislative processes and terms from state to state. Every state legislature has a website with information about the legislative process in that state. See Appendix G for direct links to state legislature websites.

1. **Bill Drafting**:

Legislators often work with advocates to craft the language that will be included in legislation or to draft amendments to a bill that has already been introduced. This type of partnership is most common and successful when advocates have an existing relationship with a legislator. Prior to introduction, a legislator may also work with an independent legislative agency, known as the Office of Legislative Counsel at the U.S. federal level, to ensure the proposed language conforms with existing formatting requirements and has the intended effect. Legislators may also seek out any technical edits from the relevant government agency targeted in the legislation.

> ***Getting Involved:***
> Units can go to a friendly legislator and request that a bill be drafted to fund programs or projects, address a problem, change policy, etc. Units can also work with legislators to influence proposed or existing bill language.

2. Bill Introduction:

When bills are formally introduced, they are assigned a bill number and referred to committee(s). Generally, bills can be introduced in either chamber (House or Senate on the U.S. federal level).

Visit your state or the federal legislature's website to learn more about which bills are currently being introduced (See Appendix G). Once you access the website you can find a specific bill using the bill's assigned number or text in the bill. You can also find out to which committee(s) it has been referred.

> ***Getting Involved:***
> When favorable legislation is introduced, units can issue a press release and/or write letters applauding the bill's introduction. Legislators appreciate public acknowledgment of their work, especially when it comes from constituents and is shared with others in their district.
>
> Units can also reach out to the office(s) introducing the legislation to see if they would like help in courting cosponsors on the bill. See Section 3 for additional information on mechanisms for making your "ask" to offices.
>
> If unfavorable legislation is introduced, it is better to submit your suggested changes to the bill once it is in committee – see next step.

3. Bills Referred to Committee(s) of Jurisdiction

Most of the work done on a bill happens in committee; ***this is the most common and effective stage at which to take action on the proposed bill***. Committee Chairs and Ranking Members decide which bills will receive the most attention. Committees may hold hearings on a bill, propose and adopt amendments, and vote on approval of a bill—or they can let a bill die by failing to take any action before the conclusion of a legislative session. If a bill is voted on and approved at the committee level, it is reported out to the full chamber for consideration. For hearings, advocates may be asked to suggest witnesses and may be asked for input on witness testimony.

House committees that interact regularly with legislation affecting wildlife and wildlife professionals include:

- *House Natural Resources Committee* – This committee deals with legislation pertaining to federally-managed lands federal fish and wildlife management, and oversight of Department of the Interior activities.
- *House Agriculture Committee* – The scope of this committee includes oversight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, including federal forestry and Farm Bill conservation programs.
- *House Appropriations Committee* – See Chapter 5.2 for a detailed overview of the appropriations process.

Committees of interest in the Senate are somewhat similar to those in the House, although scope and jurisdiction are not always identical. Relevant Senate committees include:

- *Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works* – Administers the Endangered Species Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act, and Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act.
- *Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources* – Provides oversight on federally-managed lands and administers the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act.
- *Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry* – Similar in scope to the House Agriculture Committee
- *Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation* – Interacts with coastal management programs, federally-listed marine species, commercial fisheries management, and certain USGS science programs.
- *Senate Committee on Appropriations* – Equivalent to the House Appropriations Committee

Getting Involved:
A common and effective way to influence the content of a bill is to write a letter to the appropriate committee while the bill is under consideration. (See Section 3.3) You may also consider meeting directly with members of the legislature who serve in important or influential roles on the committee. In person meetings can be very effective at expressing your position and hearing feedback from the member and their staff on the proposed legislation.

Advocates may also write to Committee members and encourage a hearing on a bill that is important to them. Advocates may prepare oral and/or written testimony to deliver at hearings. Advocates may also provide suggested questions or comments for a friendly legislator on the committee to ask of witnesses. It is also important to recruit fellow advocates or allies to pack hearings on wildlife related budgets and key legislation.

4. Floor Action on a Bill

Bills reported out of committee are placed on the House or Senate calendar for debate by the full chamber. This scheduling is done at the U.S. federal level by the House Speaker or Senate Majority Leader. Legislators that support and oppose a bill are given a chance to speak about the bill during the debate. If the bill is not placed on the chamber's calendar, no action would be taken on the bill and it is effectively dead. When debate concludes, a vote is taken to either approve or defeat a bill.

After the legislation is determined appropriate for floor consideration and prior to debate, members of the legislative body's Rules Committee will meet to determine the confines of debate for the legislation. This process includes determining what amendments to the legislation can be considered and voted on while on the floor.

Getting Involved:
Units have the opportunity to contact key legislators in advance of a floor vote to ask them to vote and/or speak in support or opposition to a bill. Units can also reach out to offices to recommend a certain vote on any amendments to the legislation proposed on the floor.

5. Conference Committee

Sometimes similar, but not identical, bills pass both legislative chambers. When this happens, a conference committee must be formed to reconcile the differences in the bills. Once differences are resolved, each legislative body must again vote to approve the modified legislation.

Getting Involved:
Units can reach out to legislative leadership to request the appointment of friendly legislators to the conference committee. Prior to this action, units should reach out to those friendly offices to ensure they are aware of the request.

Once members of the conference committee are determined, units can reach out to conference committee members highlighting any support or opposition to specific language ending up in the final, agreed upon version of the bill.

6. Action by the Governor/President

When a Governor/President receives a bill they may sign the bill into law, veto the bill or veto and send it back to the legislature with suggestions for reconsideration, or take no action (in some states that will lead to the bill becoming law after a specific period of time). If the Governor/President vetoes a bill, the legislature may override that decision, typically by a two-thirds vote in both legislative bodies.

Getting Involved:
Bills for which the Governor/President signals some reluctance about signing, advocates may write letters or op-eds and/or issue a press release to help sway the decision. When an important, favorable bill is signed into law, advocates may issue a press release and have members attend a signing ceremony, if one is held. This helps build goodwill and generates positive publicity for elected officials.

5.2 U.S. FEDERAL BUDGETING PROCESS

The U.S. federal budgeting process begins the first Monday in February of each year and is intended to conclude by October 1st, the start of the federal fiscal year.

Step 1: The Executive Budget

Purpose: The President is responsible for submitting a detailed budget request to Congress in February. Estimated levels of spending, revenue, and borrowing are broken down for the coming fiscal year, serving as a template for congressional action.

Process: Assembling the budget is a long administrative process involving each individual agency and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). OMB and the agencies develop priorities and list the funding levels needed to maintain or improve individual programs and expenses.

> ***Getting Involved:***
> Contact agencies as they are formulating budget requests for the upcoming year. This process starts long before February so make sure to start communication early, ideally no later than September of the year prior. Promote your priorities including individual programs and overall strategies to each agency and the OMB personnel working with priority agencies.

Step 2: The Concurrent Budget Resolution

Purpose: Congress is responsible for developing the concurrent budget resolution which governs the rest of the budget process by setting limits on total levels of revenue and spending. The resolution is where Congress expresses its economic goals for the upcoming fiscal year and for the next four years.

Process: The Budget Committees of the House and Senate use the President's budget request, testimony from agencies, and forecasts from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) to set a total level of budget authority called the 302(a) allocation level. When the House and Senate have developed their respective resolutions, a conference committee must reconcile the differences. The resolution is required by law to be passed by both chambers by April 15, though this rarely is the case. In reality, this step, along with steps 3 and 4 below, often occur concurrently or out of order entirely.

> ***Getting Involved:***
> Contact members of Congress on the Budget Committee or on the conference committee showing support for a resolution that supports natural resource funding.

Step 3: Setting Spending Allocations

Purpose: Congress must agree on spending allocations, or limits to how much money can be spent on discretionary programs during the coming fiscal year and the next four years. The allocations ensure that Congress is holding to the budget resolution. Discretionary funding refers specifically to money provided each year through the appropriations process.*

Process: The House and Senate Appropriations committees divide up the money specified in the concurrent budget resolution into separate appropriations bills. The subcommittees that produce each appropriations bill must use this allocation as a total dollar ceiling for all of the agencies and programs in their jurisdiction. These are called 302(b) allocations.

> ***Getting Involved:***
> Contact members of Congress on the Appropriations committee. Encourage higher allocations for the appropriations bills that deal with natural resources. The two main natural resources bills are the ones that fund the Interior Department and Agriculture Department (see step 4).

Step 4: Developing Appropriations Bills

Purpose: Appropriations bills set the amount of money specific departments, agencies, and programs receive for a given fiscal year.

Process: Each Appropriations subcommittee is responsible for a set of departments, agencies, and programs and writes one bill each year that divides up their 302(b) allocation into line items for each program. Each bill is drafted, amended, goes through markup, and is voted on by the relevant subcommittee. The full Appropriations committee then holds a hearing to approve and amend the subcommittee bill. There are 12 Appropriations subcommittees and 12 subsequent bills per chamber. The Subcommittees and related bills are:

1. Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and related agencies
2. Commerce, Justice, Science, and related agencies
3. Defense
4. Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies
5. Financial Services and General Government
6. Homeland Security
7. Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
8. Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies
9. Legislative Branch
10. Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies
11. State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs
12. Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies

The Appropriations Committees that address natural resources are:

House

- Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
- Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

Senate

- Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
- Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

Getting Involved:

Contact Appropriations subcommittee (Agriculture and Interior) and full committee members as they hold hearings and markups on the bills. Make sure to identify and support specific aspects of the bills as well as funding levels that line up with your priorities. Find other organizations that have similar funding priorities and work together to send coalition letters that represent diverse groups and individuals.

Many members of Congress will have forms available on their website for units to provide information on specific funding requests and the relevance of the request to their state or district. Even if members of Congress in your unit are not members of the Appropriations Committee, it can still be worthwhile to conduct outreach via these forms in order to inform the office's individual funding requests to the committee.

Some members of Congress also provide forms for constituent-level organizations to make requests for Congressionally-Directed Spending, also known as earmarks. Members of Congress can request earmark language that directs funds to be spent on specific projects located within their state or district. Units aware of conservation projects requiring funding that fall within the geographic jurisdiction of a given member of Congress may find it worthwhile to conduct outreach via Congressionally-Directed Spending forms (if available) or via direct outreach to offices.

Step 5: Passing the Appropriations Bills

Purpose: Each appropriations bill must be approved by both chambers.

Process: After Senate and House Appropriations committees approve each of the twelve appropriations bills in their respective chambers, the full Senate and House vote to approve them. Once each bill passes each chamber, conference committees made up of both chambers must reconcile the differences and develop a bill that both chambers can then vote to approve. Congress is required to have given final approval to all 12 spending bills by October 1 (the start of the new Fiscal Year), although this deadline is rarely met.

Getting Involved:

Contact members of Congress on the conference committee. Support the versions of each provision in a given appropriations bill (House or Senate) that most closely aligns with your unit's natural resource priorities.

Step 6: Presidential Approval of Appropriations Bills

Purpose: As an executive check on the legislative branch, the President can decide to veto or approve the appropriations bills. While each bill can reach the President's desk as standalone legislation, Congress can also compile a subset of the twelve bills into one legislative package for consideration.

Process: The President has ten days in which to decide:

a) To sign an appropriations bill, thereby making it law;
b) To veto the bill, thereby sending it back to Congress and requiring much of the process to begin again with respect to the programs covered by that bill; or
c) To allow the bill to become law without their signature after 10 days, thereby making it law but doing so without their express approval.

Step 7: The Bill Becomes Law

If the process goes as planned, all 12 spending bills have been signed by the President and become Public Law by October 1st, the start of the new Fiscal Year. Since 2011, the October 1st deadline has not been met and Congress has had to pass a Continuing Resolution (CR) to fund the government. A CR, for the most part, allows programs to continue with the same amount of funding as the year before while Congress works to approve new appropriations bills. If a CR cannot be passed and the 12 Appropriations bills are not approved, then the Federal government is shutdown.

* Programs that use discretionary funds are funded each year through the Appropriations process. When the program is enacted by law, a funding level, or Authorization, is set by the law. Authorizations are the maximum amount of money that is legally allowed to be spent by the program. Every year, these discretionary programs are appropriated money through Appropriations bills; the amount of money appropriated can vary each year. Mandatory programs are not funded through annual appropriations bills; spending for mandatory programs is dictated by the laws that created the programs (e.g. Social Security) and cannot be altered by the annual budgeting process described here.

5.3 U.S. AND CANADIAN FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCIES

U.S. Federal Government Agencies

Department of Agriculture

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service -
The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) provides leadership in ensuring the health and care of animals and plants. APHIS improves agricultural productivity and competitiveness and contributes to the national economy and the public health.

> Programs of Interest: APHIS Wildlife Services - Wildlife Damage Management, Methods Development
>
> Appropriations: Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

Farm Service Agency -
The Farm Service Agency (FSA) implements agricultural policy, administers credit and loan programs, and manages conservation, commodity, disaster and farm marketing programs through a national network of offices.

> Programs of Interest: Conservation Reserve Program (CRP); Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP); Farmable Wetlands Program (FWP)
>
> Appropriations: Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

Forest Service -
The Forest Service (USFS) administers programs for applying sound conservation and utilization practices to natural resources of the national forests and grasslands, for promoting these practices on all forest lands through cooperation with states and private landowners, and for carrying out extensive forest and range research. USFS manages 193 million acres of public lands in 43 states and Puerto Rico.

> Programs of Interest: Integrated Resource Restoration Program; Forest and Rangeland Research; Wildlife and Fisheries Habitat
>
> Appropriations: Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

National Institute of Food and Agriculture -
The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), formally the Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service (CSREES), works in partnership with land-grant universities and other public and private organizations to provide the focus to advance a global system of extramural research, extension, and higher education in the food and agricultural sciences.

Programs of Interest: Renewable Resources Extension Act; McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Program

Appropriations: Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

Natural Resource Conservation Service -
The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment.

Programs of Interest: Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP); Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP); Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (ACEP); Healthy Forest Reserve Program; Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

Appropriations: Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management -
The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages 247 million of public lands located primarily in the 12 western states, including Alaska. BLM manages an additional 700 million acres of below ground mineral estate located throughout the country. These lands were originally valued for the commodities extracted from them. Today the public also prizes them for their recreational opportunities and the natural, historical, and cultural resources they contain.

Programs of Interest: Wildlife and Fisheries Management; Wild Horse and Burro Management

Appropriations: Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

National Park Service -
The National Park Service (NPS) preserves the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park System comprises 401 areas covering more than 84 million acres across every state, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. NPS cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

Appropriations: Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service -
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is the only agency of the U.S. Government whose primary responsibility is fish, wildlife, and plant conservation. FWS helps protect a healthy

environment for people, fish, and wildlife, and helps Americans conserve and enjoy the outdoors. FWS' major responsibilities are for migratory birds, endangered species, certain marine mammals, and freshwater and anadromous fish. FWS manages 307 million acres of lands and waters across the U.S.

Programs of Interest: State and Tribal Wildlife Grants; National Wildlife Refuge System; North Americans Wetlands Conservation Act; Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Grants Program; Ecological Services Program; Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program, Science Application Program

Appropriations: Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

U.S. Geological Survey -
The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) serves as an independent fact-finding agency that collects, monitors, analyzes, and provides scientific understanding about natural resource conditions, issues, and problems. The value of the USGS rests on its ability to conduct studies on a national scale and to sustain long-term monitoring and assessment of natural resources. Because it has no regulatory or management mandate, the USGS provides impartial science that serves the needs of our changing world.

Programs of Interest: Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units; National and Regional Climate Adaptation Science Centers, Ecosystems Science Centers, National Wildlife Health Center

Appropriations: Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

Canadian Federal Government Agencies

Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change

Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada -
The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) determines the national status of wild Canadian species, subspecies, varieties or other units that are suspected of being at risk of extinction or extirpation. COSEWIC uses a process based on science and Aboriginal or community knowledge to assess wildlife species at risk. The 31 voting members of COSEWIC include a Co-chair from each of the 10 Species Specialist subcommittees and a Co-chair from the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Subcommittee, one member from each of the 13 provincial and territorial governments, one member from each of four Federal agencies (Canadian Wildlife Service, Parks Canada Agency, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and the Canadian Museum of Nature), and three non-government science members.

Environment Canada -
Directly and/or through partnership arrangements, Environment and Climate Change Canada establishes and manages National Wildlife Areas and Migratory Bird Sanctuaries for the conservation of habitat to protect migratory birds, species at risk and other species

of national interest. National Wildlife Areas and Migratory Bird Sanctuaries can be established in either terrestrial or marine environments.

Environment Canada also includes the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) which handles wildlife matters that are the responsibility of the federal government. These include the protection and management of migratory birds, nationally significant wildlife habitat, endangered species, control of international trade in endangered species, and research on wildlife issues of national importance.

Parks Canada -
Parks Canada establishes and manages National Parks and National Marine Conservation Areas, which are intended to protect a representative sample of Canada's 39 terrestrial natural regions and 29 marine regions and to provide opportunities for public education and enjoyment.

Ministry of Natural Resources

Natural Resources Canada -
Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) is primarily responsible for overseeing the management of Canada's forests and timber industry. NRCan also manages issues related to climate change and is responsible for the federal government's response plans regarding climate change and adaptation.

Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs

This department is overseen by both the minister of Crown-Indigenous relations and the minister of northern affairs. Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) is responsible for the management of natural resources in Canada's northern lands and territories including oil and gas operations, and for coordinating government responsibilities between Canada, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis.

Ministry of Fisheries and Oceans

Fisheries and Oceans Canada-
Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is charged with managing all of Canada's fisheries and aquaculture operations, as well as overseeing navigability of Canada's waterways and the operations of the Canadian Coast Guard. DFO also plays a key role in marine mammal management, and interacts directly with the Species at Risk Act to engage in the management and recovery of aquatic species at risk.

5.4 CANADIAN FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Your advocacy efforts are key to helping shape both provincial and federal laws and budgets. There are many points in the legislative process at which you can become involved - from the introduction of a bill to its passage and enactment into law. The importance of getting involved cannot be overstated; most legislators know very little about wildlife related issues and the impact their policies can have on wildlife conservation and wildlife professionals. They have much to learn from you as a wildlife professional intimately familiar with the issues.

It is important to remember that your provincial and federal representatives work for you and the other constituents in their district. Members of the House of Commons (MPs) are elected by a majority of their constituents and remain interested in local issues and how they can work to benefit the community. Most also want to be re-elected and recognize the need to keep constituents happy. At the same time, they must balance competing interests, including the need to support effective programs while remaining fiscally responsible.

The following is a summary of the typical legislative process for bills and suggestions on how you can become more involved in the process at each step. The legislative process is generally the same at both the provincial and federal level, with the key exception that the federal Parliament is a bicameral legislature, meaning there are two legislative bodies: the House of Commons and the Senate. In order for federal legislation to be enacted, it must be passed by a majority in each body. Provincial legislative branches, by contrast, are unicameral as there is only one legislative body (referred to as the legislative assembly, national assembly, or house of assembly) for bills to go through.

Please note there is some variation in the legislative process from province to province. Every provincial legislature has a website with information about the legislative process in that province. Links to provincial legislature websites are provided in *Appendix G*

1. **Legislation Introduced:**

   Most legislation originates with the Government in the form of a policy proposal, submitted to the Cabinet by the Minister(s). Legislation in the House of Commons consists of either public bills, which relate to national-level issues and interests, or private bills, which affect powers and exemptions applying to individuals and/or corporations. Public bills proposed by Cabinet Ministers are known as government bills, while those proposed by MPs are known as private members' bills.

   a) If the Cabinet approves a policy proposal, the responsible Ministry issues drafting instructions to the Legislation Section of the Department of Justice.

   b) Draft bills are prepared in two official languages and then approved by the responsible Minister and the Cabinet prior to being introduced in Parliament.

Getting Involved:
Units can go to a friendly MP and request that a bill be drafted to fund programs or projects, address a problem, change policy, etc. Units can also work with MPs to influence proposed or existing bill language.

2. **First Reading:**

   The Member or Minister performs a first reading in either the Senate or the House of Commons. At this point, the bill is printed and considered formally introduced and is given a number: C-# for House bills and S-# for Senate bills. Only the House can introduce legislation concerned with raising or spending funds.

   Getting Involved:
   When favorable legislation is introduced, units can issue a press release and/or write letters applauding the bill's introduction. Legislators appreciate public acknowledgment of their work, especially when it comes from constituents and is shared with others in their district.

   If unfavorable legislation is introduced, it is better to submit your suggested changes to the bill once it is in committee – see step 4.

3. **Second Reading:**

   The Second reading occurs in the House or Senate, wherever the bill was first introduced. During this reading, the principle of the bill is debated. The motion for second reading may be amended in only 3 ways:

   1. A three or six months' hoist, which seeks to postpone consideration of the bill for three or six months;
   2. A reasoned amendment, which requests that the House not give second reading to a bill for a specific reason; or
   3. A motion to refer the subject matter of the bill to a committee.

   A Minister may also move that a bill be referred to a committee before second reading. This allows members of a committee to examine the principle of a bill before approval by the House and to propose amendments to alter its scope. The resultant next stage is a combination of the report stage and the second reading.

   Getting Involved:
   If unfavorable legislations are introduced, speak to your MP to request that the bill not be given a second reading.

4. **Consideration in Committee**

   Once adopted, the Bill is referred to a legislative, standing, or special committee, or to the Committee of the Whole.

Committee Steps

1. Consideration of the bill through a clause-by-clause study.
2. Hearings may be helped in which witnesses and experts are summoned to provide the Committee with information and help in improving the bill.
3. Each committee can hold a "mark-up" session during which it makes recommended revisions and additions.
4. After the bill has been reviewed and amended, committee staff prepares a written report explaining why they favor the bill, and what amendments were made (if any).
5. The Committee provides this report to the House and the House considers the amendments proposed and votes for or against them.

In the House of Commons, committees that regularly interact with legislation concerning wildlife include:

- Committee on Natural Resources (RNNR) – Provides oversight on the Department of Natural Resources (NRCan)
- Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs (INAN) – Oversees operations covered by the Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs (CIRNAC) and the Department of Indigenous Services (ISC)
- Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development (ENVI) – Oversees the activities of Environment and Climate Change Canada and Parks Canada. Administers environmental legislation including the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, the Species at Risk Act, the Migratory Bird Convention Act, and the Canada Wildlife Act
- Committee on Fisheries and Oceans (FOPO) – Interacts with any legislation affecting Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and the Canadian Coast Guard
- Committee on Government Operations and Estimates (OGGO) – Roughly equivalent to the US House Appropriations Committee

In the Canadian Senate, committees of interest include:

- Committee on Energy, the Environment, and Natural Resources (ENEV) – Interacts with legislation relating to Canada's National Parks, migratory bird protections, threatened wildlife, and the Species at Risk Act
- Committee on Agriculture and Forestry (AGFO) – Legislation impacting federally-managed forests
- Committee on Aboriginal Peoples (APPA) – Similar jurisdiction to INAN in the House of Commons

- Committee on Fisheries and Oceans (POFO) – Similar jurisdiction to FOPO in the House of Commons
- Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets, and Administration (CIBA) – Similar to the Senate Committee on Appropriations in the U.S., and OGGO in the House of Commons

  Getting Involved:

  A common and effective way to influence the content of a bill is to write a letter to the committee while the bill is under consideration. (See Section 3.3 for tips on writing letters to legislators) You may also consider meeting directly with MPs or Senators, as appropriate, who serve in important or influential roles on the committee. In person meetings can be very effective at expressing your position and hearing feedback from the member and their staff on the proposed legislation. Units may also write to Committee members and encourage a hearing on a bill that is important to them. Advocates may prepare oral and/or written testimony to deliver at hearings. Advocates may also provide suggested questions or comments for a friendly legislator on the committee to ask of witnesses. It is also important to recruit fellow advocates or allies to pack hearings on wildlife related budgets and key legislation.

5. Third Reading

This reading is the last opportunity for the House to amend the bill. The House debates and votes on the final bill as amended and the bill is printed for the last time. Once the bill has been passed it is sent to the other House (i.e. if passed in the House, it is referred to the Senate) and the process starts again from the first reading.

Getting Involved:

Advocates can contact MPs or Senators directly with suggestions to improve the bill for wildlife.

6. Conference Committee

If language within House and Senate bills differs, the House may elect to accept the Senate's amendments. If the House does not agree with the Senate, it can adopt a motion stating the reason for disagreement. If the Senate wishes to alter the amendment, it sends a message back to the House, which then accepts or rejects the proposed changes.

If an agreement cannot be reached through this exchange, the Parliamentary House with possession of the bill can request a conference. The objective of the Conference Committee is to reach a compromise – which must be approved by both the House and the Senate. Although this practice is available, it has fallen into disuse.

Historically the Senate has reviewed legislation from a less partisan standpoint, and is likely to pass bills that the House proposes.

Getting Involved:
See section 4 (above) for suggestions on how to interact with Committee members.

7. Royal Assent

After a bill has cleared both the House and Senate (in the same form), it is presented to the Governor General for assent. Royal assent refers to the method by which any constitutional monarch formally approves an act of their nation's parliament, making it into law. The Governor General may assent the bill in the Queen's name, withhold assent, or reserve assent. In the provinces royal assent takes place in the House or in the chambers of the Lieutenant Governor.

8. The Bill Becomes a Law

Once the Governor General gives a bill Royal Assent it becomes a law and is assigned an official Chapter number (i.e. Bill C-7 became Chapter 1 of the Statutes of Canada, 2000).

Getting Involved:
When an important, favorable bill is signed into law, units may issue a press release and pack a signing ceremony, if one is held. This helps build goodwill and generates positive publicity for elected officials.

Units may also wish to give an award to legislators or other elected officials who support their work and mission. Elected officials need to know when they are doing something favorable just as much as when they are doing something unfavorable.

Most importantly, all laws are effected through the subsequent drafting and enactment of regulations and program spending. The impacts of laws on wildlife and wildlife professionals can be influenced significantly at these junctures. In fact it can be argued that engaging with the development of regulations and spending plans is at least as important, if not more so, than the wording of the law itself as these points dictate on-the-ground implementation of the law.

5.5 CANADIAN FEDERAL BUDGETING PROCESS

Canada's annual federal budget cycle begins following a recess of Parliament in June of each year. The federal budget sets the government's fiscal agenda for the coming year, and lays out a plan for how priorities will be addressed to fulfill that agenda.

Step 1: Cabinet Budget Preparation

Purpose: The Cabinet is tasked with reviewing information on the federal economic and fiscal outlook, public issues/concerns, and any likely fiscal policy or major government priorities for the coming year, to help inform agency and department budget preparations later in the process.

Process: Two Cabinet retreats occur between June and September, where the Cabinet engages in discussions around major fiscal priorities for the coming year. The Minister of Finance is responsible for providing reports and key policy areas to inform these discussions.

> ***Getting Involved:***
> Contact ministers to promote your priorities (e.g. increased funding for specific programs, broader department strategies, etc.) during the budget preparation process.

Step 2: Pre-Budget Consultation

Purpose: Budget consultation incorporates needs and feedback from central agencies and departments, provincial finance ministers, the Standing Committee on Finance (Standing Committee), and members of the public, into a final budget strategy.

Process: The Standing Committee facilitates public participation in the federal budgeting process with a call to all interested parties to submit their thoughts on federal spending priorities during budget consultation. Input received during the consultation process, recommendations made by the Standing Committee, and proposed needs identified by central and provincial agencies and departments, are utilized by the Minister of Finance to create the final budget strategy.

> ***Getting Involved:***
> Submit requests for funding of relevant legislation and programs during the pre-budget consultation process. Template language or guiding questions are often provided to help craft these requests. Requests may entail calls for specific funding allocations to agency and department programs, or broader calls for the implementation of new policy or amendments to existing legislation.

Step 3: Review and Approval of Budget

Purpose: The Minister of Finance and Prime Minister must approve a final Budget strategy following a review of the strategy by the Cabinet. Budget estimates are presented to Parliament for debate and final allocation.

Process: As part of the approval of the Budget strategy, the Department of Finance produces estimates of funding allocations required to meet the policy priorities identified for the upcoming year. This information is reviewed for approval by the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. This process typically culminates with the Minister of Finance's Budget Speech, which formally announces the government's Budget. The main estimates presented in the government's Budget are immediately tabled for debate and review by the House of Commons and all relevant subcommittees.

Step 4: Appropriations Acts for Main and Supplemental Estimates.

Purpose: Estimated allocations within the Budget are reviewed within the House of Commons to inform all necessary Appropriations Acts. Appropriations Acts are reviewed and passed by both chambers of Parliament before being presented to the Crown for final assent.

Process: All relevant standing Committees within the House of Commons review the detailed estimates included in the federal Budget. Although standing committees do not have the power to increase these estimates, they may vote to approve, reject, or decrease them. This review must be completed by May 31st of each year.

Concurrent with standing committee review of Budget estimates, the Secretary of the Treasury Board produces Appropriation Act No. 1, an interim supply bill to fund the government in between the tabling of the Estimates and May 31. Appropriation Act No. 2 will then allocate the remaining funds required to meet the agreed-upon Estimates.

> ***Getting Involved:***
> Contact your Members of Parliament during their review of the Appropriations Acts to provide input on specific program allocations contained within the bills.

Conservation Affairs Network Policy Toolkit

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TEMPLATE CAC TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference template provided below is meant to better define the duties, objectives, and procedures relevant to your organization unit's CAC. This may supplement CAC operations information included in your unit's bylaws, or exist as a standalone document. Most importantly, unit CAC's should feel free to customize this template as much as is needed to fit the interests, expertise, and capacity of their team. TWS staff are available to review and provide feedback on draft CAC Terms of Reference.

[SECTION/CHAPTER] OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY
CONSERVATION AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose of the Terms of Reference

The purpose of the *Terms of Reference* document is to establish the composition and mode of operation for the [Section/Chapter] Conservation Affairs Committee that will help ensure a consistent, unbiased, and accurate approach is taken when providing information and comments on emerging and ongoing wildlife management and conservation issues in [State/Province/Region]. The document is consistent with the goals and objectives of the [Section/Chapter] and The Wildlife Society.

Background

Within the [Section/Chapter] of The Wildlife Society, there exists a need to periodically review and provide comments on developing and ongoing issues relevant to wildlife conservation and management in [State/Province/Region/Cross-border]. For this purpose, the Executive Committee established a [Section/Chapter] Conservation Affairs Committee (CAC). The CAC will coordinate the development and dissemination of information required to inform managers, policy makers, and the public concerning these issues. The CAC will also accept feedback from the membership with respect to which issues warrant the attention of the [Section/Chapter], and determine, in consultation with the Executive Committee, which issues will be undertaken for consideration and analysis.

Objectives of the Conservation Affairs Committee

1) To clearly identify and describe the issues surrounding wildlife management across [State/Province/Region], and where appropriate, to contribute information relevant to decision making at all levels of government. This will occur through coordination with the [Section/Chapter] Executive Committee, and individual expertise within the [Section/Chapter];
2) To provide scientific and technical background information in a manner that is consistent with the goals and directions of the [Section/Chapter] and The Wildlife Society; and

3) To provide feedback to The Wildlife Society staff on wildlife management and conservation issues of particular relevance to [State/Province/Region], such that The Wildlife Society can undertake its mandate sensitive to the needs of the membership.

Deliverables of the Conservation Affairs Committee

1) Assessment of wildlife management and conservation problems that would benefit from the background and experience of members of the [Section/Chapter] and Executive Committee.
2) Commentary on the state of understanding and science of wildlife management issues to relevant governments, such that decisions are made in light of the best available information of relevance to wildlife and the public.
3) Assistance with the production of "white papers" or position statements on [State/Province/Region] wildlife management issues, as identified by the [Section/Chapter] Executive Committee.

Roles and Responsibilities

Conservation Affairs Committee

The CAC will be responsible for:

- General oversight and management of communication regarding wildlife management issues across [State/Province/Region] on behalf of the [Section/Chapter];
- Identifying issues to be considered, prioritizing such issues, and deciding what specific issues the CAC will address at any given time;
- For each issue referred to the CAC for consideration, collecting relevant information from expertise within the [Section/Chapter] and drafting comments on that issue for review by the [Section/Chapter] Executive Committee;
- Assessing the need for external review of CAC commentary and transparently coordinating the review in an open and consultative manner;
- Ensuring all deliverables of the CAC, in as much as possible, objectively assess policy options, and focuses on providing accurate and timely scientific information (including information on uncertainty) to inform decision making to the fullest extent possible;
- Ensuring all information provided by the CAC has been undertaken in a manner consistent with the best available information, consistent with the high standards of the [Section/Chapter] and The Wildlife Society; and,
- Submitting to the [Section/Chapter] for approval all final communications, commentary and information for the Section.

Committee Members

Members of the [Section/Chapter] will become members of the CAC based on their professional qualifications and interest in wildlife conservation issues in

[State/Province/Region]. Consideration will be given to a potential member's geographic location and/or area of expertise. [Sections may wish to include the requirement that representation will include one member of each Chapter in the Section]. Members of the CAC will not serve as representatives of their employers but rather as individual professionals working to advance the goals and mandate of the [Section/Chapter].

CAC Chair

As per the [Section/Chapter] bylaws, the Chair of the CAC is appointed on a(n) [annual/bi-annual] basis by the incoming President of the [Section/Chapter]. The primary role of the CAC Chair is to convene and coordinate the activities of the CAC. The CAC Chair will also serve as a primary liaison between the CAC and the Executive Committee of the [Section/Chapter] and TWS' Government Affairs and Partnership Program. [Chapters: *The CAC Chair is also responsible for serving as the Chapter Representative at the Section level CAC.*] Specific accountabilities include:

- Support the CAC in confirming its terms of reference and priorities on an ad hoc basis;
- Approach and engage potential committee members on behalf of the CAC;
- Ensure that each CAC member understands their responsibilities and accountabilities;
- Oversee and coordinate the work of the CAC on behalf of the [Section/Chapter] Executive Committee, including:
    - Planning and scheduling CAC conference calls as needed;
    - Tracking CAC supported deliverables;
    - Ensure alignment of CAC deliverables with Section and The Wildlife Society position statements
- Ensure an efficient and appropriate flow of information between the CAC and the CSTWS Executive including providing progress reports to the Executive;
- Maintaining regular communications with staff at The Wildlife Society Headquarters regarding issues that may impact multiple subunits or set national precedence.

Relationship with **[Section/Chapter]** *Executive Committee*

The CAC will maintain a close relationship with the [Section/Chapter] Executive Committee to allow the efficient flow of information. Further, the [Section/Chapter] Executive Committee will work with the CAC to provide facilitation support to the CAC in order to reach consensus on particular issues.

Relationship with The Wildlife Society's Government Affairs and Partnerships Program

The CAC will maintain a close working relationship with The Wildlife Society to allow the efficient flow of information and cross collaboration on key issues of interest to the [Section/Chapter]. Staff at TWS will regularly facilitate shared communication on national issues of concern to all CAC Chairs in order to facilitate more efficient actions and effective collaboration across subunits.

Operations of the Conservation Affairs Committee

Decision Making

The CAC shall make decisions based on consensus, where consensus is defined as no substantive disagreement and may include agreement on a document that describes different perspectives on an issue.

When consensus cannot be reached the Chair of the CAC will inform the President of the [Section/Chapter].

Should there be a need to revisit a decision previously taken by the CAC, the person/group will do this in a timely way, along with an explanation as to why this is needed.

Final decisions or recommendations of the Committee will not be made by majority votes in committee. If a consensus cannot be reached, that will mean that the deliberations of the committee on this topic are finished.

Transparency, openness, and complete disclosure of information will be critical for the successful operation of the CAC. All information related to commentary generated by the CAC (e.g., position statement, correspondence with governments) will be made public.

The [Section/Chapter] will maintain final approval authority on communications, commentary and information issued on behalf of the Section.

Submission Development and Approval

In order to have consistent, high quality, and science-based submissions on wildlife management issues in [State/Province/Region], the CAC will strive to follow the following protocol for submission development and sign-off:

(1) An issue is put forward to the Executive Committee and CAC by any member (or non-member) for consideration.
(2) The Executive Committee and CAC weighs in on whether or not the [Section/Chapter] should prepare a statement, and how/to whom the statement should be forwarded.
(3) Assuming the Executive Committee agrees the group or individual who brought the issue forward is invited to draft the text of the submission. If they are unwilling/unable to do so, the Chair of the CAC will do so, or find and appoint someone qualified to do so.
(4) The submission will be edited and/or revised between the author and the CAC, and the final draft will be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval or final revisions.
(5) The submission will be signed by the [Section/Chapter] President and the Chair of the CAC.
(6) Should the [Section/Chapter] be drafting a position statement on a particular wildlife-related issue, the statement will be vetted with the Government Affairs staff before distribution.

Meetings

The CAC will work toward a goal of [# meetings/year] by [phone/video conference/in person], and once annually at the [Section/Chapter] annual meeting.

Approved by the [Section/Chapter] Executive Committee on DAY MONTH 20__.

APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY OF LEGISLATIVE TERMS

ACT – the term used to refer to a bill after it has passed both chambers of the legislature.

ADJOURNMENT – Marks the end of a legislative session. The legislature is closed to business until the start of a new session.

ADOPTION – The formal approval or acceptance of amendments or resolutions.

ADVICE AND CONSENT – Constitutionally based power of the Senate to advise the President and give consent to proposed treaties and Presidential appointments.

AMENDMENT – A proposal to change, or an actual change to a bill, motion, act, or the Constitution.

APPORTIONMENT – The allocation of legislative seats by law. The seats in the U.S. House of Representatives are apportioned to states based on each state's population.

APPROPRIATION – The allocation of funds by the legislature for a public purpose. In most instances, money cannot be withdrawn from the treasury except through a specific appropriation. Congress must pass appropriations bills in order to fund the government; there are 12 separate appropriation bills in the U.S. Congress used to fund the entire federal government.

AUTHOR – The legislator who files a bill and guides it through the legislative process.

AUTHORIZATION – A legislative action establishing the terms of a program and general amounts of money the program is legally allowed to use. Subsequent appropriation bills provide the specific funding amount and can be less than the amount authorized.

BICAMERAL – A legislative body divided into two separate assemblies (e.g. the Senate and House of Representatives in the U.S. Congress, the House of Commons and the Senate in Canada's Parliament.

BILL – A proposed law that requires passage by both the House of Representatives and Senate. A bill is the primary means used to create and change the laws. Bill types include: Senate and House bills, Senate and House joint resolutions, Senate and House concurrent resolutions, and Senate and House resolutions.

BILL ANALYSIS – A document prepared for all bills reported out of committee that explains in non-legal language what a bill will do. A bill analysis may include background information on the measure, a statement of purpose, and a section-by-section analysis.

BIPARTISAN – A term used to refer to an effort endorsed by both political parties, or a group composed of members of both political parties.

BLOC – Representatives or Senators who are members of a group with common interests.

BUDGET – The executive branch's annual proposal to Congress anticipating revenue and expenditures by the federal government for the upcoming fiscal year.

BUDGET RESOLUTION – Originating in Congress, the budget resolution sets spending ceilings for the fiscal year in response to the budget proposed by the executive branch.

CALENDAR – A list of bills or resolutions to be considered by a committee, sub-committee, the House, or the Senate.

CAUCUS – A meeting of members of a political party, usually to decide policy or select members to fill positions. The term also refers to the group itself, or of any other grouping of elected representatives focused on a particular issue (i.e. Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, Invasive Species Caucus).

CHAMBER – One portion of the legislature. The House of Representatives and the Senate are the two chambers in the United States Congress.

CLOTURE – The closing of debate in the Senate, or ending of a filibuster by the required three-fifths vote (60 senators), thereby allowing a bill to be voted on.

COMMITTEE – Group of appointed legislators who consider legislation and guide congressional action on particular issues.

COMMITTEE CHAIR - A member of the majority party, assigned the position by party leadership, who guides the committee and determines legislative action.

COMMITTEE REPORT – The text of a bill or resolution and its required attachments that is prepared when the measure is reported from a committee for further consideration by the members of the full chamber. The committee report includes the recommendations of the committee regarding action on the measure by the full House or Senate and is generally necessary before a measure can proceed through the legislative process.

COMPANION BILL – A bill introduced in either the House or Senate that is identical or similar to a bill introduced in the other house.

CONFEREES – Members of a conference committee that is composed of Senators and Representatives named to work out differences between same-subject bills passed by both chambers. Once the conferees have agreed on compromises in the bills, each chamber must vote on the revised bills before the bills can be signed into law by the Executive office.

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD – A daily account of House and Senate debates, votes, and comments published by the Government Publishing Office.

CONGRESSIONAL SESSION – The assembly of Congress to conduct business. Each Congress has at least two congressional sessions, one each year.

CONSTITUENT – A citizen residing within the district of an elected representative.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION – Legislation providing continued funding for a federal department or program, usually at the previous fiscal year's funding level. Used when Congress fails to pass necessary appropriations bills for a new fiscal year.

CONVENE – To assemble or call to order the members of a legislative body.

EARMARK – A congressional provision directing funds to be spent on specific projects. Also referred to as congressionally directed spending.

ENACTING CLAUSE – The initial language in a bill saying "*be it enacted*." To prevent the bill from being in effect, a legislator will move to "*strike the enacting clause*."

ENGROSSED BILL – Official copy of a bill passed by either the House or Senate.

ENROLLED BILL – Final certified copy of a bill passed in identical form by the House and Senate.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – A meeting closed to the public.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS – Comments that were not spoken on the floor but inserted into the Congressional Record by a Senator or Representative.

FILIBUSTER – Talking and debating a bill in an effort to change it or kill it.

FISCAL YEAR – The 12-month period denoted "FY XXXX" in which funds are apportioned. The U.S. federal government's fiscal year begins October 1st of the previous year and ends the following September 30th. For example, FY 2015 begins October of 2014.

FLOOR – The meeting chamber of either the House or Senate.

FLOOR ACTION – Action taken by either House or Senate on a bill reported by a committee. Members may propose amendments, enter debate, seek to promote or prevent a bill's passage, and vote on its final passage.

FLY-IN – An event bringing constituents from different jurisdictions/geographic areas to the legislative capitol (i.e. state or federal capitals) to advocate on behalf of a common interest or broadly-supported legislation. Fly-ins may also occur in a virtual setting, with many virtual meetings scheduled with offices in a set timeframe.

GERRYMANDER – To divide a state, county, or other political subdivision into election districts in an unnatural manner to give a political party or ethnic group an advantage over its opponents.

HEARING – A meeting of the Senate, House of Representatives, committee, subcommittee, or special committee of Congress to obtain information and solicit opinions on proposed legislation, conduct an investigation, or conduct oversight on the actions of a government agency or the implementation of a Federal law.

HOPPER – The box in which proposed bills are placed.

INTRODUCE – Placing a new bill in the Hopper to start the process of moving a bill through the legislature. This is the first stage of the bill process.

JOINT COMMITTEE – A committee that includes both Senators and Representatives.

JURISDICTION – Authority to interpret and apply law. Jurisdiction is often used to mean the geographical area in which a governing body's authority applies.

MAJORITY LEADER – Leader of the majority party in either the House or the Senate.

MARKUP – A committee session where the members perform a section-by-section review and revision of one or more bills.

MINORITY LEADER – Leader of the minority party in either the House or the Senate.

MOTION – A formal suggestion presented to a legislative body for action by one of its members while the body is meeting.

NONPARTISAN – Free from party domination.

PAIRING – An agreement by two members of Congress to be recorded on opposite sides of an issue if one or both persons will be absent when the vote is taken. The votes are not counted, but make the members' positions known.

PASSAGE – Approval of a measure by the full body.

PETITION – An official request submitted under the federal Endangered Species Act to either list, reclassify, or delist a species, or revise the definitions of critical habitat for a species.

POINT OF ORDER – An objection by a Senator or Representative to a rule being violated.

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE - The Vice President is the president of the Senate, but is present only for crucial votes. In their place, the Senate elects a president pro tempore (temporary president) who presides, or, when routine measures are being considered, assigns the job to a junior Senator.

PREVIOUS QUESTION – By a motion to "*move the previous question*," a Representative seeks to end debate and bring an issue to a vote. Senators do not have this debate-limiting device.

PRIVILEGE – A privileged question is a motion that is considered before other motions. A "*question of privilege*" relates to the personal privilege of a Senator or Representative.

PUBLIC HEARING – A meeting of a House or Senate committee or subcommittee during which public testimony may be heard and formal action may be taken on any measure or matter before the committee or subcommittee.

QUORUM – The number of members of a legislative body who must be present before business may be conducted.

RANKING MEMBER of a COMMITTEE – a member of the minority party, typically determined by seniority, who is the voice of the minority party in that committee or subcommittee.

RECESS – Suspends legislative business and sets time for the next meeting of the legislative body.

REPORT – A committee's written record of its actions and views on a bill. The committee is required to report its findings to the House or Senate.

RESOLUTION – A formal statement of a decision or opinion by the House, Senate, or both.
- A **simple resolution** is made by one chamber and generally deals with that chamber's rules or prerogatives; does not need Presidential approval.
- A **concurrent resolution** is presented in both chambers and usually expresses a congressional view on a matter not within congressional jurisdiction; does not need Presidential approval.
- A **joint resolution is** procedurally the same as a bill and requires approval by both chambers and the President. These are used to authorize "continuing resolutions" to fund the government, declare war, create federal commissions and ad hoc bodies, etc.

RIDER – A provision added to a bill so it may "*ride*" to approval on the strength of the bill. Generally, riders are placed on appropriations bills and limit the uses of federal funds.

SERGEANT AT ARMS – Legislative officer who maintains order and controls access to the chamber at the direction of the presiding officer.

SPECIAL RULE – A simple resolution of the House of Representatives to permit the immediate consideration of legislation outside the standard procedures of the House.

SPEAKER – Speaker of the House of Representatives who presides over the House. Elected, in effect, by the majority party in the House. Next in the line of succession to the Presidency after the Vice President.

SPONSOR/CO-SPONSOR – A sponsor of a bill is a Representative or Senator who introduces a bill for consideration. A co-sponsor is a Representative or Senator who adds their name as a supporter of the bill.

SUSPEND THE RULES – A motion in the House intended to quickly bring a bill to a vote.

SUPERMAJORITY – A threshold in the level of support (typically in relation to legislation) that is greater than a simple majority (e.g. a presidential veto of a bill may be overridden by congress by a two-thirds supermajority in both Houses).

TABLE A BILL – A motion to, in effect, put a bill aside and thereby remove it from consideration, or "*kill*" it.

TELLER VOTE – A House vote in which members' votes are counted "*for*" or "*against*" as representatives file past tellers in the front of the chamber. A count is taken, but there is not an official record of how each representative voted.

TREATY – A formally signed and ratified agreement between two or more nations or sovereigns.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT – A timesaving procedure for non-controversial measures. Measures are adopted without a vote when a member simply says, "*I ask unanimous consent for...*" and states the proposal and no member of Congress objects.

UNION CALENDAR – The calendar on which bills involving money are placed in order of the dates on which they are to be reported by committees.

WHIP – A legislator who is chosen to be the assistant to the leader of the party. A Whip is chosen in each of the House and Senate. The Whip is generally responsible for gathering votes for measures within a party.

VETO – The rejection of a decision or proposal made by a legislative body.

(Adapted from the U.S. Congress Handbook and CHADD Advocacy Manual)

APPENDIX C: EXAMPLE LETTER TO CONGRESS

June 30, 2021

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro
Chair, Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger,

Our organizations support the U.S. Geological Survey's Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Program and we ask that you allocate at least $27 million to the program for fiscal year 2022 to provide for the much-needed expansion of the program with two new units in Michigan and Indiana.

The USGS Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units (CRUs) are highly productive, cost-effective, and reputable sources of scientific information that further fish and wildlife management and conservation. Their work directly assists decision-makers in addressing the nation's greatest natural resource challenges, including climate change, disease, invasive species, and at-risk fish and wildlife.

Through a unique cooperative partnership of federal agencies, academic institutions, state fish and wildlife agencies, and non-governmental organizations (PL. 86-686), the CRU program provides actionable science and technical support for state and federal fish and wildlife managers. They uniquely address the applied science needs of management agencies while training diverse students to be the next generation of natural resource and conservation leaders. CRU graduates often go on to work directly for natural resource management agencies, further advancing the nation's conservation efforts.

Currently, there are 40 CRUs across 38 states embedded in major research universities that bridge the gap between science and natural resource decisions. CRU scientists produce credible, applied science that meets the direct needs of cooperators and empowers the front lines of fish and wildlife conservation. Their research yields both very specific, short-term information and long-term state-of-the-art research on complex, longer-term questions to inform critical conservation work.

A CRU budget of at least $27 million for FY2022 is $2 million above last year's appropriation and provides for two important and highly needed new CRUs to be established at universities—Michigan State University and Purdue University. These two new units will address a major gap in the CRU program in the Great Lakes region and provide critical fish and wildlife science to advance regional conservation actions.

Furthermore, we support an additional $5 million in each of the next 5 years for the CRU program to complete the Wildlife Migration Corridors Project for Big Game Species. This effort will leverage USGS science and collaboration capacity to comprehensively map migration corridors throughout the western states, aiding on-the-ground efforts to manage and conserve important species migration paths in the face of climate change, development, and other challenges.

We appreciated the support for the program in FY21 and we urge the Appropriations Committee to appropriate at least $27 million for the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Program in Fiscal Year 2022. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Douglas J. Austen

Douglas J. Austen, Ph.D.
American Fisheries Society

Carol L Chambers

Carol Chambers, Ph.D.
The Wildlife Society

Cc: members of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations

AFS is the world's oldest and largest professional society of fishery and aquatic scientists and managers. The Society seeks to improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by advancing fisheries and aquatic science and promoting the development of fisheries professionals. www.fisheries.org

The Wildlife Society and its network of affiliated chapters and sections represent professional wildlife biologists, managers, and educators dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship. The Society's mission is to inspire, empower, and enable wildlife professionals to sustain wildlife populations and habitat through science based management and conservation. www.wildlife.org

APPENDIX D: EXAMPLE COMMENTS ON AGENCY RULEMAKING

7 March 2022

U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

The Wildlife Society
425 Barlow Place
Bethesda, MD 20008

Re: Request for Information to Inform Interagency Efforts to Develop the American Conservation and Stewardship Atlas [Docket No. DOI-2021-0016]

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments that enhance the Administration's efforts to create a database representative of the diverse interests of private and public stakeholders and their efforts to conserve America's wildlife, lands, and waters.

Founded in 1937, The Wildlife Society (TWS; wildlife.org) and our network of affiliated chapters and sections represents over 15,000 wildlife biologists and managers, dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education. Our mission is to inspire, empower, and enable wildlife professionals to sustain wildlife populations and habitat through science-based management and conservation.

The Wildlife Society is supportive of the core principles of the American the Beautiful Initiative, particularly using science as a guide in implementation. While science informing the conservation of biodiversity must be foundational to any decision making, other core principles, such as pursuing a collaborative and inclusive approach to conservation, will be key in creating an Atlas tool that includes the diversity of conservation stakeholder needs and interests.

Our organization offers the following considerations for the Administration as they work to implement the core principles of the America the Beautiful Initiative through creation of the Conservation Stewardship Atlas:

Science and Data

What data sources should be included in the Atlas, and what technical approaches should be applied to data to create an Atlas that is useful for the public?

The Wildlife Society recommends that an American Conservation and Stewardship Atlas build on previously existing efforts by many public and private partners. By working with partners to link multiple existing GIS coverages and biological datasets, duplicative efforts can be more effectively avoided.

TWS has identified a non-exhaustive list of databases that should be considered when reaching out to partners on existing datasets. The datasets we have identified place priority on richness and biodiversity metrics as well as identified threats to native species as key indicators of the conservation status of landscapes. Other datasets, such as those detailing recreation opportunities and multi-use activities on landscapes, should also be considered in tandem with these indicators.

- **Global**: The use of international datasets should be of primary concern in the creation of the Atlas. The Wildlife Society strongly recommends that geographic datasets in support of the Atlas project not end at the US-Canada and US-Mexico borders. These borderlands are important for conservation, especially considering connectivity for wildlife and fish movements. For a more holistic evaluation of trans-boundary conservation issues, we encourage consideration of mapping at least a 100-200 km buffer that goes into adjoining Canada and Mexico.
    - United Nations Biodiversity Lab
    - Global Initiative on Ungulate Migration - A compilation of standardized maps detailing movement of ungulate populations.
- **National:** There are already many databases in the U.S. that provide information on biodiversity and species richness. In any approach, the U.S. Geological Survey, which already manages Biodiversity Information Serving Our Nation (BISON), should play a key role in compiling relevant datasets. Use of citizen science projects, particularly those that track sightings of at-risk and invasive species, should be a core component of the Atlas. In addition to being useful for natural resource professionals, the use of citizen science projects will allow for additional engagement with outdoor recreationists on protected landscapes.
    - Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System (EDDMapS) - Provides timely information on invasive species detections that can play an important role in the conservation of protected areas.
- **Regional:** Existing regional data initiatives often have buy-in from a suite of partners, including state fish and wildlife agencies. These initiatives are drawn from existing, state-based reporting of fish and wildlife species such as State Wildlife Action Plans to inform priority areas for species conservation.
    - Southeast Conservation Blueprint (SECAS)
    - Northeast Conservation Atlas
    - Conservation Atlas for Midwest Grasslands
    - Great Northern Ecological Connectivity Data Atlas

Conservation as a Continuum

How can the Atlas reflect the meaningful conservation work already underway in America?

As an initial step, the American Conservation and Stewardship Atlas should use the standardized International Union for the Conservation of Nature protected areas designations to denote existing protected areas. This includes designation of areas managed by the federal government and state lands such as wildlife management areas and state parks. As noted above though, biodiversity and richness metrics and associated threats to native species, along with identifiers denoting a lack of information on these metrics, should be clearly identified in any Atlas tool.

Beyond clearly designated state and federal lands, third party outreach will be vital to the success of the Atlas. The Administration must conduct outreach to all possible participants in as broad and inclusive manner as possible. A foundational component of outreach must include sincere and sustained engagement with American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian communities to determine current conservation practices and associated values in land and wildlife management.

Smaller entities, such as local municipalities, local advocacy organizations, and private land trust networks also engage in a diversity of land management practices, though not all have the capacity to participate in the solicitation of public input. Outreach should also extend to the engagement of operators of working lands, such as those utilized for timber production and those engaging in Farm Bill Title II conservation programs.

What stewardship actions should be considered, in addition to permanent protections, to capture a more complete picture of conservation and restoration in America?

The Wildlife Society is fully supportive of the Administration's inclusion of multi-use landscapes in areas that are already under some level of state or federal designation into the atlas. Outdoor recreation activities, such as hiking, hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing, should be viewed as key components of ensuring equitable access to nature and advancing natural resource conservation.

In addition to lands and waters conserved and managed by non-profit and government entities, conservation activities on private and working lands should be identified and considered for inclusion in the Atlas. With seventy percent of U.S. lands in private hands, it is imperative that private landowners and producers be brought into the process of shaping the Atlas tool. Existing programs that can be evaluated for their efficacy in conserved landscapes and potential inclusion in the Atlas include:

- **Farm Bill Title II Conservation programs.** Programs that set aside sensitive lands from production, such as the Conservation Reserve program and the Agriculture Conservation Easement Program, allow private operators to engage in conservation activities. Working lands programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program and the Environmental Quality Incentive Program, may also be appropriate for inclusion based on the habitat type and conservation activities conducted. Prior to inclusion of these lands, the U.S. Department of Agriculture along with state and private partners should make meaningful progress in determining performance and success metrics for these programs, a longstanding issue in Title II implementation.

- **Partners for Fish and Wildlife program.** This program allows voluntary habitat restoration goals aligned with identified federal priorities to be achieved through financial and technical assistance. As a result, federal fish and wildlife professionals are able to interact directly with landowners to conduct management actions of benefit to at-risk species.
- **North American Wetlands Conservation Act program.** This program provides grants to conserve, restore, and protect North America's wetlands. Similar initiatives are being discussed for the country's grasslands through the proposed "North American Grasslands Conservation Act", a potentially vital tool in bringing private stakeholders to the table to conserve grassland landscapes.

Investment in professionals. The programs detailed above are able to be implemented due to their investment in technical assistance programming. Continued investment in natural resource professionals to guide landowner engagement in conservation will be vital to ensuring future success in public-private conservation partnerships. This investment will be foundational to any attempts by the Administration to pursue a collaborative and inclusive approach to conservation. The ability to earn a living wage, particularly for student and early career natural resource professionals, continues to be a major roadblock in recruiting professionals representative of the diverse experiences of Americans. It is imperative that the Administration look to invest in the next generation of professionals by providing adequate job opportunities and wages in promoting the goals of America the Beautiful.

What are the attributes of lands and waters that should be included in the Atlas?

- **Biodiversity metrics.** While the core of the Atlas is focused on land and water designations and conservation, it should not be lost that the bigger picture goal is about ensuring ecological processes and functions on those lands. Biodiversity is a key component of those processes and should be viewed as a key indicator of the success of America the Beautiful. By assessing the biodiversity of a given area, lands and waters in different regions and under different land management and conservation activities may be able to be better compared for their overall contribution to conservation and the long-term outcomes of the America the Beautiful initiative.
- **Adaptation threats and opportunities.** The Atlas should include attributes regarding the contributions lands and waters could provide to fish and wildlife conservation in light of climate change effects that are happening now and that are projected in the future. Climate change will affect landscapes and result in the shifts of ecosystems and biotic communities. Areas should be assessed for their value in resilience to climate change and their potential value as ecosystems and species adapt to the climate of the future.
- **Invasive species populations and associated risks.** Attributes of lands and waters that are valuable for understanding the threats posed by invasive wildlife include information on species distribution, regional presence, and range expansion concerns related to climate change.
- **Analysis of conflicts with conservation.** In concert with the U.S. Geological Survey, TWS recommends that the American Conservation and Stewardship Atlas consider

anticipated areas of future development for resources such as critical minerals, oil and gas, coal, renewable energy solar and wind farms, etc. Providing context for potential uses of landscapes will allow for more open multi stakeholder discussions on appropriate uses of these landscapes.

- **Migration corridors.** The U.S. government does not presently have a centralized, federally managed dataset of species migration corridors. Inclusion of available datasets and associated data deficiencies will allow for a more targeted investment in information needed to fully understand and conserve species migration routes.

How can the Atlas best reflect the contributions of State, local, Tribal, territorial, and private lands?

As the Administration has noted, multi stakeholder partnerships must be foundational to implementation of the America the Beautiful Initiative and creation of the Atlas. Once the Atlas is set for the initial phase of implementation, our organization requests another round of outreach and solicitation of public input to ensure the Atlas will meet the needs of the public and natural resource professionals prior to launch.

Upon implementation of the Atlas, further solicitation of input should be provided through the creation of a federal advisory committee representing the diversity of stakeholder interests. As with the recently reinstated Hunting and Wildlife Conservation Council, state fish and wildlife agency and tribal government representation should be included in the committee's charter.

We thank the Administration for their solicitation of feedback on creation of the Conservation and Stewardship Atlas and broader efforts to ensure multi stakeholder engagement in implementation of America the Beautiful. We look forward to working together on this and other Administration efforts that embrace the invaluable expertise of wildlife and natural resource professionals. Please consider The Wildlife Society as a resource and an ally as the Administration moves towards Atlas implementation.

Please contact Caroline Murphy AWB®, Government Relations Manager at cmurphy@wildlife.org or (301) 968-1903 with any questions on the provided comments.

Sincerely,

Gordon Batcheller

Gordon R. Batcheller, CWB®
President, The Wildlife Society

APPENDIX E: EXAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
April 22, 2021

Contact: Drue Banta Winters, 504-220-7868, dwinters@fisheries.org
Caroline Murphy, 301-897-9770 x 308, cmurphy@wildlife.org

Natural Resource Professionals Commend Reintroduction of Recovering America's Wildlife Act

Today, fisheries and wildlife professionals from across the United States welcomed the reintroduction of groundbreaking legislation to empower natural resource professionals to conserve at-risk species for generations to come.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act, introduced by Representatives Debbie Dingell (D-Mich.), Jeff Fortenberry (R-Neb), and eight of their bipartisan colleagues, would secure $1.3 billion in dedicated funding annually for state fish and wildlife agencies and $97.5 million annually for tribal nations to proactively and cost-effectively work on the conservation and monitoring of at-risk species.

This bipartisan group of representatives are working to provide a new funding approach that would reverse the steep declines in the nation's remarkable biodiversity. Today, nearly one-third of U.S. fish and wildlife species are imperiled and threats such as climate change, habitat degradation, and invasive species threaten to exacerbate the problems without proactive funding to address them.

State Wildlife Action Plans have identified 12,000 species at-risk of becoming threatened or endangered, known as species of greatest conservation need, and have detailed, proactive plans to reduce population declines in an effort to prevent the need to list them under the Endangered Species Act. Funding would provide the much needed resources to implement these plans and funding for tribal nations to identify, plan, and conserve at-risk species.

"The Recovering America's Wildlife Act is a once in a generation opportunity to secure the funding needed to keep common species common and proactively invest in America's native wildlife," said Carol Chambers, President of The Wildlife Society. "We are excited to help move this legislation forward in support of America's wildlife professionals and the species they conserve."

"Increases in water temperatures, lack of water in streams and rivers, poor water quality, and loss of habitat have led to 40 percent freshwater species now being at risk and unfortunately, a changing climate means the situation will only get worse. With a dedicated stream of funding, we can implement science-based conservation plans that will build resilience in the face of climate change." said Doug Austen, Executive Director, American Fisheries Society.

# # #

Founded in 1937, TWS and its network of affiliated chapters and sections represent more than 15,000 professional wildlife biologists, managers, and educators dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship. TWS' mission is to inspire, empower, and enable wildlife professionals to sustain wildlife populations and habitat through science-based management and conservation. www.wildlife.org

Founded in 1870, the American Fisheries Society (AFS) is the world's oldest and largest fisheries science society. The AFS mission is to improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by advancing fisheries and aquatic science and promoting the development of fisheries professionals. With its renowned journals, books and conferences, AFS is the leading source of fisheries science and management information in North America and around the world. www.fisheries.org

To learn more about TWS' and AFS' efforts on the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, check out the Reversing America's Wildlife Crisis report, a collaboration between TWS, AFS, and the National Wildlife Federation. This report calls attention to North American and migratory wildlife species facing population declines due to a variety of threats. It echoes the intent of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act in calling for more proactive management to prevent these declines and an improved funding mechanism to support such efforts.

APPENDIX F: U.S. AND CANADIAN FEDERAL POLICY PUBLICATIONS

U.S. Federal Policy Publications

Bills/Laws – Congress writes and passes bills which are signed into law by the President.

Library of Congress **-** congress.gov
Website that includes links to members of the House and Senate, Congressional committees' websites, the status of current bills, and the full text of laws, bills and other legislation.

United States Code (USC) **-**
www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collectionUScode.action?collectionCode=USCODE
Codification by subject matter of the general and permanent laws of the United States that have been enacted by Congress and signed by the President. Updated every six years.

Regulations **-** Federal agencies, boards, or commissions write regulations to enforce laws. Federal agencies must consult with the public when creating, modifying, or deleting regulations.

Federal Register **-** www.federalregister.gov
Daily publication of the U.S. Federal government that records notices, proposed, and final administrative regulations of federal agencies. The Federal Register contains regulations, proposed rules and public notices, executive orders, proclamations, and presidential documents.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) **-** www.ecfr.gov
Codification of the general and permanent regulations published in the Federal Register by the departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

Reports

Congressional Budget Office (CBO) **–** www.cbo.gov
Non-partisan agency that issues economic and budget projections, analytical reports on federal programs, monthly budget reviews, and more.

Canadian Federal Policy Publications

Bills/Laws/Regulations

Canada Gazette - www.gazette.gc.ca
The official newspaper of the Canadian government. The Canada Gazette is issued in three parts:

- Part one: published every Saturday and contains public notices, official appointments, and proposed regulations. Proposed regulations are open to public comment.
- Part two: published every other Wednesday and contains all enacted regulations, orders, and proclamations.
- Part three: published after the Royal Assent of any new Acts of Parliament.

Justice Laws Website – www.laws.justice.gc.ca
Website that includes all updated federal Acts and regulations. Updated on a biweekly basis.

LEGISinfo - http://www.parl.gc.ca/LegisInfo
Provides information on legislation before Parliament such as the text of the bill, major speeches at second reading, government press releases etc.

Reports

Parliamentary Budget Officer - www.pbo-dpb.gc.ca
Provides independent analysis to Parliament on the nation's finances, trends in the Canadian economy, and issues cost estimate reports on any Parliament proposal when requested by a committee or Member of Parliament.

Library of Parliament -
www.parl.gc.ca/About/Library/VirtualLibrary/ResearchPublications-E.asp
Non-partisan research publications that provide analysis to parliamentarians, parliamentary committees and parliamentary associations on current and emerging key issues, legislation and major public policy topics.

APPENDIX G: U.S. STATE AND CANADIAN PROVINCIAL LEGISLATIVE WEBSITES

U.S. State Legislative Websites

Alabama
Alabama Legislature website
- The Alabama Legislative Information System Online (ALISON) links to the status of bills and text, the Code of Alabama, and more
- Look up specific bills here
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

Alaska
Alaska State Legislature website
- Create a "Bill Tracking Management Facility" account to track bills
- Use the "BASIS" system to look up specific bills
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

Arizona
Arizona State Legislature website
- Search for and track specific bills
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

Arkansas
Arkansas State Legislature website
- Find a specific bill
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

California
California State Legislature website
- Lookup current (2017 - present) and historic (1993 – 2016) bills
- Members of the Assembly and Senate
- Committees in the Assembly and Senate

Colorado
Colorado General Assembly website
- Search for specific bills
- Contact information and Committees for members of both the House and Senate

Connecticut
Connecticut General Assembly website
- Search for specific bills
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

Delaware
Delaware General Assembly website
- Search or browse for bills
- Members of the House and Senate

- Committees in the House and Senate

District of Columbia

Council of the District of Columbia website

- Use "LIMS" to find bills and other legislation
- Council members and their committees

Florida

Florida Legislature website

- Search bills in the Senate and in the House. On the House website, there is a bill tracker on the right side
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees in the House and Senate

Georgia

Georgia General Assembly website

- Search for bills
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees in the House and Senate

Hawaii

Hawaii State Legislature website

- Search for bills on the main page on the right hand side
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees in the House and Senate

Idaho

Idaho Legislature website

- Create a "My Bill Tracker" account to log in and track bills. Use the manual for more information
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

Illinois

Illinois General Assembly website

- An index of bills and resolutions can be found
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees in the House and Senate

Indiana

Indiana General Assembly website

- Search for specific bills
- Find Democratic Senators and Representatives
- Find Republican Senators and Representatives
- House and Senate committees

Iowa
Iowa Legislature website
- Find bills or use the "BillBook" bill tracking system
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

Kansas
Kansas Legislature website
- Index of bills
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

Kentucky
Kentucky Legislature website
- Search for bills
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

Louisiana
Louisiana State Legislature website
- Search for bills
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees in the House and Senate

Maine
Maine State Legislature website
- Search for bills
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees in the House and Senate

Maryland
General Assembly of Maryland website
- Search for bills
- Sing up for the tracker system
- Roster for both the House and Senate and their committees

Massachusetts
General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts website
- Search for specific bills
- To track bills, sing up for the "MyLegislature" service found in the upper right hand corner of the main website
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

Michigan
Michigan Legislature website
- Search for bills
- Register to the website to track bills and other legislative actions
- Roster for both the House and Senate and their committees

Minnesota
Minnesota State Legislature website

- Search for bills in the House or Senate
- Sign up for "MyBills" to track legislation as it moves through the legislature
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

Mississippi
Minnesota Legislature website

- Search for bills on the left hand side of the main website
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees for the House and Senate

Missouri
Missouri General Assembly website

- Search for specific bills
- Sign up for the "Bill Reporting System" to track legislation
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees for the House and Senate

Montana
Montana Legislature website

- Find bills and track them
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

Nebraska
Nebraska Legislature website

- Search bills and resolutions
- Members of the Senate (Nebraska is unicameral so only one house).
- The committees and committee members

Nevada
Nevada Legislature website

- Use the "NELIS" system to find bills and other legislature
- Sign up for the "Personalized Legislative Tracking" system to track bills
- Members of the Assembly and Senate
- Committees for the Assembly (on the right hand side of the page) and Senate

New Hampshire
New Hampshire General Court website

- Search for specific bills
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees for the House and Senate

New Jersey
New Jersey Legislature website

- Search for bills on the main site on the bottom of the page

- Create a bill subscription service account to track bills
- Roster of Senators and Assemblymen by district
- Committees for the Senate and Assembly

New Mexico
New Mexico Legislature website

- Find legislation and register for the "My Roundhouse" tracking service
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

New York
New York State Assembly and Senate websites

- Find bills in the Assembly and the Senate
- Members of the Assembly and Senate
- Committees for the Assembly and Senate

North Carolina
North Carolina General Assembly website

- Find bills and other legislation
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees for the House and Senate

North Dakota
North Dakota Legislative Assembly website

- Search for bill at the top right corner of the main site
- Subscribe to the RSS feed to track bills and other legislation
- Members of the House and Senate by district
- House and Senate committees

Ohio
Ohio General Assembly website

- Search for bills and more detailed bill information at the Legislative Service Commission (LSC) website. Look up more information about the LSC
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees in the House and Senate

Oklahoma
Oklahoma State Legislature website

- Find specific bills or browse by subject
- Sign up for the "Legislative Electronic Notification System" (LENS) to track bills
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees in the House and Senate

Oregon
Oregon State Legislature website

- Use the Oregon Legislative Information System (OLIS) to find bills
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania General Assembly website

- Search for bills
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees in the House and Senate

Rhode Island
State of Rhode Island General Assembly website

- Search for bills and other legislation
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

South Carolina
South Carolina Legislature website

- Search for legislation and sign up for the "Legislative Information Tracking System" to track bills and other legislation
- Members of the House and Senate can be found and their committees

South Dakota
South Dakota Legislature website

- Search for bills
- Create a MyLRC+ account to track bills
- Current members of the House and Senate

Tennessee
Tennessee General Assembly website

- Search for bills and register for "My Bills" to track legislation
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

Texas
Texas Legislature website

- Search for bills and sign up for "MyTLO" to track bills
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees in the House and Senate

Utah
Utah State Legislature website

- Search for bills at the top of the main page and use the tracking service
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

Vermont
Vermont State Legislature website

- Search for bills
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees in the House and Senate

Virginia

Virginia General Assembly website

- Search for bills through the "LIS" system
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees in the House and Senate

Washington
Washington State Legislature website

- Search for bills
- Subscribe to track legislative activities
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees in the House and Senate

West Virginia
West Virginia Legislature website

- Search for bills and sign up for bill tracking
- Members of the House and Senate
- Committees in the House and Senate

Wisconsin
Wisconsin State Legislature website

- Search for bills and subscribe to updates
- Members of the Assembly and Senate
- Committees in the Assembly and Senate

Wyoming
Wyoming Legislature website

- Search for bills
- Members of the House and Senate and their committees

Canadian Province Legislative Websites

Alberta
Legislative Assembly of Alberta website

- Search for bills
- Find members of the Assembly and committees

British Columbia
Legislative Assembly of British Columbia website

- Search for bills
- Find members of the Assembly and committees

Manitoba
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba website

- Search for bills
- Find members of the Assembly and committees

New Brunswick
Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick website

- Browse for bills
- Find members of the Assembly and committees

Newfoundland and Labrador
House Assembly of Newfoundland and Labrador website

- Browse for bills
- Find members of the Assembly and committees

Nova Scotia
The Nova Scotia Legislature website

- Browse for bills
- Find members of the Assembly and committees

Ontario
Legislative Assembly of Ontario website

- Browse for bills
- Find members of the Assembly and committees

Prince Edward Island
Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island website

- Browse for bills
- Find members of the Assembly and committees

Quebec
Assemblée nationale du Québec website

- Search for bills
- Find members of the Assembly and committees

Saskatchewan
Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan website

- Browse for bills
- Find members of the Assembly and committees

APPENDIX H: RECOMMENDED READINGS IN WILDLIFE POLICY

Leopold, B.D., W. B. Kessler, and J. L. Cummins. 2018. North American Wildlife Policy and Law. Boone and Crockett Club, Missoula, Montana, USA.

Pielke, Jr, R. A. 2007. The Honest Broker: Making Sense of Science in Policy and Politics. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England.

Smucker, B. 1999. The Nonprofit Lobbying Guide, Second Edition. Independent Sector, Washington, DC, USA.