



The Wildlife Society's Conservation Affairs Network

February 2019, Volume 5, Issue 2

Opportunities

State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Fly-In – The Wildlife Society, the American Fisheries Society, and the National Wildlife Federation are working alongside the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies on their annual fly-in in support of adequate funding for the [State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program](#). The fly-in will be on **Wednesday, March 27**, and **TWS is seeking volunteers to meet with members of their Congressional delegation and speak on the importance of the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program**. The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program is the only federal program in the U.S. dedicated to the conservation of at-risk species at the state level, and it is important that members of Congress hear how vital this funding is to the wildlife profession. TWS staff is available to assist volunteers with setting up [meetings](#), [message training](#), and engagement with congressional staffers during meetings. Please contact [Caroline Murphy](#) if you are interested in attending or have any questions.

CAC Activities

Manitoba Chapter submits letter on water rights regulation – The [Manitoba Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) submitted [a letter](#) to the Manitoba Government on the proposed water rights regulation. The Chapter sees many positive aspects of the proposed regulation but suggest some ways in which the details can be strengthened or specified to ensure the “no net loss” goal of the Act will be met. *CAC Contact:* [Brian Kiss](#)

Nebraska Chapter submits letter opposing LB 126 – The [Nebraska Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) submitted [a letter](#) to the Nebraska State Legislature Natural Resources Committee on January 22 expressing their opposition of [LB 126](#), a bill to “provide for special landowner deer hunting permits as prescribed.” The bill in the Nebraska legislature is a proposal to provide free landowner deer permits in exchange for opening at least half your property to public hunting during the November rifle season and the Chapter’s board had some concerns over language in this bill. *CAC Contact:* [Eric Zach](#)

New Jersey Chapter submits letter on proposed environmental rights amendment – The [New Jersey Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) submitted [a letter](#) to Senator Christopher Bateman on January 4 expressing their opposition to [SCR-134/ACR-85](#), which would designate the State of NJ trustee of public natural resources and guarantee to the people other environmental rights. *CAC Contact:* [Lisa Clark](#)

Northwest Section submits letter opposing MT HB 161 – The [Northwest Section of The Wildlife Society](#) submitted [a letter](#) to Montana Representative Bob Brown on January 21 [expressing their opposition](#) to House Bill 161, which would reduce the effectiveness of Montana’s Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks in making appropriate and sustainable management decisions regarding public fish and wildlife resources in partnership with the citizens of Montana. CAC Contact: [Becca Much](#)

Texas Chapter develops position statement on captive bred deer – The [Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) recently developed the position statement, “Support for improvement of captive-bred deer identification system,” available on their [website](#). CAC Contact: [Romey Swanson](#)

Wisconsin Chapter supports license fee increases – The [Wisconsin Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#), along with several other natural resource organizations, signed a letter supporting a \$3 increase in the price of deer hunting licenses and a \$5 increase in the inland trout stamp, along with other suggestions. Read more in [an article from the Journal Sentinel](#). CAC Contact: [Chuck Pills](#)

Federal Updates

US Government reopens for three weeks; TWS responds – On January 25, after [35 days](#) of partisan gridlock and no foreseeable end in sight to the partial US government shutdown, President Trump [announced](#) he would reopen shuttered agencies in hopes of progressing talks on funding for a wall along the US-Mexico border. This marks a reversal for President Trump, who prior to this had stated his intent to keep government agencies shuttered if \$5.7 billion dollars in funding for a wall along the US-Mexico border was not provided by Congress. Now that the government has reopened, it is unclear what border wall funding Congressional Democrats will be willing to provide, and President Trump will be willing to accept, to avert another shutdown on February 15.

TWS [responded](#) to the shutdown, which deeply affected the work and lives of many TWS members, with a [statement](#) of hope that Congressional and Administration leaders will now be able to reach a consensus on funding for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2019. Staff contact: [Caroline Murphy](#)

House and Senate committee assignments near finalization – House and Senate committee and subcommittee assignments are nearing finalization for the new Congress, as the work of legislating, appropriating, and oversight begins in earnest with

the reopening of the US Government. The newly Democratic House Natural Resources Committee, which will have authority over the [Recovering America's Wildlife Act](#) when it is soon reintroduced, went through a reshuffling of subcommittee jurisdictions, and [includes](#) a new Water, Oceans, and Wildlife subcommittee. On the Senate side, the [Energy and Natural Resources Committee](#) and the [Environment and Public Works Committee](#) have yet to announce their final subcommittee rosters.

Staff contact: [Caroline Murphy](#)

Tools

TWS finalizes policy priorities – Over the past few months, TWS has sought input from Chapters, Sections, and Working Groups on what TWS' policy priorities should be for January 2019-January 2021. This input was collated and considered by TWS' policy priorities ad hoc committee, which provided a final list of recommendations to TWS Council.

Council reviewed these recommendations and approved a [new set of TWS policy priorities](#) to be implemented by TWS staff and Council in partnership with organization units over the next two years. These recommendations will help shape TWS work and output, but is not meant to limit the amount and diversity of communications had between TWS staff and organization units. Staff contact: [Caroline Murphy](#)

Hot Topics

TWS staff is working to assist organization units dealing with contentious issues in their region with more direct connections to other units that have faced these issues.

Currently, two items of conversation among several units include:

- **State wildlife corridors bills** - Has your organization unit engaged with wildlife corridors legislation in your state legislature?
- **Predator killing contests** - Has your organization unit engaged on policy surrounding predator killing contests?

Please let TWS staff know if you or your organization unit has engaged or is interested in engaging in either of the above two topics. CAC Contact: [Keith Norris](#)

Request for Submissions

Do you need assistance with a wildlife conservation policy issue? Does your CAC have a success story to tell? Is a new partnership developing at your organization unit? Send it in! Let the CAN hear about it and help you in your work.

Staff Contact: [Mariah Simmons](#)

CAC Contact Information

Update TWS HQ on Conservation Affairs Committee point of contacts – As your Sections and Chapters have new elections and appointments of officers, board members, and other organization unit volunteers, be sure to update TWS staff of your new CAC Chairs. Email Mariah Simmons at MSimmons@wildlife.org with the new contact information to ensure continuity of communications in the Network.