

November 8, 2018

The Honorable John Barrasso  
Chairman  
Committee on Environment and Public Works  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thomas Carper  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Environment and Public Works  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper,

On behalf of the millions of hunters, anglers, recreational target shooters, professional scientists, and outdoor enthusiasts our organizations represent, we write to request that the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW) hold a hearing and markup on the *Recovering America's Wildlife Act* (S. 3223) this Congress. This bill will authorize funding for desperately needed resources to support state-based conservation and restoration of fish, wildlife, and their habitats to the direct benefit of sportsmen and women.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act will help recover species at-risk by authorizing \$1.3 billion annually from existing royalty revenues generated by the development of energy and mineral resources on federal lands and waters for state fish and wildlife agencies (state agencies) to implement proactive conservation programs. The funds will be leveraged with state dollars and utilized by new and existing partnerships to create more fish, wildlife and habitat on the ground. Doing so will arm state agencies with the resources needed to assist in the restoration and recovery of federally listed threatened and endangered species while also preventing other species from being listed. Furthermore, this legislation will reduce the risk associated with an uncertain landscape helping private landowners, sportsmen and women, and the businesses that make a living off the land and water.

Specifically, S. 3223 would authorize funding for the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration subaccount, which was established pursuant to the *Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act* (Pittman-Robertson Act) of 1937. This innovative approach stems from a recommendation of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources. Comprised of a wide array of national business and conservation leaders, the Blue Ribbon Panel remains united in support of legislation implementing the Blue Ribbon Panel's [recommendations](#).

The undersigned organizations further urge Congress to enact Recovering America's Wildlife Act with mandatory funding, which would ensure financial certainty to states, and allow them to plan and implement multi-year conservation projects. The House version of this bill, H.R. 4647, includes a dedicated funding mechanism currently.

Each state, territory, and the District of Columbia is mandated by Congress to develop comprehensive State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAPs) to identify key fish and wildlife conservation needs. Collectively, SWAPs have identified over 12,000 species across our nation that are considered "species of greatest conservation need", and potentially at-risk of becoming threatened or endangered, complimentary to the contributions of hunters, anglers, recreational target shooters and boaters, the *Recovering America's Wildlife Act* will empower our state wildlife managers to get ahead of the endangered species backlog that may occur if adequate and sustained funding is not dedicated to this pressing problem.

Our nation is blessed with a diverse array of fish and wildlife and we have a proud history of bringing species back from the brink of extinction by helping fund professional fish and wildlife management. At various times during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, species including bald eagles, peregrine falcons, elk, wood ducks, and pronghorn antelope were teetering on the edge of extinction—now they are thriving because Americans made conservation action a priority.

Today, we face a new wildlife crisis; one in which the magnitude of the solution must match the magnitude of the challenge. By prioritizing the *Recovering America's Wildlife Act*, this Congress will ensure that our fish, wildlife and proud outdoor recreation traditions and their associated national economic benefits will endure for the benefit of future generations. The *Recovering America's Wildlife Act* represents an historic opportunity to simultaneously benefit conservation, sportsmen and women, the economy and taxpayers.

To that end, we encourage your strong, bipartisan support for state wildlife agencies and look forward to working with you to support them through the legislative process this Congress.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request to take up S. 3223, and for your ongoing service on behalf of America's sporting-conservation community.

Sincerely,

American Woodcock Society  
Archery Trade Association  
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies  
Boone and Crockett Club  
Camp Fire Club of America  
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation  
Conservation Force  
Dallas Safari Club  
Delta Waterfowl Foundation  
Ducks Unlimited  
Houston Safari Club  
Izaak Walton League of America  
Mule Deer Foundation  
National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative  
National Shooting Sports Foundation  
National Wild Turkey Federation

National Wildlife Federation  
North American Grouse Partnership  
Orion - The Hunter's Institute  
Pheasants Forever/Quail Forever  
Pope and Young Club  
Professional Outfitters and Guides of America  
Quality Deer Management Association  
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation  
Ruffed Grouse Society  
Texas Wildlife Association  
The Wildlife Society  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership  
Whitetails Unlimited  
Wild Sheep Foundation  
Wildlife Forever  
Wildlife Management Institute

Cc: Senate Majority Leader McConnell and Senate Minority Leader Schumer