



December 18 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and  
Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Udall  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and  
Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Senator Udall:

We are writing to express our appreciation and support for the **\$1 million increase for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program** in the FY18 Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies funding recommendation. This increase is a positive step in meeting the larger need to conserve the full array of fish and wildlife species. You have both shown considerable support over the years for this important program and the proposed increase will allow states and their partners to do more to conserve our nation’s most vulnerable species.

The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program was created in 2000 to empower states and their partners to proactively conserve fish and wildlife with the goal of minimizing listing species under the Endangered Species Act. This funding led to the development of State Wildlife Action Plans in every state, territory and the District of Columbia. These recently updated plans serve as blueprints for conserving over 12,000 species of greatest conservation need.

The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program continues to achieve results. For example, in the western United States, the program has been integral in funding remote camera surveillance and DNA analysis of wolverines leading to far greater understanding of the abundance and distribution of this secretive carnivore. In the Midwest, states have been working with private conservation groups like the National Wildlife Federation to develop regional conservation plans to help prevent endangered species listing of the monarch butterfly. In the Southeast, State and Tribal Wildlife Grants are playing a critical role in evaluating more than 400 species petitioned or considered for listing under the Endangered Species Act. In the Northeast, the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program is funding captive breeding and management for the rare New England Cottontail.

We understand the challenges you face appropriating funding for many important conservation programs. Investing in the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program saves money by avoiding the cost of recovery and regulatory compliance when a species is listed as endangered or threatened. Again, we applaud you for recommending a funding increase for the program and for highlighting the increase in the Committee news release. Please don't hesitate to let us know if you or your staff would like to learn more about successes of this program. Thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

American Fisheries Society

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

Ducks Unlimited, Inc.

Izaak Walton League

National Audubon Society

National Wildlife Federation

National Wild Turkey Federation

NatureServe

Teddy Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

The Nature Conservancy

The Wildlife Society

Wildlife Conservation Society

Wildlife Management Institute