



The Wildlife Society's Conservation Affairs Network

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Happy holidays! We hope this email finds you safe and well. In lieu of a formal newsletter this month, we are opting for a quick note on a couple TWS headquarters policy updates.

With the U.S. Congress winding down for the year and preparations for the incoming Biden Administration underway, we are taking stock and planning our policy priorities for the next two years. Thanks to the organization units that have already helped by providing their input for new TWS policy priorities. **If your unit is interested in providing feedback on 2021-2022 TWS federal policy priorities, please do so by the end of the day on Tuesday, December 8.** More information about this opportunity can be found in the [letter](#) sent to units by TWS Council's Policy Priorities committee.

While we focus our attention forward, we are also keeping track of a few must-pass items that Congress needs to get out the door before they head home for the holidays. This includes [spending legislation to fund federal agencies for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2021](#). Talks are ongoing between the House and Senate, and with a \$1.4 trillion top-level agreement, hope is high that Congress and the White House will be able to reach a deal before short-term funding ends on December 11. Comprehensive COVID-19 stimulus legislation is looking unlikely before the end of the year, though extension of programs such as the Paycheck Protection Program may be wrapped into FY 2021 funding discussions. Other pending legislation such as the [Recovering America's Wildlife Act](#) is unlikely to be passed before the end of the year, meaning reintroduction in the next Congress will likely be necessary.

The Wildlife Society is also spending this time **corresponding with members of federal agency transition teams to provide a strong reference point on the needs of wildlife professionals**. This includes conversations on several regulatory actions by the current Administration that TWS has stated concerns with, including proposed changes to [Migratory Bird Treaty Act](#) (MBTA) implementation and finalized changes to [Endangered Species Act](#) implementation. Finalized changes to MBTA implementation are expected out before the end of the year after a final [Environmental Impact Statement](#) on the rule was recently published.

Starting in January, TWS will have a new wildlife policy intern that will be on hand to assist in these and other efforts to advance policies that empower and enable wildlife professionals.

During these uncertain times, TWS has continued to evaluate how to best serve the diverse needs of professionals. As many of you read earlier this week, we have decided

to **hold the 2021 Annual Conference virtually** in order to allow for certainty and safety in planning. You can check out twsconference.org for continued updates on the conference planning process, including calls for abstracts, schedules, and registration rates.

Please feel free to reach out to [Caroline](#) if you have any questions about the policy updates above, or to tws@wildlife.org if you have any questions about the conference. Thank you for all you do to empower and enable your fellow wildlife professionals, and have a happy holiday season.