



The Wildlife Society's Conservation Affairs Network

March 2021, Volume 7, Issue 3

Opportunities

New eWildlifer Action Center – The eWildlifer now features a new “Take Action!” section where members can engage with policy issues relevant to the wildlife profession. This section will be featured biweekly and include legislative and regulatory opportunities to make your voice heard on important wildlife policy topics. TWS staff welcomes thoughts from CAN representatives on how to make this section most useful to members. *Staff contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

Parks Canada accepting comments on at-risk species – The Canadian government has [assessed the status](#) of 17 wildlife species in Canada and proposed to add, reclassify, or remove them from the [Species at Risk Act](#). The government has also proposed to extend legal protections to [critical habitat](#) for the endangered copper redhorse (*Moxostoma hubbsi*). The public can submit comments on both proposals until March 21. All correspondence must follow the guidelines listed in the “Proposed Regulatory Text” section of the *Canada Gazette* notices. *Staff contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

On the Horizon

FY2022 budget requests expected soon – The U.S. Administration has not yet released its federal budget requests to the U.S. Congress for FY2022. Administration requests are not expected to start trickling out until at least mid-March, with more information to follow in the coming weeks. TWS will keep members informed on the progress of the FY2022 [appropriations process](#), including opportunities for members and units to advocate for strong conservation program funding. *Staff contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

TWS Council Spring Meeting – TWS Council will meet for the Spring Council Meeting on Mar. 6 and 7 via Zoom video conference. The [meeting agenda](#) is now available. Members and units can provide feedback to their [section representatives](#) prior to the meeting. *Staff contact:* [Keith Norris](#)

North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference to be held this month – The [86th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference](#) will be held virtually from Mar. 8-12. The conference is administered by the Wildlife Management Institute and serves as an annual forum to set and exchange ideas on conservation

policy in North America. The Wildlife Society is a conference partner and will host a virtual exhibit booth for the “Partner Showcase.” [Online registration](#) is available now. *Staff contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

Resources

United Nations Environment Program report released – The United Nations Environment Program has released its first synthesis report titled “[Making Peace with Nature: A scientific blueprint to tackle the climate, biodiversity and pollution emergencies](#).” The report is based on evidence from global environmental assessments. It reviews actions that governments, businesses, and people can take to simultaneously address climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution within the framework of the U.N. [Sustainable Development Goals](#). *Staff contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

Invasive species coalition provides recommendations to the U.S. Congress and Administration – Members of the [National Environmental Coalition on Invasive Species](#) (NECIS) have [provided recommendations](#) to the U.S. Administration and 117th Congress on mechanisms to tackle invasive species prevention and management. The [report](#) suggests federal actions that would address invasive species introduction, dispersal, and establishment. It provides specific guidance for agencies in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (U.S. Forest Service and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service) and U.S. Department of the Interior (U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Park Service). For each federal agency, the report describes existing programs and activities, analyzes barriers to their success, and recommends administrative and congressional actions to improve their success. TWS coordinates the efforts of NECIS, which works to promote scientifically sound policies that prevent invasive species introduction and spread in the United States. *Staff contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

Policy Toolkit: U.S. Federal Budgeting Process – As the U.S. enters the federal appropriations season, the TWS Policy Toolkit page on the [U.S. Federal Budgeting Process](#) is available for member and unit reference. The page outlines the seven steps of the federal budgeting process, with a description of their purpose and process along with ways to get involved as a constituent. *Staff contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

TWS CAN slideshow template now available – TWS has developed [a slideshow template](#) on the structure and mechanisms for engagement within the Conservation Affairs Network. CAN representatives can use this template to provide information to their unit’s members about the layout of and unit interactions with the network. *Staff contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

CAC Activities

Alberta Chapter policy engagement – The [Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) submitted the following letters during the month of February 2021:

- [Comment letter on the Alberta Crown Land Vision](#)
- [Comment letter on the impacts of open-pit coal mining on water quantity](#)
- [Response to letters regarding coal exploration in southern Alberta](#)

CAC Contact: [Mark Boyce](#)

TWS, Western Section, SF-Bay Area Chapter submit comments in response to MBTA rulemaking extension – The public comment period for federal regulations that modify the interpretation of “take” under the U.S. [Migratory Bird Treaty Act](#) was [recently extended](#) and closed on Mar. 1. The [new rule](#), which was originally finalized in January and set to take effect on Feb. 6, aims to prevent the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from regulating incidental or accidental take of migratory species listed under the Act. TWS previously [spoke out against](#) the proposed rule, its underlying [legal opinion](#), and its associated [environmental impact statement](#). In response to the comment period extension, TWS, the [Western Section](#), and the [San Francisco-Bay Area Chapter](#) all submitted [new comments](#) against finalization of the rule. In a separate action last week led by the U.S. Justice Department, the U.S. administration formally [abandoned its defense](#) of the underlying legal opinion for the rule change. CAC Contacts: [Patricia Valcarcel](#) (SFBA Chapter) and [Kelly Holland](#) (Western Section)

Federal Updates

U.S. Administration nominees move forward – The presidential nominees for U.S. Agriculture and Interior Secretaries have moved forward in the confirmation process. The U.S. Senate confirmed Thomas J. Vilsack as the 32nd U.S. Secretary of Agriculture on Feb. 23. Vilsack previously served as Agriculture Secretary for eight years under President Barack Obama. Additionally, last week the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee held a [confirmation hearing](#) for the Administration’s Interior Secretary nominee Representative Deb Haaland (D-NM). The committee is divided over Haaland, but recent support relayed by Chairman Joe Manchin (D-WV) has made her confirmation likely. TWS and other members of the conservation community have sent a [letter](#) to the committee stating support for the nomination. Staff contact: [Caroline Murphy](#)

Reintroduction of Recovering America’s Wildlife Act imminent – The Recovering America’s Wildlife Act is expected to be reintroduced to the U.S. Congress in the coming weeks. The legislation would provide significant funds to state and tribal wildlife agencies for the conservation of at-risk species. TWS will keep members informed on the progress of the bill, including opportunities for members and units to advocate for

their congressional representatives to co-sponsor the legislation. *Staff contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

CAC Activity and Contact Updates

Policy consultation – Do you want assistance with a wildlife conservation policy issue? Curious as to the various ways your organization unit can support federal efforts by TWS or engage on local level issues? Contact policy@wildlife.org.

Activity updates, success stories, and CAC Contact information – Does your CAC have a success story to tell? Is a new partnership developing at your organization unit? Do you have a new CAC Chair? Send it in! Let the CAN hear about it and help you in your work. Email Mariah Beyers at MSimmons@wildlife.org.