



13 September 2021

George Butterfield
NC 1st District
2080 Rayburn
House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Butterfield,

The North Carolina Chapter of the Wildlife Society (NCTWS) is requesting your support for the House bill titled “**Recovering America’s Wildlife Act of 2021**” (H.R. 2773). This bill was introduced by Senator Heinrich (D-NM) and is the counterpart to the Senate’s Recovering America’s Wildlife Act of 2021 (S. 2372). Currently, there are 109 cosponsors of the **bipartisan** House act including North Carolina Representatives Rouzer, Ross, Mchenry, and Price.

NCTWS is the professional society for wildlife biologists and managers in North Carolina, with over 250 members representing dozens of federal, state, and local agencies, universities, and non-governmental organizations. As part of our mission, NCTWS “strives to be an acknowledged source of current scientific information and expertise, and acts as a collective voice on matters relating to wildlife biology, management, education, and policy.”

We support this legislation so that wildlife professionals throughout our state will be able to hold the nation’s wildlife in the public trust for generations to come. While the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants (SWG) program has been valuable and successful, the scope of SWG has not been large enough to meet the need as it typically funds only \$60-70 million annually. In addition, SWG’s short-term funding creates uncertainty, which challenges states’ ability to plan long-term projects or hire staff. The state of North Carolina has **457 of the more than 12,000 Species of Greatest Conservation Need** identified across the country by state agency wildlife professionals. These species, listed in the State’s Wildlife Action Plan, have received insufficient funding through the SWG program over the last 20 years. While many North Carolina taxpayers support these species through the voluntary tax check-off, the amount of funding for species conservation, habitat improvement, and monitoring is still insufficient.

The passage of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act of 2021 (S. 2372 and H. R. 2773) will provide **dedicated funds from the U.S. Treasury of \$1.3 billion annually to state fish and wildlife agencies and an additional \$97.5 million to Tribal Nations** for proactive, collaborative conservation actions to prevent wildlife from becoming endangered. These funds will support North Carolina wildlife and **foster regional cooperation** to conserve species that



cross borders through a dedicated competitive grants program. Further, these funds will be leveraged by state agencies, North Carolina Universities, and non-governmental organizations to **boost the power of federal conservation spending**. By dedicating this funding, you will enable wildlife professionals to conserve wildlife populations in a cost-effective manner.

It is our hope that your office will also put your faith in the professionals working on the front lines of conservation by **cosponsoring H. R. 2773** and working to change the language to provide mandatory funding for fish and wildlife species.

Sincerely,

Matthew Harrell

Matthew Harrell
President, NC Chapter of The Wildlife Society

P.O. Box 37742
Raleigh, NC 27312
<http://nctws.org>