



May 16, 2021

The Honorable Trent Kelly
2243 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Kelly,

The Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society is writing to **request your cosponsorship of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act (H.R. 2773)**, introduced in April by Representatives Debbie Dingell (D-MI) and Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE). This legislation would provide state and tribal wildlife agencies with a vital source of funding needed to proactively and cost-effectively conserve America's at-risk wildlife populations.

Founded in 1937, The Wildlife Society and its 15,000 professional and associated members work to inspire, empower, and enable wildlife biologists and managers to sustain wildlife populations and habitat through science-based management and conservation. The Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society encompasses over 100 professional wildlife biologists from Mississippi who strive to conserve and protect the wildlife resources of our great state.

The states and tribes within our Mississippi Chapter have more than 310 at-risk species as identified by Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks in their congressionally-mandated conservation action blueprints, known as State Wildlife Action Plan. This includes species like the gopher tortoise, northern bobwhite quail and northern fox squirrel. Most of these species are affected by habitat deterioration and lack of adequate funds for habitat and species management.

Nationally, conservation efforts for these at-risk species are critically underfunded, only receiving about \$60 million annually through the existing [State and Tribal Wildlife Grants](#) program. This is not nearly enough for states and tribes to plan for multi-year conservation and recovery projects or prevent costlier measures, such as Endangered Species Act listings, from occurring.

Passage of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act would match an appropriate solution to the scale of this crisis. By dedicating \$1.3 billion annually for the adequate implementation of State Wildlife Action Plans, and \$97.5 million annually for tribal agencies to plan long-term conservation projects, wildlife professionals will have the resources needed to hold the nation's wildlife in the public trust for generations to come.

Thank you for considering this important legislation. If you have any questions regarding the Recovering America's Wildlife Act and the Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society's support for this legislation, please feel free to reach me at krisgodwin10@gmail.com or my cell phone at 662-769-3798.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristina Casscles Godwin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K' and a decorative flourish at the end.

Kristina Casscles Godwin

President

Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society

610 Hospital Road

Starkville, MS 39759

662-769-3798

Krisgodwin10@gmail.com