



The Wildlife Society's Conservation Affairs Network

April 2022, Volume 8, Issue 4

Take Action

Act ASAP on Recovering America's Wildlife Act! – Members of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee are holding a hearing and **vote** to advance the [Recovering America's Wildlife Act](#) **this Thursday, April 7th at 10 am EST**. This vote is the final major hurdle before consideration by the entire Senate. TWS members and CAN units in AL, AK, AZ, AR, CA, DE, IL, IA, MD, MA, MI, MS, ND, OK, OR, RI, SC, VT, WV, and WY have a Senator that will be directly voting on Thursday and your engagement is especially critical at this time.

- **TWS members:** members in these states should fill out our new Environment and Public Works Committee [Action Center](#), which will send tailored messages to your Senators on this critical committee. Members in these states can also consider calling their relevant Senators using these call scripts which request hearing attendance and support for the bill. Members can help us keep track of the phone calls logged by filling out this [quick Google form](#) at the end of their call.
- **TWS units:** units with representation in these states should email your committee member's office with a brief request to attend Thursday's hearing and voice their support for the bill. You can find template emails for this purpose on TWS' [Dropbox](#).

Any questions on these resources and their dissemination can be directed to Kelly. TWS staff will be in touch as the week goes on with additional details on Thursday's vote. *Staff Contact:* [Kelly O'Connor](#).

Submit request forms for robust FY2023 conservation appropriations – With FY 2022 funding finally resolved last month and the recent release of President Biden's [funding priorities](#) for FY 2023, members of Congress have begun their [annual appropriations process](#). **Units are encouraged to submit "member request forms" highlighting TWS' funding priorities.** These forms are used by congressional offices to help them understand the funding priorities of their constituents. Check out TWS' [guidance document](#) for information on how to submit request forms on behalf of your members. You can visit TWS' appropriations [action center](#) to keep track of the latest on TWS, administration, and congressional priorities for FY 2023. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

CAC Activities

North Carolina Chapter submits recommendations on the American Conservation and Stewardship Atlas – [The North Carolina Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) provided [recommendations](#) to the U.S. Department of the Interior to ensure the [Conservation and Stewardship Atlas](#) meets the core principles of the America the Beautiful Initiative (30x30). Their

recommendations included incentives to states to help include green spaces and outdoor recreation opportunities in municipal/community planning, collaboration with state wildlife agencies to monitor streams and ponds in underserved communities, and use of Farm Bill cost share reporting data to determine what conservation practices are being implemented on private conservation lands. CAC Contact: [Rachael Urbanek](#)

Virginia Chapter supports amendment to state code governing possession of nutria – [The Virginia Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) submitted a [letter to State Representative James Edmunds](#) requesting an amendment to the Code of Virginia to allow an exemption to the prohibition on possession of nutria for state employees. The Chapter suggested language that would provide biologists studying and managing nutria with the flexibility needed to better understand and manage this invasive species within the state. Their suggested language was ultimately incorporated into [HB 65](#), which was passed and enacted earlier this month. CAC Contact: [David Luther](#)

Western Section Comments on USFWS Listing Proposal for the Foothill Yellow-legged Frog – [The Western Section of The Wildlife Society](#) submitted [comments](#) in response to the [USFWS proposed rule](#) affecting the listing status of four Distinct Population Segments (DPS') of the foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylei*). While ultimately supportive of the proposal to list the species under the Endangered Species Act, the Section recommended range-wide listing for the species including all 6 identified DPS', with 2 DPS' being listed as threatened, and the remaining 4 DPS' listed as endangered. Recommendations in the Section's comments are based on population declines, range contractions, and threats to the species occurring across its range. CAC Contacts: [Kelly Holland and Lisa Fields](#)

Federal Updates

USFWS proposes listing northern long-eared bats as endangered – Citing the escalation of white-nose syndrome, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is [proposing](#) to reclassify the threatened northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) as endangered under the [Endangered Species Act](#). The USFWS' [proposal](#) to reclassify the northern long-eared bat as endangered stems from a 2020 court order requiring a review of the 2015 threatened species [listing](#) and accompanying [4\(d\) rule](#), which outlines the protective regulations for the species under the ESA. After an in-depth [review](#), the USFWS found the fungal disease is expected to affect 100% of the northern long-eared bat's U.S. range by 2025, a rate of spread far quicker than initially anticipated. The USFWS is holding a virtual information session followed by a public hearing about the proposal on Apr. 7. Interested parties may [register](#) and comment on the proposal at the public hearing, or [submit](#) written comments to USFWS by May 23, 2022.

TWS advocates for increased DOI conservation funding – The Wildlife Society [urged](#) the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies to provide robust funding in its Fiscal Year 2023 [appropriations](#) package for programs that support wildlife professionals and their work. The Wildlife Society requested a \$200 million increase for the USFWS' [National Wildlife Refuge System](#); a \$27.6 million increase for [State and Tribal Wildlife](#)

[Grants](#) funding; a minimum \$43.7 million increase for USGS' [Climate Adaptation Science Centers](#); and an increase of \$2.5 million for [USGS Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units](#). As more information is revealed about FY 2023, which begins in October, TWS will re-examine and submit additional appropriations requests regarding these program areas. The Wildlife Society will also provide testimony to the Agriculture appropriations subcommittee focused on USDA conservation programming in the coming weeks. Members of TWS can check out the [appropriations action center](#) for updates on Administration and Congressional requests as well as TWS' positioning on FY 2023 funding. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

TWS comments on American Conservation and Stewardship Atlas – The Wildlife Society, with input from several organization units, recently submitted [feedback](#) to the U.S. Administration on their pending development of the American Conservation and Stewardship Atlas. The Atlas is intended to be an accessible and comprehensive tool for tracking federal conservation, stewardship and restoration efforts throughout the next decade. In its creation of the Atlas, the DOI seeks to unite conservation efforts across the country and support the current administration's [America the Beautiful](#) initiative to conserve 30% of public lands and waters by 2030. The Wildlife Society [recommends](#) building on previously existing regional, national and international datasets; assessing biodiversity and invasive species as a metric for determining an area's conservation value; ensuring equitable access to nature; initiating sincere engagement with tribal communities; sustaining multi-stakeholder partnerships; and investing in natural resource professionals. *Staff Contact:* [Caroline Murphy](#)

Updates from Headquarters

New Slack Workspace for the Conservation Affairs Network – The Wildlife Society is creating a Slack workspace to support communications across the Conservation Affairs Network (CAN). Conservation Affairs Committee Chairs and other CAN contacts in TWS organization units will receive an invitation to the workspace in the near future. Please reach out to Kelly (koconnor@wildlife.org) if you have any questions about accessing the workspace.

TWS 29th Annual Conference call for abstracts open – The Wildlife Society invites you to present at our 2022 Annual Conference. The Call for Abstracts is open now through April 29, and includes contributed oral presentations, contributed poster presentations and Student Research in Progress posters. Abstracts related to all aspects of wildlife ecology, management, conservation, education or policy are welcomed. The conference will be held in Spokane, Washington, Nov. 6-10, 2022. [Click here](#) to submit an abstract, or visit twsconference.org for general conference information and updates.

TWS certification will add designation for airport wildlife biologists – [Bird Strike Committee USA \(BSC-USA\)](#) and The Wildlife Society are working together to develop a designation that will expand TWS' Wildlife Biologist Certification Program's current opportunities. This designation will be consistent with the Qualified Airport Wildlife Biologists (QAWB) requirements outlined in the [U.S. Federal Aviation Administration \(FAA\) Advisory Circular No: 150/5200-36](#). Members who currently hold certification or who become certified in

the future through TWS will be able to add an airport wildlife biologist designation to their [Associate or Certified Wildlife Biologist® credentials](#). More details on this process will be made available within the coming months. *Staff Contact:* [Jamila Blake](#)

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 Kelly O'Connor at koconnor@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 Kelly O'Connor at koconnor@wildlife.org.