

30 January, 2024

The Honorable Steve Womack
2412 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Womack,

The Arkansas Chapter of The Wildlife Society would like to respectfully encourage you to join the bipartisan Congressional Wildlife Refuge Caucus (CWRC) to express your support for the conservation values that are supported by the National Wildlife Refuge System.

The Wildlife Society and its network of affiliated chapters and sections represent over 11,000 wildlife biologists and managers, dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education. Our mission is to inspire, empower, and enable wildlife professionals to sustain wildlife populations and their habitat through science-based management and conservation. The Arkansas Chapter of The Wildlife Society has a membership of over 200 professional natural resource managers and educators working for state and federal agencies, non-profits and private industry. Outdoor recreation is a critical part of the economy and culture of The Natural State and Certified Wildlife Biologists® are the leaders in conserving game and nongame wildlife, Threatened and Endangered species and the habitats these animals depend on.

The mission of the CWRC is to fortify, protect, and preserve the National Wildlife Refuge System by supporting adequate Refuge System funding, working for the strategic growth of the Refuge System through easements and targeted land acquisition, and by promoting legislation to improve the Refuge System. The CWRC also aims to educate members of Congress about the increasing number of challenges facing the System through briefings and other forms of outreach.

The National Wildlife Refuge System is the world's largest network of lands and waters dedicated to wildlife conservation. Administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, it is the nation's only set of federal lands dedicated to the conservation and management of America's native wildlife, encompassing more than 850 million acres of unique habitats our native wildlife species depend on. The Refuge System consists of 570 national wildlife refuges, five marine national monuments, and 38 wetland management districts, with units located in every state and territory of the US. Learn more here.

The CWRC is currently co-chaired by the following House members:

- Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA)
- Rep. Rob Wittman (R-VA)
- Rep. Nancy Mace (R-SC)
- Rep. Jenniffer Gonzalez-Colon (R-PR)
- Rep. Gabe Vasquez (D-NM)
- Rep. Melanie Stansbury (D-NM)
- Rep. Val Hoyle (D-OR)

The CWRC also sponsors the annual National Wildlife Refuge Expo, an event hosted and organized by the [Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement](#) (CARE) on Capitol Hill to highlight the values and

importance of the Refuge System for congressional staff. CARE just hosted the first Refuge Expo since the pandemic on November 15 and CWRC co-chairs Reps. Thompson, Wittman, and Vasquez came to speak at the event.

If you would like to learn more about the CWRC or join, please contact Congressman Thompson's office at adam.durand@mail.house.gov or Congressman Wittman's office at will.sroka@mail.house.gov.

Regards,

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