

The Wildlife Society's Conservation Affairs Network

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The Wildlife Society's Conservation Affairs Network supports communication, collaboration, and coordination on policy engagement across our organization and participating chapters, sections, and working groups. The monthly CAN Newsletter highlights policy issues occurring at local, regional, and national levels, and provides opportunities for wildlife professionals to engage with those issues.

Engagement Opportunities

Urge Congress to invest in federal conservation programs – TWS' [request](#) to Congress for the FY26 appropriations cycle is to reject the President's proposed cuts to conservation funding and instead begin to reinvest in our nation's natural resources. **Constituent-led outreach is incredibly valuable at this time.** We're asking all units to help amplify this message to members of their state's congressional delegation, and will be distributing tools to support this outreach shortly. If your unit is interested in engaging with a specific office, please reach out for staff support. *Staff contact:* [Kelly O'Connor](#)

CAC Activities

Wildlife professionals unite in opposition to proposed ESA rulemaking – The Wildlife Society, along with 13 TWS chapters, two sections and a group of TWS' past presidents, provided comprehensive comments to the Trump administration regarding proposed rulemaking that would rescind the definition of "harm" from regulations implementing the Endangered Species Act. Many thanks go out to all our unit and working group members who made sure that the expertise of wildlife professionals was included in this rulemaking process. You can explore all of the unit-led comments submitted to the Service using the interactive map in the article linked [here](#).

Leadership opportunity in Section Conservation Affairs Committee – The **Northwest Section** seeks a member interested in serving as Section Conservation Affairs Committee Chair. Section CAC Chairs communicate policy engagement activities and issues of interest from across the section's jurisdiction to the section's board, provide coordination and support to chapter CACs, and meet every other month with TWS staff and other section CAC Chairs to coordinate on regional and national policy issues. Please reach out to Kelly if you have any questions about this opportunity or are interested in serving as a Section Chair. *Staff contact:* [Kelly O'Connor](#)

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 koconnor@wildlife.org

Increasing the Society's effectiveness through communication and collaboration

Federal Updates

TWS engagement – The Wildlife Society joined several coalition efforts targeting congressional leaders over the last month, including:

- Recommending the adoption of a [wildlife habitat recovery credit](#) intended to incentivize partnerships with private landowners to recover at-risk wildlife;
- Urging Senate leadership to keep [federal public land sales](#) out of the budget reconciliation bill, and;
- Opposing the [House-proposed rescission](#) of \$100 million from the Forest Legacy Program.

USFWS Seeks Input on Voluntary Conservation Incentives – The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is [soliciting](#) public input on ways to modify the rules involving the accidental killing or injuring of endangered and threatened species, as well as regulations involving measures private landowners take to conserve these imperiled creatures.

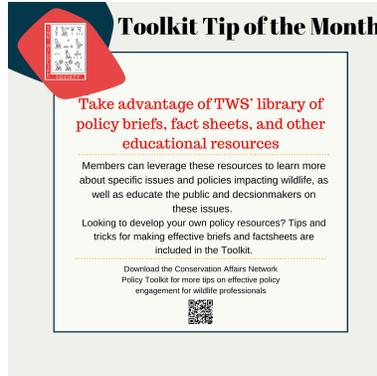
Detailed FY26 budgets released for DOI, USDA – The Trump administration has released its detailed FY26 budget requests for a broad suite of federal conservation programs in the [DOI](#) and [USDA](#). The administration is proposing steep cuts to, and in some cases elimination of funding for, programs like the National Wildlife Refuge System, USGS Ecosystems Mission Area, State and Tribal Wildlife Grants, and more.

Meanwhile, congressional hearings for FY26 spending bills are underway. The House Appropriations Committee has completed its markup of the bill that sets spending levels for programs like APHIS Wildlife Services and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The Interior Appropriations Subcommittee is set to markup the FY26 spending bill for Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies on June 23. Markup dates in the Senate for relevant spending bills have yet to be released.

Staff will continue to update [TWS' appropriations action center](#) as we progress through the appropriations process for FY26.

Federal appeals court upholds layoff ban – On May 9, a federal judge [temporarily halted](#) planned reduction in forces (RIF) before a [new wave of layoffs](#) hit federal departments like the U.S. Department of the Interior, which included wildlife professionals working with the [U.S. Geological Survey](#).

Questions on any items covered in this month's Federal Updates can be sent to [Kelly O'Connor](#)



Updates from Headquarters

New policy and communications intern joins TWS – TWS welcomes its [summer 2025 policy and communications intern](#), Kaylyn Zipp. Kay is passionate about science communication, community advocacy and sustainable socioecological systems. Her favorite activities include public education and outreach events where she can relay science to varied audiences from children to fishermen to policy makers. In the future, Zipp hopes to continue breaking down barriers in science communication while contributing to decision-support science that informs natural resource management.

TWS joins efforts to quantify impacts of federal policy shifts on ecological sciences – The American Society of Naturalists (ASN) is conducting a survey on the impacts of federal policies since Jan. 20, 2025, on science and scientists in the fields of ecology, evolution, marine science and environmental science. An optional, [anonymous survey](#) was sent to all U.S.-based members on June 9.

See you in Edmonton! – [Registration is now open](#) for The Wildlife Society's 32nd [Annual Conference](#) in Edmonton, Alberta, which will take place Oct. 5-8. To secure the early-bird registration rate, be sure to register by June 30. Visit twsconference.org to register today and learn more about the conference.

Don't forget to vote! – The Wildlife Society's Council election is open through **June 30!** This year's ballot includes nominees for the positions of vice president, North Central representative, Northwest representative and Western representative. [Log in to your member portal](#) and navigate to the election tab to vote today.

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