



Conservation Affairs Network Newsletter

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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.

On the Horizon

U.S. House prepares to vote on 2026 Farm Bill – Members of the U.S. House of Representatives are likely to vote on the long-awaited [2026 Farm Bill](#) during the week of April 27th. TWS has been an enduring supporter of private lands conservation programs in Title II of the Farm Bill, and has joined several recent efforts urging members of Congress to pass a bipartisan Farm Bill. Take a look at [key points on the legislation](#) and previous TWS news coverage.

CAC and Working Group Activities

TWS units highlight potential impacts of border activities to Big Bend wildlife – The Texas and Mexico Chapters and Southwest Section of The Wildlife Society, along with TWS, collaborated to [voice concerns](#) about proposed border wall infrastructure and associated activities in the Big Ben Region of Texas and Mexico. The letter was sent to Senators Cruz and Cornyn, as well as Representative Gonzales of Texas, in response to an [announcement earlier this year](#) that federal environmental laws would be waived in this area to expedite border security activities. Participating units called for appropriate environmental review under laws including the ESA and NEPA, as well as the incorporation of science-based mitigation measures for wildlife in any project initiated in this biologically, culturally, and economically significant region. *Unit contacts:* [Matt Wagner](#), [Mary Pearl Meuth](#) (Texas Chapter); [Luis Antonio Tarango Arámbula](#) (Mexico Chapter); [Nick Forman](#) (Southwest Section)

Learn more about how wildlife populations in Texas could be impacted by barriers to movement and connectivity in the latest episode of [TWS' Our Wild Lives Podcast](#).

Alberta Chapter begins to implement a new approach to policy engagement – The ACTWS is evolving its approach to engaging in policy discussions for wildlife management and conservation in Alberta, with a greater focus on direct engagement with decision-makers and science-based dialogue within our community. [This update](#) highlights recent efforts, including meetings with the Minister of Forestry and Parks and the introduction of our Species Reporting Session. *CAC contact:* [Stan Boutin](#)



Oregon Chapter comments on BLM plan revisions; hosts conservation policy workshop

– The Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society submitted [comments](#) in response to the BLM's [Notice of Intent to Revise Resource Management Plans for Northwestern and Coastal Oregon and Southwestern Oregon in Oregon/Washington](#). The Chapter's comments note that the BLM's management plans for the affected area are relatively recent, meet the agency's multiple-use mandate, and should not require significant revision. They highlight concerns relating to timber management strategies included in the BLM's proposal which are in violation of federal environmental laws and administrative regulations and policies to protect old-growth forest stands. The Chapter provided several detailed recommendations for analyses and wildlife management considerations that should be included in the BLM's subsequent Environmental Impact Statement.

Earlier this month, the Oregon Chapter also hosted a Legislative Strategies for Wildlife Conservation workshop in collaboration with Oregon State Universities Confluence Research Symposium hosted by the College of Forestry and the Department of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Sciences. The workshop provided an introduction into Oregon's legislative process focusing on conservation policy, legislative involvement, and career perspectives in the wildlife policy realm. The workshop included a panel discussion made up of a group of diverse experts including Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Deputy Director Shaun Clements, Senator Floyd Prozanski, Western Environmental Law Center's Environmental Communicator and Advocate Suze Wehr, Xerces Society Executive Director Scott Black, TWS Conservation Policy Manager Kelly O'Connor, and independent lobbyists Cindy Robert and Amy Patrick. CAC contact: [Trent Gianella](#)

Activity updates, success stories, and contact information – Does your CAC or working group 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

Federal Updates

Administration proposes another year of deep cuts to conservation spending – The federal budget proposal for fiscal year 2027 once again seeks to eliminate long-standing conservation programs. [Read more in our coverage.](#)

Congress considers topics ranging from scientific publishing to mining in the Boundary Waters – Noteworthy conservation policymaking was at the forefront of congressional activities the week of April 13. [Read more in our coverage.](#)

Endangered Species Committee meets to discuss species protections in the Gulf of Mexico – An administration-appointed committee has [determined](#) that Endangered



Species Act protections should be waived for listed species in the Gulf of Mexico related to potential impacts from oil and gas production. [Read more in our coverage.](#)

House Appropriations Committee releases FY27 spending bill for USDA and related agencies – On April 22, House appropriators released the [Fiscal Year 2027 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Bill](#). The bill is set for subcommittee markup on April 23. This bill sets annual federal funding levels for agencies and programs in the USDA. The [committee summary](#) notes that this version of the bill maintains FY26 funding for USDA APHIS, but reduces funding for the NRCS by \$50 million from the previous fiscal year.

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

Tools and Resources

Revised Issue Statements approved by TWS Council – TWS members can now access the following Issue Statements, which were updated and approved by TWS Council at the March 2026 Council meeting:

- [Hunting](#)
- [Wildlife Management and Conservation and the Animal Rights Philosophy](#)
- [Competitions in the Harvest of Wildlife](#)

Updates from Headquarters

Save on Life Membership – In celebration of TWS' 90th anniversary, we're providing a steep discount on life membership, but only for the month of April! Now through April 30, life membership is only \$1,500—that's nearly 40% off! To claim this special rate use the promo code TWS90LIFE at checkout.

Submit nominations for all remaining TWS awards – The deadline to submit nominations for the remaining 2026 TWS Awards is May 1 by 11:59 p.m. ET. Our Awards Program annually honors professional excellence, recognizes outstanding achievement, and highlights contributions to wildlife science and management. We encourage members to recognize the contributions of their peers by participating in the nomination process. Visit wildlife.org/awards to see the complete list of TWS Awards and find out how you can nominate deserving peers and colleagues.