

November 8, 2018

The Honorable John Barrasso
Chairman
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thomas Carper
Ranking Member
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper,

On behalf of the millions of hunters, anglers, recreational target shooters, professional scientists, and outdoor enthusiasts our organizations represent, we write to request that the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW) hold a hearing and markup on the *Recovering America's Wildlife Act* (S. 3223) this Congress. This bill will authorize funding for desperately needed resources to support state-based conservation and restoration of fish, wildlife, and their habitats to the direct benefit of sportsmen and women.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act will help recover species at-risk by authorizing \$1.3 billion annually from existing royalty revenues generated by the development of energy and mineral resources on federal lands and waters for state fish and wildlife agencies (state agencies) to implement proactive conservation programs. The funds will be leveraged with state dollars and utilized by new and existing partnerships to create more fish, wildlife and habitat on the ground. Doing so will arm state agencies with the resources needed to assist in the restoration and recovery of federally listed threatened and endangered species while also preventing other species from being listed. Furthermore, this legislation will reduce the risk associated with an uncertain landscape helping private landowners, sportsmen and women, and the businesses that make a living off the land and water.

Specifically, S. 3223 would authorize funding for the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration subaccount, which was established pursuant to the *Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act* (Pittman-Robertson Act) of 1937. This innovative approach stems from a recommendation of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources. Comprised of a wide array of national business and conservation leaders, the Blue Ribbon Panel remains united in support of legislation implementing the Blue Ribbon Panel's [recommendations](#).

The undersigned organizations further urge Congress to enact Recovering America's Wildlife Act with mandatory funding, which would ensure financial certainty to states, and allow them to plan and implement multi-year conservation projects. The House version of this bill, H.R. 4647, includes a dedicated funding mechanism currently.

Each state, territory, and the District of Columbia is mandated by Congress to develop comprehensive State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAPs) to identify key fish and wildlife conservation needs. Collectively, SWAPs have identified over 12,000 species across our nation that are considered "species of greatest conservation need", and potentially at-risk of becoming threatened or endangered, complimentary to the contributions of hunters, anglers, recreational target shooters and boaters, the *Recovering America's Wildlife Act* will empower our state wildlife managers to get ahead of the endangered species backlog that may occur if adequate and sustained funding is not dedicated to this pressing problem.

Our nation is blessed with a diverse array of fish and wildlife and we have a proud history of bringing species back from the brink of extinction by helping fund professional fish and wildlife management. At various times during the 20th Century, species including bald eagles, peregrine falcons, elk, wood ducks, and pronghorn antelope were teetering on the edge of extinction—now they are thriving because Americans made conservation action a priority.

Today, we face a new wildlife crisis; one in which the magnitude of the solution must match the magnitude of the challenge. By prioritizing the *Recovering America's Wildlife Act*, this Congress will ensure that our fish, wildlife and proud outdoor recreation traditions and their associated national economic benefits will endure for the benefit of future generations. The *Recovering America's Wildlife Act* represents an historic opportunity to simultaneously benefit conservation, sportsmen and women, the economy and taxpayers.

To that end, we encourage your strong, bipartisan support for state wildlife agencies and look forward to working with you to support them through the legislative process this Congress.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request to take up S. 3223, and for your ongoing service on behalf of America's sporting-conservation community.

Sincerely,

American Woodcock Society
Archery Trade Association
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Boone and Crockett Club
Camp Fire Club of America
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Conservation Force
Dallas Safari Club
Delta Waterfowl Foundation
Ducks Unlimited
Houston Safari Club
Izaak Walton League of America
Mule Deer Foundation
National Association of Forest Service Retirees
National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative
National Shooting Sports Foundation
National Wild Turkey Federation

National Wildlife Federation
North American Grouse Partnership
Orion - The Hunter's Institute
Pheasants Forever/Quail Forever
Pope and Young Club
Professional Outfitters and Guides of America
Quality Deer Management Association
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Ruffed Grouse Society
Texas Wildlife Association
The Wildlife Society
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Whitetails Unlimited
Wild Sheep Foundation
Wildlife Forever
Wildlife Management Institute

Cc: Senate Majority Leader McConnell and Senate Minority Leader Schumer