

February 14, 2018

Honorable Rob Bishop, Chairman  
House Natural Resources Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Raul Grijalva, Ranking Democrat  
House Natural Resources Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop and Ranking Member Grijalva,

On behalf of the millions of hunters, anglers, shooters, and outdoor enthusiasts that our organizations represent, we write to express our strong support for the bipartisan Recovering America's Wildlife Act (H.R. 4647), sponsored by Representatives Jeff Fortenberry and Debbie Dingell.

We believe that collaborative conservation is the most effective way to recover wildlife populations—an approach embodied in H.R. 4647. Time and time again, proactive, collaborative, and voluntary conservation efforts have allowed our nation to recover wildlife species, from deer and elk to wild turkeys and a range of waterfowl and fish, through habitat restoration projects and other strategies. These collaborative efforts have largely been funded by our members and sportsmen and women across America, who pay license fees and the excise taxes collected under Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson.

While collaborative conservation has spurred countless on-the-ground successes, today more than 12,000 wildlife species across our nation are considered “species of greatest conservation need,” as identified by State Fish and Wildlife Agencies. A Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources, comprised of industry and conservation leaders, was empaneled with the express purpose of developing recommendations to solve this challenge. They recommended—and we agree—that the best way to recover these species of concern is to build upon the conservation model that has produced the remarkable successes for game species by investing a portion of existing energy revenues in proactive, collaborative, voluntary efforts at the state-level through the existing Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program, as proposed in H.R. 4647. This non-regulatory, collaborative approach is a superior means of recovering species and leverages additional funds through innovative public/private partnerships, while reducing the need for more expensive “emergency room” measures and avoiding tens of billions of dollars in economic uncertainty from potential regulation and litigation.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act will drive measurable conservation outcomes by providing the resources necessary to implement Congressionally-required State Wildlife Action Plans through which each state and territory develops a clear state-level strategy with local stakeholders for how best to recover species of greatest conservation need in their state.

Further, and in addition to other conservation and recreation programs, H.R. 4647 will strengthen local communities and the national economy by both bolstering the outdoor recreation industry, which generates more than \$887 billion in annual economic benefit, supports 7.1 million jobs, and attracts more than 140 million participants (including nearly 40 million hunters and anglers), while creating more regulatory certainty for numerous industries. More specifically, funds from H.R. 4647 will be used to enhance wildlife-associated recreation.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act is good for conservation, good for sportsmen, good for the economy, and good for taxpayers. We encourage your strong support and look forward to working with you to move this bill through the legislative process.

Thank you for your commitment to conservation.

American Woodcock Society  
Archery Trade Association  
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies  
Boone and Crockett Club  
Camp Fire Club of America  
Catch-A-Dream Foundation  
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation  
Conservation Force  
Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports  
Dallas Safari Club  
Delta Waterfowl Foundation  
Ducks Unlimited  
Houston Safari Club  
Izaak Walton League of America  
Masters of Foxhounds Association  
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  
Pheasants Forever  
Professional Outfitters and Guides of America  
Quail Forever  
Quality Deer Management Association  
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation  
Ruffed Grouse Society  
Texas Wildlife Association  
The Conservation Fund  
The Wildlife Society  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership  
Whitetails Unlimited  
Wild Sheep Foundation  
Wildlife Forever  
Wildlife Management Institute  
Wildlife Mississippi