

September 27, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear President Biden, Leader Schumer, and Speaker Pelosi:

We write to you today to express our support for wildlife recovery and public lands restoration provisions that restore and build resilience of nature-based infrastructure benefitting both wildlife and people included in the Build Back Better package that Congress will consider as part of budget reconciliation.¹ The dual crises of climate change and biodiversity loss require bold action that focuses on programs rooted in sound science, with proven track records of success, and which achieve measurable results for long-term recovery and conservation of our nation's native plant and animal species. These programs will also provide millions of well-paying jobs throughout the country. Therefore, on behalf of our millions of members and supporters, we urge you to ensure that the following investments by the relevant House committees are preserved and passed in the final bill.

House Natural Resources Committee²

- \$340,000,000 for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to implement the Endangered Species Act (ESA), our nation's most effective tool for preventing extinction
 - \$75,000,000 for species recovery (§70601(a))³
 - \$75,000,000 for Candidate Conservation (§70601(b))
 - \$50,000,000 for Habitat Conservation Plans (§70602)
 - \$40,000,000 for interagency consultation pursuant to the ESA (§70603)
 - \$100,000,000 to help stop the slide toward extinction of four critically endangered groups of species – pollinators, freshwater mussels, island plants, and desert fish (§70604 *et seq.*)
- \$100,000,000 to FWS for the protection and restoration of grassland habitat (§70610)
- \$100,000,000 for FWS to make lands and waters more climate resilient by investing in projects that reduce damages from extreme weather events, address invasive species, and restore habitat in the National Wildlife Refuge System and on state and local lands (§70608)
- \$10,000,000 to identify, conserve, and restore wildlife corridors (§70609)

¹ See S. Res. Con. 14

² <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/II/II00/20210902/114019/BILLS-117pih-CommitteePrint.pdf>

³ The original House Natural Resources Committee bill included \$150,000,000 for species recovery. Through an amendment adopted at the full Committee markup, \$75,000,000 was shifted to Candidate Conservation. We strongly urge that the recovery funding be restored.

- Repeal the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Oil and Gas Program and buy back leases that generated less than 0.1% of the promised revenue (§70804)
- \$3,000,000,000 to the Department of the Interior to establish and implement Civilian Climate Corps programs to restore and rehabilitate public lands and waters managed by Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management (§70202)
- \$9,500,000,000 to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to restore marine, estuarine, coastal, or Great Lake habitat, providing adaptation to climate change (§70501)
- \$400,000,000, to NOAA for climate resilience, habitat protection, and other habitat restoration projects to recover Pacific salmon (§70502)
- \$2,500,000,000 for all activities necessary to inventory, assess, decommission, reclaim, respond to hazardous substance releases on, and remediate abandoned locatable minerals mine land. (§70807)
- Reclamation Fee - each operator conducting hardrock mineral activities shall pay to the Secretary of the Interior a reclamation fee of 7 cents per ton of displaced material. (§70807)
- \$3,000,000 to revise rules and regulations to prevent undue degradation of public lands due to hardrock mining activities as authorized by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (43 U.S.C. 1701) and the Mining Law of 1872 (30 U.S.C. 22). (§70807)

House Agriculture Committee⁴

- \$450,000,000 for the Legacy Roads and Trails program of the Forest Service (§11001(6))
- \$100,000,000 to provide for more efficient and more effective environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act (§11001(10))
- \$50,000,000 for the protection of ancient forests, including completing an inventory of old-growth forests within the National Forest System (§11001(11))
- \$50,000,000 to develop and carry out activities and tactics for the maintenance and restoration of habitat conditions necessary for the protection and recovery of at-risk species on National Forest System land in implementing Forest Service hazardous fuels reduction and other vegetation management programs and projects based on a science based analysis carried out by the Secretary (§11001(12))
- \$50,000,000 to carry out post-fire recovery plans that emphasize the use of locally adapted native plant materials to restore the ecological integrity of disturbed areas and do not include salvage logging (§11001(13))
- \$50,000,000 to develop and carry out non-lethal activities and tactics to reduce human-wildlife conflicts on National Forest System land (§11001(14))
- \$2,250,000,000 to be used for staffing, salaries, and other workforce needs to support the development of a Civilian Climate Corps for the purposes of managing National Forest System land (§11001(15))

We ask that you ensure this funding is included in the final legislation as the bill advances in both chambers. Each of these provisions would restore ecosystems and increase the climate resilience of our

⁴ <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AG/AG00/20210913/114043/BILLS-117SConRes14pp.pdf>

natural infrastructure. We also request that you consider further investments to create jobs while protecting wildlife and habitat.⁵ For instance, Chair Scott stated that the Agriculture Committee intends to add \$28 billion in conservation funding during floor consideration; we urge you to adopt that funding and include language that directs funding to agency practices that simultaneously support climate resilience and biodiversity.

Additionally, as one of the most effective tools for addressing biodiversity loss in the face of climate change, we request that you increase the investment to restore and conserve wildlife corridors to \$1 billion, including funding for the National Park Service, the Bureau Land of Land Management, and the United States Geological Survey.⁶ We also urge you to direct \$1 billion of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee's allocation toward imperiled species recovery programs at the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). BLM administers habitat for 2,768 special status species, and funding is desperately needed to prevent and reverse further population declines.

Finally, the development and inclusion of legislative sideboards to ensure these historic investments conserve wildlife and wild places is essential for long-term success. It is also incumbent on the Biden Administration to develop implementation plans that direct this much-needed funding to proper uses. Most notably, we urge you to create additional specificity for the Civilian Climate Corps programs to guarantee funds benefit lands, waters, and wildlife while creating well-paying jobs and long-term career opportunities throughout the country.⁷

We look forward to working with you to meet the climate and biodiversity crises head on by passing this landmark legislation.

Sincerely,

Advocates for Snake Preservation
Alaska Clean Water Advocacy
American Bird Conservancy
Animal Defenders International
Animal Welfare Institute
Animals & Society Institute
Animals Are Sentient Beings, Inc.
Animas Valley Institute
Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Battle Creek Alliance/
Defiance Canyon Raptor Rescue
Bird Conservation Network
Bonobo Conservation Initiative

Born Free USA
Boulder Rights of Nature, Inc.
Buffalo Field Campaign
Cahaba Riverkeeper
Californians for Western Wilderness
Cascades Raptor Center
Cascadia Wildlands
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Large Landscape Conservation
Chesapeake Conservancy
Conservation Northwest
Conserve Southwest Utah
Defenders of Wildlife

⁵ [Final Congressional Wildlife Stimulus Letter_5-20.pdf: Wildlife Recovery and Public Lands Restoration Letter for Biden Transition_1_12_21_Corrected.pdf](#)

⁶ [Senate Budget Reconciliation letter on Wildlife Corridors_08_21.pdf](#)

⁷ [Final Congressional Letter for CCC Priorities 9_1_21.pdf](#)

Delaware Valley Ornithological Club
Desert Tortoise Council
Earth Ethics, Inc.
Earthjustice
Eastern Coyote/Coywolf Research
Endangered Habitats League
Endangered Species Coalition
Environmental Protection Information Center
Flathead-Lolo-Bitterroot Citizen Task Force
Fly Fishers International N. California Council
FOUR PAWS USA
Franciscan Action Network
Friends of Alaska National Wildlife Refuges
Friends of the Bitterroot
Friends of the Clearwater
Friends of the Sonoran Desert
Gallatin Wildlife Association
Grand Staircase Escalante Partners
Grazing Reform Project
Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Greater Hells Canyon Council
Hoosier Environmental Council
Humane Society Legislative Fund
In Defense of Animals
International Marine Mammal Project of Earth
Island Institute
Jemez Peacemakers
Kentucky Natural Lands Trust
Los Padres ForestWatch
Maryland Ornithological Society
Montana Wilderness Education School
National Wolfwatcher Coalition
Native Plant Society of the United States
Natural Resources Defense Council
Northeast Oregon Ecosystems
Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness
Ocean Conservation Research
Oregon Natural Desert Association
Predator Defense
Prince George's County Audubon Society
Project Coyote
Project Eleven Hundred
Public Lands Project

Raptors Are The Solution
RESTORE: The North Woods
Salem Audubon Society
SAVE THE FROGS!
Selkirk Conservation Alliance
Sequoia ForestKeeper®
Sky Island Alliance
Social Compassion in Legislation
Soda Mountain Wilderness Council
South Florida Wildlands Association
Southern Environmental Law Center
Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance
Southwest Environmental Center/Wildlife for All
The Humane Society of the United States
Tennessee Riverkeeper
Ventana Wilderness Alliance
Western Watersheds Project
Western Wildlife Conservancy
Western Wildlife Outreach
Wild Horse Education
WildEarth Guardians
Wildlands Network
Wisconsin Society for Ornithology
www.All-Creatures.org
Wyoming Wildlife Advocates