



The voice of fish and wildlife agencies

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**For Immediate Release**

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**Statement from the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Supporting the Introduction of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act in the Senate**

**Washington D.C.** (July 20, 2021)- The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies strongly supports the introduction of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act ([S.2372](#)) in the U.S. Senate today. Senators Martin Heinrich (D-NM) and Roy Blunt (R-MO) introduced legislation that recommends funding for conservation of those fish and wildlife species in greatest need across the country. If passed, this bill will not only help the one-third of wildlife species in the United States currently at risk of becoming threatened or endangered, but also get Americans back to work immediately, creating an estimated 33,000 jobs each year restoring natural resources and bolstering community resilience while protecting our valuable natural infrastructure.

This bipartisan legislation will dedicate \$1.3 billion annually to state fish and wildlife agencies to implement their science-based wildlife action plans and an additional \$97.5 million for tribal fish and wildlife managers to conserve fish and wildlife on tribal lands and waters. This existing revenue stream will allow state fish and wildlife agencies to implement [proactive solutions](#) to conserve those species in greatest need and prevent wildlife from becoming threatened or endangered without increasing taxes. The Senate bill complements the House version ([H.R. 2773](#)), introduced in April 2021 by Congresswoman Debbie Dingell (D-MI-12) and Congressman Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE-1), which has gained strong, bipartisan co-sponsorship due to its innovative approach to solving America's wildlife crisis, with the [current list of co-sponsors growing to more than 89 members](#).

"This nation is blessed with abundant fish and wildlife resources that provide enjoyment as well as essential services to people and communities. Our state agencies have the primary responsibility of conserving our treasured natural resources and with this dedicated funding, states and our many partners will be able to make sure our fish and wildlife are healthy for years to come," said Sara Parker Pauley, Director of the Missouri Department of Conservation and President of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. "This bipartisan legislation transcends political boundaries and brings diverse stakeholders to the table to work on real conservation solutions. We thank Senators Blunt and Heinrich for their leadership and commitment to this important bill that benefits our nature, outdoor recreation, our overall health, clean air and water and our economy."

"Protecting America's fish and wildlife habitat means conserving the creatures we love before they ever become imperiled," said Heinrich. "After all, our children deserve to inherit the full breadth of American wildlife, from bumble bees to bison, that we know today. This legislation will make that possible."

"Missouri is home to some of the best hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation our country has to offer," said Blunt. "We can better protect our land, waterways, and wildlife by encouraging states, territories, and Tribes to make significant

contributions to voluntary conservation efforts. I'm proud to help introduce this bill that will help preserve our nation's wildlife for future generations."

"This bill is complementary to existing natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation programs and will allow all Americans to become investors in fish and wildlife conservation," said Executive Director Ron Regan. "Our funding model can no longer keep up with the needs of the full array of fish and wildlife in this country. The Recovering America's Wildlife Act provides a modern solution and allows states to more fully implement their State Wildlife Action Plans."

These critical efforts are supported by the [Alliance for America's Fish & Wildlife](#), whose purpose is to create a 21st-century funding model for critically needed conservation of our nation's most precious natural resources, our fish and wildlife. This effort was built upon the strong partnership created by the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish & Wildlife Resources, consisting of members representing the outdoor recreation, retail and manufacturing sector, the energy and automotive industries, private landowners, educational institutions, sportsmen's and other conservation organizations and state and federal fish and wildlife agencies.

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The Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies represents North America's fish and wildlife agencies to advance sound, science-based management and conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats in the public interest. The Association represents its state agency members on Capitol Hill and before the Administration to advance favorable fish and wildlife conservation policy and funding and works to ensure that all entities work collaboratively on the most important issues. The Association also provides member agencies with coordination services on cross-cutting as well as species-based programs that range from birds, fish habitat and energy development to climate change, wildlife action plans, conservation education, leadership training and international relations. Working together, the Association's member agencies are ensuring that North American fish and wildlife management has a clear and collective voice.

ASSOCIATION OF FISH & WILDLIFE AGENCIES

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