

STATE WILDLIFE GRANTS AT WORK

Rep. Bryan Steil , 1st District

Federal **State Wildlife Grants** are the only nationwide program to prevent wildlife from becoming endangered. These grants have been critical for Wisconsin, yet despite many conservation successes, the state has more than 400 Species of Greatest Conservation Need - and more than 100 are endangered or threatened. Once species become endangered, especially at the federal level, they often require costly “emergency room” conservation and regulatory measures which are not sustainable in the long-term.

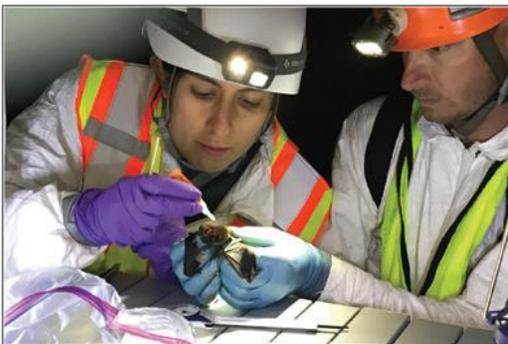
The **Recovering America’s Wildlife Act (HR 2773)** is designed to keep species off endangered and threatened lists. It would provide the most important boost for conservation in decades and would fund the highest priorities in our state using an existing blueprint: Wisconsin’s Wildlife Action Plan. Agencies, organizations, and individuals across the state already do critically important work to conserve fish, wildlife, and our natural areas, and RAWA would help them do more.



Examples of on-the-ground conservation work in 2019-20.

- Restored 686 acres of oak savanna and oak forest communities and 635 acres of prairie and grassland habitats using prescribed burning
- Controlled invasive plant species across 2,850 acres of public lands within the district
- Completed property management and maintenance activities for 16 State Natural Areas to promote public access and enjoyment of these properties
- Completed 52 field visits to follow up on rare species avoidance and habitat management guidance requests
- Reviewed and provided consultation or data that facilitated the completion of 60 different projects within the district, including waterways, wetlands, timber management, road construction, and utility projects

Project Highlight: Conserving Wisconsin’s bats



Bats are a vital part of Wisconsin’s ecosystems, major consumers of agricultural and forest pests, and predators of biting insects. Wisconsin’s four cave bat species are state-threatened and severely impacted by white-nose syndrome, a deadly disease decimating hibernating bats across North America caused by a fungus unknown to occur in the state only 10 years ago. State Wildlife Grants provided critical support for understanding bat populations and establishing baselines for future conservation goals. Also, The Wisconsin DNR has worked with the USGS National Wildlife Health Center, UW-Madison, Mississippi Valley Conservancy and Virginia Tech to develop and evaluate vaccines to help bat populations recover, including undertaking the first vaccine trials in the wild for any disease affecting bats.

