

EDITORIAL: Conservation: Gohmert, other lawmakers should support Recovering America's Wildlife Act

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More than 12,000 species of fish and wildlife in the United States are at risk of becoming endangered. Of those, 1,310 are Texas species.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act, H.R. 4647, is the best hope for obtaining significant funding for recovering those at-risk wildlife populations and keeping them off the Endangered Species List. The bipartisan measure would direct \$1.3 billion annually from existing energy and mineral royalties on federal lands and waters to the currently-unfunded Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Account. These revenues would be distributed to state wildlife agencies to fund projects that benefit species at risk of becoming endangered. Texas' share would be more than \$60 million per year.

The bill now has 61 co-sponsors, but Louie Gohmert, our U.S. representative, is not a co-sponsor. We believe he should be. The measure has the support of nationally recognized leaders in business and conservation, including senior management of Shell Americas, Toyota, Bass Pro Shops, the Outdoor Industry Association, the National Wildlife Federation and National Audubon Society. You read that correctly. This measure has the support of leaders in *both* the oil and gas and outdoor recreation industries.

Texas Conservation Alliance's executive director Janice Bezanson serves on the Texas steering committee supporting the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. TCA builds grassroots coalitions of conservationists, sportsmen, landowners, advocates for nature tourism and outdoor recreation, business people, timber industry leaders and elected officials to solve natural resource problems. Most recently, the TCA helped establish the Neches River National Wildlife Refuge, which now spans more than 4,500 acres of hardwood bottomland along the Neches River.

The Pineywoods of East Texas is a beautiful place to live. Maybe we take it for granted, being surrounded day in and day out by such majestic pine forests and tranquil rivers and lakes, but we are truly blessed to live among such gorgeous natural surroundings. Supporting the Recovering America's Wildlife Act will help keep it that way.

To learn more about the Texas Conservation Alliance, call (512) 327-4119 or visit tcatexas.org.

To encourage Gohmert to support this legislation, call (202) 225-3035, send a letter to 2234 Rayburn HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515, or send an email to gohmert.house.gov.