



For Immediate Release

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“Most Significant Wildlife Conservation Bill in Half a Century” Ready for Votes in House, Senate

The strongly bipartisan Recovering America’s Wildlife Act is out of committee and ready for floor votes in both the US Senate and the US House of Representatives. This landmark wildlife conservation bill would direct nearly \$1.4 billion annually to state and tribal wildlife agencies to protect thousands of at-risk species.

“This commonsense legislation will allow us to get ahead of wildlife declines by stepping in to help at-risk wildlife early with collaborative, voluntary measures,” said John Shepperd with Texas Foundation for Conservation, speaking on behalf of the Texas Alliance for America’s Fish and Wildlife. “Addressing America’s wildlife crisis with locally-driven conservation efforts is a bipartisan solution that is good for wildlife, good for business, and good for Texas.”

The Recovering America’s Wildlife Act would make more than \$50 million per year available for fish and wildlife conservation in Texas—without a new tax. The bill would help the more than 1,200 Species of Greatest Conservation Need in our state from becoming endangered, including numerous freshwater fish, pollinators, songbirds, and much-loved state icons like the Texas horned lizard, northern bobwhite, and Guadalupe bass.

State fish and wildlife agencies are currently funded at less than 5% of what’s needed to implement their Congressionally-mandated State Wildlife Action Plans. These plans are roadmaps designed to help stabilize at-risk wildlife populations before they become endangered. If this measure passes, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will send grant funds across Texas to conservation organizations, municipalities, researchers, landowners, zoos, and others to fund urgently-needed conservation projects.

Janice Bezanson with Texas Conservation Alliance notes that the bill could be particularly beneficial for a private lands state like Texas. “This funding could help expand cost-sharing programs and provide more technical guidance for private landowners who want to conduct wildlife studies or habitat restoration on their property, to benefit vulnerable species.”

Through new conservation projects, the legislation is estimated to create thousands of new “shovel-ready” jobs for wildlife management, tree planting, river restoration, and wildlife reintroductions. It would also connect more Texans and children to outdoor recreation, nature education, and wildlife watching opportunities.

Bezanson explains that “Nature tourism is huge in Texas. People from all over travel here to see iconic landscapes and wildlife such as migratory birds. Unfortunately, much of the fish and wildlife that our outdoor recreation economy depends on is declining. We’re also losing animals that are essential to agriculture, like bees that pollinate our crops and bats that help control insect pests.”

The bill has 32 cosponsors in the Senate – evenly split between Republicans and Democrats – and more than 170 cosponsors in the House.

“Recovering America’s Wildlife Act isn’t a win for one party or the other, it’s a win for wildlife, and all Texans,” said Bezanson. “This is a cost-effective, consequential bill that every member of the Texas Congressional delegation should vote for.”

The bill was voted out of the Senate Environment and Public Works committee on April 7th with a bipartisan vote of 15-5. It passed out of the House Natural Resources committee in January with a 29-15 vote. The broad support from both sides of the aisle suggests the bill has a good chance of passing in both Houses of Congress when brought to a vote.

A recent Data for Progress nationwide poll of 1,199 likely voters found that 87 percent supported the bill, with only 7 percent opposed. The bill is a reminder that Americans from all walks of life care about our natural heritage and support conservation for current and future generations.

All Texans can be a voice for wildlife by asking their U.S. House Representative and U.S. Senators to vote YES for Recovering America’s Wildlife Act when it comes up for a vote.

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The Texas Alliance for America’s Fish and Wildlife is a coalition of more than 170 organizations and businesses formed to support the need for dedicated wildlife conservation funding. To learn more and get involved, visit www.txwildlifealliance.org.

Media resources:

[Download photos](#) of some of the species and landscapes that will benefit from Recovering America’s Wildlife Act

[Watch](#) the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act national and Texas videos.