

NEWS RELEASE

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Alliance for America's Fish & Wildlife Brings Together Leaders of Outdoor Recreation, Tribes, Business, Sportsmen/women, Conservation & More to Secure Funding to Address Wildlife Crisis


This Earth Day, A Bipartisan Bill Aimed at Recovering America's Wildlife Introduced in Congress

WASHINGTON, DC – April 22, 2021 – Today, on Earth Day, an unprecedented alliance of business, academic, tribal and conservation leaders have united to provide a solution to one of America's greatest threats—the decline of our fish and wildlife and their natural habitats. Scientists estimate that one-third of wildlife species in the United States are at risk of becoming threatened or endangered without much needed funding for their proactive conservation. Healthy, sustainable fish and wildlife populations drive many sectors of our economy, especially the \$788 billion outdoor recreation industry.

The solution to this wildlife crisis is passage of the bipartisan ***Recovering America's Wildlife Act***, introduced today by Representatives Debbie Dingell (D-MI) and Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE). The bill 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 will provide dedicated funding, so state and tribal wildlife managers can proactively conserve fish and wildlife species of greatest conservation need in a voluntary, non-regulatory manner before federal listing under the *Endangered Species Act* is warranted. This bill will 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. What better way to honor the spirit of Earth Day than to introduce the most impactful wildlife conservation funding bill in a generation.

The [Alliance for America's Fish & Wildlife](#) has expanded out of the strong partnership and recommendations 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 groups and state, tribal and federal fish and wildlife agencies. The Alliance also sent a [letter](#) today to the U.S. House encouraging support for the *Recovering America's Wildlife Act* signed by over 350 partner organizations and businesses.

"As we celebrate Earth Day and continue our work to combat the biodiversity crisis, bold solutions are needed to safeguard our nation's wildlife from further decline," said Congresswoman Dingell. "The *Recovering America's Wildlife Act* represents a strong commitment to addressing the current biodiversity crisis using innovative, state-based management that will protect our nation's environmental heritage for years to come."



Congressman Fortenberry added “The *Recovering America’s Wildlife Act* is smart upstream policy to promote continuity of habitat and prevent the costly downstream emergency room procedures of the *Endangered Species Act*—enhancing opportunity for birders, hikers, hunters, anglers, and the burgeoning field of ecotourism.”

Proactive conservation is good for wildlife, good for taxpayers, good for business and good for our communities. By directing funds to State Wildlife Action Plans through the *Recovering America’s Wildlife Act*, America will be fueling shovel ready projects that immediately create jobs in a sector with one of the highest returns on investment and supporting continued world class outdoor recreation opportunities.

“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 past year has really brought into focus the value of nature, outdoor recreation, our overall health, clean air and water and our economy. We must work together now to pass this legislation so that future generations will have these same opportunities and quality of life that we enjoy.”

Not since enactment of the Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson acts, that provided critical funding for fish and wildlife on the brink of extinction, have we had an opportunity to pass legislation of such magnitude to the overall health and wellbeing of our wildlife and our planet Earth. The *Recovering America’s Wildlife Act* is the most important conservation legislation in a generation.

“Tribes are our nation’s first people and first conservationists with many fish and wildlife species having biological and cultural importance,” said Elveda Martinez, President of the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society. “The *Recovering America’s Wildlife Act* is monumental legislation for Tribes to protect these species and our cultural ties to them along with promoting tribal self-governance. With the support of this legislation, the Tribes stand ready and committed to ensure that wildlife endures for all of our future generations.”

“America’s wildlife are in crisis. One-third of all species in the country currently face a heightened risk of extinction. This bill represents a bold, bipartisan vision for how we can recover wildlife and create jobs in every state across the nation,” said Collin O’Mara, president and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation. “There is important work just waiting to be done restoring habitat, removing invasive species, stopping wildlife diseases, reducing water pollution, and mitigating the harm from climate change. This bill will put people to work today protecting our wildlife heritage for tomorrow. Representatives Dingell and Fortenberry’s steadfast leadership on this bill is a shining example of how

Congress can still find common ground on conservation even in these polarized times. We're confident the bill will be signed into law by President Biden this year."

"As legislative Co-Chair of the Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife, I am grateful for the leadership of Representatives Dingell and Fortenberry," said Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation President Jeff Crane. "The reintroduction of *Recovering America's Wildlife Act* represents one of the most significant investments in fish and wildlife conservation in the last two decades. This bipartisan legislation is crucial for ensuring an abundant and healthy future for our nation's fish and wildlife."

A lot is at stake if we do not act soon. Every American benefits when we have healthy and accessible fish and wildlife. We need to start down a new path where we invest proactively in conservation rather than reacting to emergencies that cost taxpayers more than preventative measures like this one.

Please visit OurNatureUSA.com and urge your U.S. Representative to support passage of the *Recovering America's Wildlife Act* to address our biodiversity crisis and allow future generations to enjoy the same abundant fish, wildlife and outdoor recreation opportunities that we have today—for Our Nature, Our Nation and Our Future.

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About the Alliance for America's Fish & Wildlife

The Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife formed in 2017 to secure funding for much needed conservation of our most precious natural resources, our fish and wildlife. The Alliance was built upon the strong partnership created by the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish & Wildlife Resources. The Alliance consists of members representing more than a trillion dollars of economic impact, millions of non-exportable jobs, and tens of millions of members and consumers across the country, all who rely on healthy fish and wildlife populations. Our goal is to partner with all Americans to conserve our precious fish and wildlife and natural heritage for future generations. Learn more at OurNatureUSA.com.

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