

**COMPILATION OF RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT THE 116TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES (LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA)**

2026-01-07	Strengthening State Involvement in the National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP) and Recognizing NFHP's 20 th Anniversary
2025-02-07	Support for the Adoption of Best Management Practices for the Harvest Information Program
2025-03-07	Fostering a Strategic Partnership with the American College of Lifestyle Medicine and the Nature and Health Alliance Through Shared Nature and Health Principles
2025-04-07	Encouraging State Fish and Wildlife Agencies to Use the Collaboratively Developed National Utility-Scale Solar Wildlife Guidelines
2025-05-07	Support for a Coordinated and Standardized National Native Bee Monitoring Framework
2026-06-07	Celebrating the 250 th Anniversary of the United States' Declaration of Independence and the Essential Role of American Ideas in Advancing Wildlife Conservation
2026-07-07	Appreciation to Pennsylvania's Game Commission and Fish & Boat Commission for a Successful 116th Annual Meeting



RESOLUTION 2026-01-07

STRENGTHENING STATE INVOLVEMENT IN THE NATIONAL FISH HABITAT PARTNERSHIP (NFHP) AND RECOGNIZING NFHP'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY

WHEREAS, America's fisheries depend upon healthy, connected aquatic habitats, and collaborative, science-based conservation efforts are essential to protect, restore, and enhance these habitats for the benefit of fish, wildlife, anglers, boaters, and communities nationwide; and

WHEREAS, impediments to conserving quality fish habitat still exist across the country, such as fragmentation, over-allocation (related to water), extreme weather events, sedimentation, and excess nutrients, and fisheries resources remain at risk; and

WHEREAS, the National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP) is a state-led, action-oriented, and science-based partnership effort that is strategic and priority-driven; is focused on achieving measurable habitat conservation outcomes; is collaborative in its conservation efforts; targets resources and funding where they will make a measurable difference; facilitates public-private partnerships; and, promotes monitoring and dissemination of conservation results; and

WHEREAS, fish habitat conservation partnerships through NFHP are voluntary and non-regulatory, creating significant goodwill from the public; and

WHEREAS, from the beginning, states have been essential to making NFHP an effective program for protecting, restoring, and enhancing aquatic habitats across all 50 states through over 1,800 projects since 2006; and

WHEREAS, states had significant input in developing the framework for NFHP, including the development of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (2006) and its second (2012) and third (2026) editions, as well as National Fish Habitat Assessment Reports (2010, 2015, and 2026), highlighting important scientific data regarding fish habitats valuable to state, federal and local fisheries management agencies as a decision-making tool; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the importance of state agency involvement is now more critical than ever to support the activities of the National Fish Habitat Board and the twenty (20) congressionally-designated Fish Habitat Partnerships (FHPs) working to conserve fish habitats across the country; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of this public-private partnership, we also recognize Bass Pro Shops as the largest single sustaining corporate donor to NFHP, contributing to the improvement of over 55 reservoirs in the United States through the Reservoir Fish Habitat Partnership, and welcome and celebrate the contributions from other partners to this important work;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies ("Association") recognizes and encourages state fish and wildlife agencies to continue to support and participate in

NFHP through involvement in NFHP nationally, the individual FHPs, and/or contributions to on-the-ground conservation projects; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association celebrates the 20th Anniversary of NFHP and encourages implementation of the recommendations laid out in the 2026 AFWA President's Task Force Report on NFHP.

Submitted by the Fisheries Policy Committee.

Adopted by the Association on September 18, 2026 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.



RESOLUTION 2026-02-07

SUPPORT FOR THE ADOPTION OF BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR THE HARVEST INFORMATION PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Harvest Information Program (HIP) provides a critical framework for the collection of migratory bird harvest data used to inform science-based management of migratory bird populations; and

WHEREAS, accurate, consistent, and comprehensive harvest data are essential to support effective management and conservation of migratory game bird species across North America; and

WHEREAS, state fish and wildlife agencies are responsible for the implementation of HIP and play a key role in ensuring data quality and participation across jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, opportunities exist to improve consistency, data quality, and program effectiveness across jurisdictions through greater alignment in HIP implementation; and

WHEREAS, state-led efforts to increase coordination with respect to HIP have resulted in the identification of Best Management Practices, in collaboration with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (“Service”) and industry partners, to provide guidance on effective program delivery;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (“Association”) supports the adoption and use of Best Management Practices for the HIP to improve consistency, data quality, and overall program effectiveness across jurisdictions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association encourages state fish and wildlife agencies to consider and implement these Best Management Practices, as appropriate, within their jurisdictions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association supports continued collaboration among state agencies, the Service, Flyway Councils, and industry partners to evaluate and refine HIP implementation over time.

Submitted by the Bird Conservation Committee.

Adopted by the Association on September 18, 2026 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.



RESOLUTION 2026-03-07

FOSTERING A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF LIFESTYLE MEDICINE AND THE NATURE AND HEALTH ALLIANCE THROUGH SHARED NATURE AND HEALTH PRINCIPLES

WHEREAS, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (“Association”) recognizes that achievement of optimal health outcomes among people, wildlife, domesticated animals, plants, and their shared environments, is influenced by the professional interaction and collaboration among disciplines and governmental, non-governmental, and commercial sectors; and

WHEREAS, the American College of Lifestyle Medicine (ACLM) encompasses a network of more than 100,000 trained physicians and healthcare professionals in the United States alone that supports the therapeutic use of lifestyle change as the new standard of care for chronic diseases; and

WHEREAS, the ACLM delivers programs and curricula aimed to prevent, treat, and reverse chronic human health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, hypertension, anxiety, obesity, diabetes, and cancer risk; and

WHEREAS, the ACLM addresses the root causes of chronic disease through six interconnected pillars centered on physical activity, stress management, restorative sleep, social connectedness, optimal nutrition, and risky substance avoidance; and

WHEREAS, evidence-based literature confirms that nature is a beneficial component underlying each of the ACLM’s six pillars; and

WHEREAS, the Nature and Health Alliance (NHA) has established strategic goals to become a recognized nationwide network of researchers and practitioners focused on nature and health, generate evidence on the benefits of nature for health and well-being, incorporate evidence on the benefits of nature for health and well-being into policy and practice, and educate and train the next generation of nature and health researchers, practitioners, and advocates; and

WHEREAS, according to the American Heart Association’s 2025 Report, between the years of 2017 and 2020, 127.9 million United States adults (48.6%) had some form of cardiovascular disease; and

WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) 2022 National Health Interview Survey, less than one quarter of adults in the United States meet the federal physical activity guidelines; and

WHEREAS, in 2023 the CDC estimated that, in the United States, more than 40.1 million Americans are affected by diabetes; and

WHEREAS, approximately half of U.S. adults report experiencing loneliness, with some of the highest rates among young adults; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that more than one in five U.S. adults lives with a mental illness (59.3 million in 2022; 23.1% of the U.S. adult population); and

WHEREAS, spending time in nature hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, hiking, and/or engaging in other outdoor activities including habitat management, can encourage physical activity, foster social connections, improve mental health and cognitive function, contribute to improved cardiovascular health and quality of life, and combat the development of chronic diseases; and

WHEREAS, sustainable wild harvested plants (including plant derivatives such as fruits, nuts, roots, etc.), fungi, and animals depend on healthy landscapes to provide locally sourced nutrition directly to hunters, anglers, and gatherers, and indirectly through food donation programs each year; and

WHEREAS, the Association has taken the initiative to develop and support a One Health Committee to promote the sharing of information across disciplines and sectors through collaboration with state, provincial, territorial, tribal, federal, private, and international entities; and

WHEREAS, there is high alignment between the charge of the Association's One Health Committee, each of the ACLM programs and pillars, and the NHA's mission and strategic goals; and

WHEREAS, ACLM and NHA are currently collaborating toward shared outcomes, exploring policy, curricula, and programming that demonstrate the value of nature in enhancing beneficial human health and well-being outcomes; and

WHEREAS, working with the healthcare and research sectors provides opportunities to increase the relevancy of the conservation community by sharing the importance of fish and wildlife conservation with new stakeholder groups and connecting them to hunting, angling, and other outdoor related programs and activities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association supports establishing a partnership with the American College of Lifestyle Medicine and the Nature and Health Alliance to promote the health and well-being benefits of nature to the public and the public's responsibility to take care of nature by engaging the healthcare and research sectors to increase conservation relevancy and achieve shared outcomes.

Submitted by the One Health Committee.

Adopted by the Association on September 18, 2026 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.



RESOLUTION 2026-04-07

ENCOURAGING STATE FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES TO USE THE COLLABORATIVELY DEVELOPED NATIONAL UTILITY-SCALE SOLAR WILDLIFE GUIDELINES

WHEREAS, utility-scale solar energy development continues to expand across the United States and is expected to remain an important component of the nation's future energy portfolio; and

WHEREAS, the siting, construction, operation, and eventual decommissioning of utility-scale solar energy facilities can adversely affect wildlife species, their habitats, and ecological processes, and implementation of science-based planning and management practices can help avoid, minimize, and reduce those impacts; and

WHEREAS, state fish and wildlife agencies (SFWAs) hold primary statutory authorities for managing fish and wildlife as public trust resources within their jurisdictions and provide critical scientific expertise and technical guidance on the impacts of energy development on species and habitats; and

WHEREAS, the Energy and Wildlife Policy Committee of the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (Association), the American Clean Power Association (ACP), and the Energy and Wildlife Action Coalition (EWAC) jointly developed and published the Communications Framework for Solar Energy Project Proponents and State Fish and Wildlife Agencies in 2024, establishing voluntary national expectations for communication between solar project proponents and state agencies; and

WHEREAS, the Association, ACP, and EWAC jointly developed the National Utility-Scale Solar Wildlife Guidelines (Guidelines) to provide a structured and repeatable framework for identifying, avoiding, and reducing potential impacts to wildlife and habitats throughout the life cycle of utility-scale, ground-mounted photovoltaic solar projects, while also highlighting opportunities to achieve positive conservation outcomes; and

WHEREAS, the Guidelines are voluntary and are designed to complement, not replace or preempt existing federal, state, or local regulatory requirements, and are intended to support responsible solar energy development in areas where formal wildlife-related permitting or review processes are absent or limited; and

WHEREAS, the Guidelines are structured around six stages – relationship building, preliminary area evaluation, site characterization and design, construction, operations, and decommissioning – and integrate the Communications Framework through communication elements and milestone triggers at each stage; and

WHEREAS, the Guidelines address four key ecological topics of national relevance to solar development – habitat connectivity, fencing, vegetation management, and seasonality – that support broader conservation objectives, including maintaining habitat quality and ecological function, and provide a foundation for science-based, collaborative decision-making between project proponents and SFWAs; and

WHEREAS, use of the Guidelines by both SFWAs and project proponents may support consistent and predictable review processes, reduce permitting uncertainty for project proponents, and improve outcomes for wildlife, habitats, and the broader conservation mission of state agencies;

NOW BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Association encourages its member state fish and wildlife agencies to use the National Utility-Scale Solar Wildlife Guidelines as a voluntary framework for identifying, avoiding, and minimizing wildlife and habitat impacts associated with utility-scale solar energy development.

Submitted by the Energy & Wildlife Policy Committee.

Adopted by the Association on September 18, 2026 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.



RESOLUTION 2026-05-07

SUPPORT FOR A COORDINATED AND STANDARDIZED NATIONAL NATIVE BEE MONITORING FRAMEWORK

WHEREAS, the United States is home to approximately 4,000 species of native bees that support native ecosystems, agricultural production, food security, and human well-being embodied in the One Health framework; and

WHEREAS, population declines have been documented among numerous native bee species, and recent standardized assessments identified approximately 35 percent of assessed United States bee species as being at risk of extinction; and

WHEREAS, State fish and wildlife agencies play a central role in identifying priority species and information needs, guiding monitoring objectives, and applying monitoring results to State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAPs), species assessments, habitat management, and conservation investments; and

WHEREAS, successful national wildlife monitoring programs for birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, and amphibians demonstrate the immense value, efficiency, and efficacy of coordinated sampling frameworks, shared data infrastructure, sustained technical support, and collaboration among State, Tribal, Territorial, and Federal agencies and other partners; and

WHEREAS, native bees are increasingly identified as Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) in SWAPs, yet substantial gaps remain in information regarding their distributions, population trends, threats, and responses to management; and

WHEREAS, existing native bee inventory and monitoring efforts are often fragmented across jurisdictions, use differing methods and data standards, and lack the coordination and infrastructure needed to support reliable regional and national assessments; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. National Native Bee Monitoring Research Coordination Network ("Network") and its partners, including at least 25 State and provincial wildlife agencies and 5 Federal agencies, have developed standardized methods for native bee data collection and a framework for designing statistically rigorous monitoring programs around SGCN and other priority species and their management information needs; and

WHEREAS, the Network and its partners are developing USBee, a coordinated national native bee monitoring and data system, to support standardized inventory and monitoring, management-relevant monitoring design, interoperable data, analysis, and technical assistance for participating agencies and partners;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (“Association”) supports the voluntary implementation of, and participation in, USBee as a coordinated, standardized, and scientifically rigorous national framework for native bee inventory, monitoring, data management, and analysis; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association will work to facilitate coordination among interested agencies and partners and encourages Congress, Federal agencies, states, foundations, and other funding partners to provide sustained resources for the staffing, field implementation, taxonomic expertise, data infrastructure, analytical support, and technical assistance necessary to support a national native bee monitoring program.

Submitted by the Wildlife Diversity Conservation and Funding Committee.

Adopted by the Association on September 18, 2026 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.



RESOLUTION 2026-06-07

CELEBRATING THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED STATES' DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF AMERICAN IDEAS IN ADVANCING WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

WHEREAS, on July 4th, 2026, the United States commemorated the passage of 250 years since the Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Second Continental Congress; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Jefferson, the Declaration's principal author, noted that it "[n]either aim[ed] at originality of principle or sentiment...[but] intended to be an expression of the American mind"; and

WHEREAS, the ideas that define the Declaration, from the equality of all people in their "unalienable Rights...[to] Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" to authority arising from the "consent of the governed," laid the foundation for the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and a form of self-rule that has sustained itself through fidelity to these core ideas, reservation of significant authorities to the States, and adaptability to changing times; and

WHEREAS, as James Madison observes in *Federalist No. 43*, the guarantee in Article IV of the Constitution that each State shall have a "Republican Form of Government" ensures the continued ability of States to determine which form such government shall take, subject only to elections by the voting public; and

WHEREAS, subsequent amendments to the Constitution have taken steps to further perfect our Union, including by abolishing the institution of slavery, ensuring equal protection of the laws, and extending the franchise; and

WHEREAS, the lands and waters of the United States encompass an exceptional variety of ecosystems and habitat types, from mountains and prairies to forests, reefs, wetlands, and coastlines, that all support endemic fish and wildlife and unique species assemblages; and

WHEREAS, beginning in the nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth, in response to extinctions and extirpations of wildlife populations due to unregulated hunting, habitat conversion, and other anthropogenic influences, the sporting community joined with the States to establish the first game commissions and hunting regulations, which spurred a wave of similar measures across the nation; and

WHEREAS, in 1937, the U.S. Congress (with President Franklin D. Roosevelt's signature) enacted the Pittman-Robertson Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act, and in 1950 (with President Harry S. Truman's signature) enacted the Dingell-Johnson Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act, ensuring that funds derived from Federal excise taxes would be paired with State-based sources of revenue including hunting and fishing licenses to provide a sustainable foundation for State-led wildlife restoration and management; and

WHEREAS, State-led conservation has brought about the recovery of game species and their habitats, including white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, cutthroat trout, striped bass, and many more; and

WHEREAS, the enactment of the Endangered Species Act in 1973 declared the Nation’s lasting interest in recovering imperiled species and positioned the States as leaders in collaborative, voluntary conservation; and

WHEREAS, for over two decades, State Wildlife Action Plans have served as national blueprints to proactively conserve over 12,000 species of greatest conservation need, and have led the wildlife management profession to pursue and act on an ever fuller understanding of ecosystem health; and

WHEREAS, over a century of dedicated wildlife management, shaped by countless episodes of innovation and adaptation from all corners of the country, yielded a set of traits collectively unique to the United States and our partners in Canada referred to as the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (“Model”); and

WHEREAS, in our contemporary era, State-led conservation is reflected in the seven elements of the Model—including wildlife as a public trust resource with democracy of hunting; and

WHEREAS, conservation across landscapes and jurisdictions benefits from a deepening pursuit of cooperation with Native American tribes; and

WHEREAS, the ongoing and iterative process of adapting conservation to address our ever-changing needs amid increasing threats to fish, wildlife, and habitat, in partnership with Federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, landowners, excise-paying industries, and other industries that rely on healthy lands and waters, strives for the ambition and clarity of purpose shown by the Second Continental Congress and the Framers of the Constitution in conceiving a modern republic; and

WHEREAS, State fish and wildlife agencies stand ready to build on our distinguished conservation history, addressing increasingly complex conservation challenges, and setting the stage for even greater collaborative outcomes in the 21st century and beyond;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (“Association”) observes the auspicious timing of its 116th Annual Meeting, on the eve of its own 125th anniversary, taking place in Pennsylvania, where both the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution were first adopted; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association hereby commemorates the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration and celebrates the endurance of a constitutional framework that has nourished a uniquely successful and fittingly adaptable North American conservation system.

Submitted by the Executive Committee.

Adopted by the Association on September 18, 2026 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.



RESOLUTION 2026-07-07

APPRECIATION TO PENNSYLVANIA'S GAME COMMISSION AND FISH & BOAT COMMISSION FOR A SUCCESSFUL 116TH ANNUAL MEETING

WHEREAS, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies ("Association") convened its 116th Annual Meeting on Sept. 14-18, 2026 in the historic city of Lancaster, Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, Lancaster's onetime courthouse served as a temporary wartime capital on the day of September 27, 1777, providing refuge for 14 members of the Continental Congress and the Declaration of Independence while British forces threatened Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, over its history as a colony and a state, Pennsylvania's wide range of ecosystems have provided opportunities for hunting, fishing, trapping, and other wildlife-driven recreation and supported species ranging from ruffed grouse to brook trout to eastern hellbender that are treasured across the country; and

WHEREAS, this year's Plenary Session, "The Power of Partnership: How Fish Habitat Partnerships Help States Scale Conservation Success," drew on the commemoration of two decades of successful collaboration between State, Federal, and Tribal agencies, and non-governmental partners, to restore aquatic ecosystems across the country; and

WHEREAS, the Association, as it concludes its 116th Annual Meeting, greets its 125th year more mindful than ever of the power of trusting relationships to meet emerging and complex challenges while simultaneously preserving long-successful conservation frameworks and taking innovative risks; and

WHEREAS, Stephen Smith, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC), and Tim Schaeffer, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC), generously provided their time and that of their hardworking staff to facilitate a productive conference in a vibrant and engaging setting;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Association offers its deep gratitude to PGC and PFBC and to all Association members for a successful Annual Meeting.

Adopted by the Association on September 18, 2026 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.