



Resolution 2017-01

SUPPORT FOR THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION RESTORATION PROGRAM FUNDING AND THE ALLIANCE FOR AMERICA'S FISH AND WILDLIFE CAMPAIGN

WHEREAS, the states are principally responsible for the management of fish and wildlife within their borders, including on federal lands and waters; and

WHEREAS, this conservation and management of fish, wildlife and their habitats contribute significantly to our quality of life and economic well-being; and

WHEREAS, the Pittman-Robertson, Dingell-Johnson and Wallop-Breaux Acts and the contributions of hunters, recreational shooters, anglers, boaters and their industries led to the unprecedented recovery and sustainable management of our nation's game and sportfish; and

WHEREAS, a similar dedicated and sustainable funding mechanism is lacking for the many species of birds, mammals, fish, amphibians, reptiles and invertebrates that are not game species; and

WHEREAS, the states, territories and District of Columbia developed and recently updated historic, comprehensive and scientifically-based State Wildlife Action Plans that identified over 12,000 species of greatest conservation need; and

WHEREAS, there is a recognized need to expand the funding base for wildlife conservation throughout the Nation as effective implementation of State Wildlife Action Plans would require an annual investment of over \$1 billion; and

WHEREAS, the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources, was tasked with recommending a new funding mechanism to support state fish and wildlife conservation to ensure the sustainability of all fish and wildlife for current and future generations; and

WHEREAS, the Blue Ribbon Panel recommended that Congress dedicate up to \$1.3 billion annually in existing revenue from the development of energy and mineral resources on federal lands and waters to the existing unfunded Wildlife Conservation Restoration Program; and

WHEREAS, funding apportioned to the states through the Wildlife Conservation Restoration Program would provide 75% of the funds needed for states to effectively implement the State

Wildlife Action Plans and states would provide a 25% nonfederal match with all funds used to implement state-led proactive, voluntary and incentive-based conservation actions to conserve state species of greatest conservation, including to stabilize and recover species trending toward listing under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), and if states choose use the funds to help recover species listed under the ESA; and

WHEREAS, states can also use these funds on conservation education, which enhances their ability to work with communities and landowners, and up to 10% on wildlife-associated recreation projects;

WHEREAS, the Blue Ribbon Panel also recommended that the impact of societal changes on the relevancy of fish and wildlife conservation be examined and recommendations made on how programs and agencies can advance to engage and serve broader constituencies.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association recognizes and appreciates the valuable contributions of co-chairs Mr. John Morris and former Governor David Freudenthal and the business and conservation leaders of the Blue Ribbon Panel; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association stands ready to work with the Blue Ribbon Panel members and other conservation groups, businesses and industries that form the Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife campaign to work with the US Congress and the Federal administration to implement the Blue Ribbon Panel's funding recommendation by passing legislation to create a 21st century conservation funding model that provides states, territories, and the District of Columbia with sustained and dedicated funding to conserve all fish and wildlife and their habitats; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association also stands ready to support continuing efforts by the Blue Ribbon Panel to develop recommendations that will ensure state fish and wildlife agencies remain relevant and supported by all citizens well into the future.

*Adopted September 2017
Snowbird, Utah*

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies



Resolution 2017-02

SUPPORT FOR GRASSLAND BIRD CONSERVATION. RESEARCH, EVALUATION, AND MONITORING

WHEREAS, North American grassland ecosystems are home to a suite of declining birds, pollinators, and other grassland dependent wildlife; and

WHEREAS, those grasslands are under ongoing threats of conversion to cropland, non-native pasture, and development; and

WHEREAS, only 53% of the total acres in the Great Plains remain as intact grasslands, with 53 million acres of grassland converted to cropland across the Great Plains since 2009; and

WHEREAS, 84% of the intact habitat in the Great Plains is privately owned, and more than 80% of grassland bird distributions nationwide are on private lands (U.S. State of the Birds Report 2013); and

WHEREAS, in the Eastern U.S. true native grasslands are for practical purposes completely extirpated, and other habitats that support grassland species such as longleaf pine savannahs have declined from 90 million acres to 3 million acres; and

WHEREAS, other threats to intact grasslands such as woody invasion, fragmentation, introduction of non-native species, aquifer depletion, and lack of habitat management including prescribed burning further impact the diversity and health of grassland ecosystems, threatening our agricultural heritage and human quality of life in rural America; and

WHEREAS, grassland birds are dependent on multiple countries to meet full life cycle needs have declined most dramatically, with some populations declining by 70% since 1970 (North American Bird Conservation Initiative, State of North America's Birds, 2016); and petitions for listing as threatened or endangered are imminent; and

WHEREAS, grassland birds have shown some of the most dramatic population declines of any suite of North American avifauna (North American Bird Conservation Initiative, State of North America's Birds, 2016); and

WHEREAS, 27% of grassland birds of conservation concern have slipped below Watch List threshold (NABCI 2016), and many will likely lose 50% of their remaining population by 2050 (Partners In Flight 2016); and

WHEREAS, Grassland birds represent a significant proportion of Species of Greatest Conservation Need and state T&E species in nearly every U.S. state (e.g. Grasshopper Sparrow in 35 states); and

WHEREAS, important resident gamebird species, including Northern Bobwhite, Scaled Quail, Lesser and Greater Prairie-Chickens, and Ring-necked Pheasant, are also among the most steeply declining grassland birds, contributing to a loss of significant recreational income to states; and

WHEREAS, pollinators are declining and they play a critical role in grassland ecosystems and pollination services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies recognizes the urgent plight of North America's grasslands and supports increased trilateral resources for conservation, research, monitoring, and evaluation of grasslands and the fauna that depend on them.

Be it further resolved, that this includes identifying specific trilateral threats and limiting factors causing the declines of the highest concern species and conservation efforts to stabilize and reverse trends.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that significant new investment in voluntary and incentive-based efforts, such as conservation provisions in the U.S. Farm Bill, to improve the quality and diversity of remaining grasslands and to slow or reverse declines in grassland bird populations, pollinators, and other grassland dependent wildlife is supported by State and Provincial members.

***Adopted September 2017
Snowbird, Utah***

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies



Resolution 2017-03

IN SUPPORT OF FUNDING AND RESOURCES FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE DISEASE PREVENTION, DETECTION AND MANAGEMENT

WHEREAS, State, federal, and provincial fish, wildlife, and natural resource agencies are confronting unprecedented challenges from known and emerging fish and wildlife diseases, including, but not limited to, chronic wasting disease, white-nose syndrome, fungal diseases of amphibians and reptiles, whirling disease and other parasitic infections of fish, viral hemorrhagic septicemia, brucellosis, highly pathogenic avian influenza, and West Nile virus; and

WHEREAS, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies founded the National Fish and Wildlife Health Initiative in 2005 in order to conserve, restore, and enhance healthy fish and wildlife resources of the United States by recognizing, respecting and coordinating the missions, jurisdictions, and abilities of fish and wildlife managers to more effectively address health issues; and

WHEREAS, the first Guiding Principle of the National Fish and Wildlife Health Initiative calls for “well-funded” agency efforts to combat fish and wildlife diseases; and

WHEREAS, Current funding for fish and wildlife disease prevention, surveillance, and diagnosis remain below levels needed to provide adequate resources for prevention, early detection, response and management by state and federal agencies; and

WHEREAS, State and federal fish, wildlife and natural resource agencies continue to rely on a small network of dedicated fish and wildlife biologists, professionally trained health technicians, pathologists, and veterinarians at state and federal agencies and in private and public research institutions for all aspects of their fish and wildlife disease prevention, surveillance, diagnosis, research, and management needs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies urges the U. S. Congress to fully fund existing programs, laboratories, and research institutions that provide critical support to state and federal fish and wildlife agencies in the prevention, surveillance, diagnosis, research, and management of fish and wildlife diseases, including programs which are housed at or funded by the U. S. Geological Survey, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Park Service, the U. S. Forest Service, the USDA Agricultural Research Service, and the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies urges the Secretaries of Interior, Commerce, and Agriculture to fully fund, staff, and equip those programs, laboratories, and research institutions in their Departments that provide fish and wildlife disease surveillance, diagnostics, training and continuing education, and management-relevant research and information to the state and federal fish and wildlife agencies, and encourage public-private partnerships which can provide additional support and resources for these activities.

***Adopted September 2017
Snowbird, Utah***



Resolution 2017-04

IN APPRECIATION OF THE UTAH DIVISION OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES. UTAH DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR HOSTING THE AFWA ANNUAL MEETING IN SNOWBIRD, UTAH

WHEREAS, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies held its 107th Annual Meeting in the beautiful foothills of the Little Cottonwood Canyon in the Wasatch Range of the Rocky Mountains near Salt Lake City, Utah; and,

WHEREAS, Utah is the home of six National Parks, six National Forests and 43 state parks; and

WHEREAS, the state fish and wildlife agency directors and AFWA staff had the opportunity to experience firsthand the Rocky Mountain elk, Utah's state animal, including experiencing some of the sounds elk use to communicate such as its piercing bugle call, barking and squealing; and

WHEREAS, Utah offers many other attractions including Monument Valley, the Great Salt Lake, the Bonneville Salt Flats and Lake Powell and boasts many premium outdoor opportunities for fishing, hunting, and wildlife-associated activities; and

WHEREAS, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources' Director Mike Fowlks and his staff gave AFWA's Annual Meeting an environment of professionalism, collegiality and friendship to hold its 107th AFWA Annual Meeting; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies extends its deep appreciation to Director Fowlks and his staff for hosting the 107th Annual Meeting.

***Adopted September 2017
Snowbird, Utah***