



RESOLUTION 2019-08-10

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 species; and

WHEREAS, despite the success of those funds, states still lack a robust, dedicated and sustainable funding mechanism that enables the management and conservation of all species of birds, mammals, fish, amphibians, reptiles and invertebrates that are within their public trust responsibilities; 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 to the existing, unfunded Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program; and

WHEREAS, funding apportioned to the states through the Wildlife Conservation and 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 need, including to stabilize and recover species trending toward listing under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), and to help recover species listed under the ESA; and

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

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; and

WHEREAS, the Association thanks co-chairs Mr. John Morris and former Governor David Freudenthal and the business and conservation leaders of the Blue Ribbon Panel for their valuable contributions and commitment to further support implementation of the Blue Ribbon Panel's recommendations; and

WHEREAS, this resolution builds upon Resolution #2017-01-04 that was adopted in September 2017, supporting the implementation of the Blue Ribbon Panel's recommendations, which were instrumental to launching the Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife, a diverse coalition of conservation organizations, industry associations, businesses, and scientists that all support permanent, dedicated funding of the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association stands ready to work with the Blue Ribbon Panel members, the Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife, the US Congress, the Administration, and others 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 by enacting the "*Recovering America's Wildlife Act*;" and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association strongly supports the "*Recovering America's Wildlife Act*" and respectfully requests that US Congress to take immediate action to conserve the diverse array America's fish and wildlife today, before it becomes more biologically and ecologically difficult and more economically expensive, by enacting "*Recovering America's Wildlife Act*" as soon as possible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association will continue to develop guidance and recommendations in support of the Blue Ribbon Panel's recommendation on relevancy, which will ensure state fish and wildlife agencies remain relevant and supported by all citizens well into the future.

Submitted by the Legislative & Federal Budget Committee and Wildlife Diversity Conservation and Funding Committee.

Adopted by the Association on September 25, 2019 in St. Paul, MN