

July 21, 2025

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro,

The 155 undersigned Bird Conservation Alliance partner organizations are writing to share our collective thoughts regarding the recently released text of the House Appropriations bills for the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies (IERA), Department of Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS), and the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs (SFOP).

Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies (IERA)

We want to first thank you for preserving funding in the IERA bill for migratory bird conservation programs including the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act and the North American Wetland Conservation Fund. These programs fund grants that conserve critical habitat, facilitate partnerships, and advance bird conservation research. We are also grateful for the increase to State and Tribal Wildlife Grants proposed in the bill.

At the same time, we are concerned with proposed cuts to federal agencies and programs which provide bird conservation funding, program assistance, and scientific knowledge including the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the US Geological Survey (USGS), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Additionally, there are many of the riders in the bill that concern us. In particular, we are troubled by those that would undermine the rigorous Endangered Species Act listing process and the best available science for species conservation.

Department of Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS)

We are deeply concerned by the topline cut to NOAA's budget. Specifically, we strongly oppose cuts to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the National Ocean Service (NOS), and the Office for Coastal Management. NMFS helps mitigate bycatch, including of seabirds, and ensures fish stocks are healthy. National Marine Sanctuaries, which are managed under NOS, provide habitat for birds and recreational opportunities for the public. Collectively, these NOAA programs are integral to seabirds, fisheries, and the health of coastal and island communities.

State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs (SFOP)

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We were pleased to see \$100 million allocated for the U.S. Foundation for International Conservation in the SFOP appropriations bill. These funds will help kickstart the foundation, advancing conservation that benefits wildlife and communities globally. We appreciate the bipartisanship that has made this new source of conservation funding possible and look forward to watching the foundation grow over the next 10 years.

Conclusion

We thank you again for upholding funds for bird conservation. We urge you to protect these programs in the final bills. These programs are:

IERA

- \$5M for Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act
- \$49M for North American Wetland Conservation Fund
- \$73.8M for State and Tribal Wildlife Assistance Grants

SFOP

- \$100M for the U.S. Foundation for International Conservation

Additionally, we urge you to OPPOSE topline funding cuts to the following agencies:

- FWS
- USGS
- EPA
- NOAA

Finally, please OPPOSE all riders that undermine science and species conservation:

- Sec. 116 - No ESA listing for Greater or bi-state sage grouse
- Sec. 117 - No funds can be used to carry out the Draft Resource Management Plan Amendment for Draft EIS for Greater Sage-Grouse
- Sec. 126 - Blocks the listing of the Lesser Prairie-chicken and undermines both government process and scientific integrity
- Sec. 134 - Blocks ESA rules relating to economic consideration during listing, unoccupied critical habitat, historical baseline, and the blanket 4(d) rule, among others, undermining government processes
- Sec. 136 - Blocks implementation of BLM Conservation and Landscape Health Rule
- Sec. 138 - Cottonwood: blocks the ability to update a forest management plan when a listed species or its critical habitat are described within forest boundaries
- Sec. 429 - Increase biomass energy production from National Forests
- Sec. 453 - Prevents states from being able to protect themselves from toxic chemicals when the federal agency has fallen short
- Sec. 503 - Blocks expansion of Muleshoe NWR in Texas, an important habitat for the Lesser Prairie-chicken



Sincerely,

Alabama Audubon
Alabama Ornithological Society
Allamakee County Protectors - Education Fund
Alliance for the Wild Rockies
American Bird Conservancy
American Ornithological Society
Asociación Ecosistemas Andinos - ECOAN / Acción Andina
Associação de Pesquisa e Preservação de Ecossistemas Aquáticos - Aquasis
Audubon Society of Kalamazoo
Audubon Society of Western PA
Baltimore Bird Club
Bird Conservation Network
Birds Georgia
BirdsCaribbean
Black Canyon Audubon Society
Black Swamp Bird Observatory
Blue Ridge Wildlife Center
Bozeman Birders
Bucks County Audubon Society at Honey Hollow
Californians for Western Wilderness
Chicago Ornithological Society
Christian Council of Delmarva
Christians For The Mountains
City Wildlife
Coast to Cascades Bird Alliance (formerly Lane Audubon)
Conservation Biology Institute
Conservation Northwest
Delaware Audubon
Delaware Valley Ornithological Club
Delaware Valley Raptor Center
Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society (NY)
Desert Wildlife Consultants, LLC
Eastern Long Island Audubon Society
Endangered Habitats League
Endangered Species Coalition
Environment for the Americas
Environmental Protection Information Center- EPIC
Enviroscapes Ecological Consulting, LLC
Evergreen Audubon
Families Advocating for Chemical and Toxics Safety
Fort Worth Audubon Society
FOUR PAWS USA
Friends of Dyke Marsh
Friends of Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge
Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge
Friends of Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge
Friends of Nevada Wilderness
Friends of the Boundary Mountains (Maine)
Fyke Nature Association
Gallatin Wildlife Association
Georgia Bird Observatory
Golden Gate Bird Alliance
Habitats.org
Halifax River Audubon
Hilton Head Audubon
Hilton Pond Center for Piedmont Natural History
Howling For Wolves
Indiana Audubon
IndiGo Birding Nature Tours
International Crane Foundation
JazzSLAM
Jeepney Projects
Kalmia Gardens
Kettle Range Conservation Group
KlamBlog
Lehigh Valley Audubon Society
Los Angeles Audubon Society
Louisiana Audubon Council
Louisville Audubon Society
Lynnhaven River NOW



Madrean Archipelago Wildlife Center
Maine Audubon
Manistee Audubon Society
Manomet Conservation Sciences
Maryland Ornithological Society
Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project
Michigan Audubon Society
Missouri River Bird Observatory
Montgomery Bird Club
Nashville Chapter of The Tennessee
Ornithological Society
Nature Conservancy
Nature Forward
New Mexico Audubon Council
New York State Ornithological
Association
North American Climate, Conservation
and Environment (NACCE)
North Cascades Audubon
Northern New York Audubon
Northern Virginia Bird Alliance
NY4Whales
NYC Bird Alliance
NYC Plover Project
One Hundred Miles
Orleans Audubon Society
Pacifica Shorebird Alliance
Palomar Audubon
Paso Pacifico
Peoria Audubon Society
Pilchuck Audubon Society (WA State)
Presque Isle Audubon Society
Prince George's Audubon Society
Project Eleven Hundred
Rachel Carson Council
Raptors Are The Solution
Rock Creek Alliance
Rockbridge Bird Club
Safe Skies Maryland
Salem Audubon Society
San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society
San Diego Bird Alliance
Santa Clara Valley Bird Alliance
Santa Cruz Bird Club
Santa Monica Bay Audubon Society
Save Our Cabinets
Save Our Sky Blue Waters
Saw Mill River Audubon
Sea and Sage Audubon Society
Sequoia Forestkeeper
Sierra Foothills Audubon Society
Society for Conservation Biology North
America
Soda Mountain Wilderness Council
SOH CONSERVACION
Songbirdsaver.org
Sonoma County Climate Activist
Network (SoCoCAN!)
South Florida Wildlands Association
South Sound Bird Alliance
Southeastern Arizona Bird Observatory
Southeastern Avian Research
Southern Maryland Audubon Society
Southern Wisconsin Bird Alliance
Space Coast Audubon Society
St. Louis Audubon Society
Sycamore Audubon Society, West
Lafayette IN
Tampa Audubon Society
Tennessee Naturalist Program
Tennessee Ornithological Society
TEXAS POLLINATOR POWWOW
The Connecticut Audubon Society
The Safina Center
The Trumpeter Swan Society
The Urban Wildlands Group
The Zoological Lighting Institute
Tracy Aviary
Tree Fredericksburg
Umpqua Watersheds
Valley Forge Audubon Society
Virginia Alliance for Animal Shelters
Western Cuyahoga Audubon Chapter
Wichita Audubon Society



Wild Cumberland
Wildbirds in Northern Kentucky, Inc.
WildEarth Guardians
Wildlife Forever

Willistown Conservation Trust
Wisconsin Society for Ornithology
Words for Birds

