



September 29, 2021

TO: Members of the Pennsylvania Delegation

RE: Support for H.R. 2773, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA) 2021

Dear Honorable Representative Raúl M. Grijalva, Committee Chair; Honorable Representative Jesús G. García, Committee Vice-Chair; and Members of the House Natural Resources Committee:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, which represent tens of thousands of sportsmen and women across Pennsylvania, we are writing today in support of House Resolution 2773, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act of 2021 (RAWA). By dedicating \$1.3 billion annually to the federal Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program, RAWA will help states prevent fish and wildlife from becoming endangered.

Despite the remarkable diversity of fish and wildlife in the United States, populations of many species are now in decline. RAWA provides a consistent source of funding to identify and assist at-risk wildlife populations before they are moved into the costly category of "endangered species." Hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars are spent each year to restore our threatened and endangered species—outlays that could be avoided or greatly reduced if preemptive

conservation measures are implemented first. Proactive conservation is good for wildlife, good for taxpayers, and good for business.

At the direction of Congress, every state has developed a State Wildlife Action Plan to assess the health of their state's fish and wildlife, and to act as a guide for addressing and restoring at-risk wildlife populations in each state. Pennsylvania lists the native Eastern brook trout as a species of "very high concern" in its Wildlife Action Plan, for example. Facing risks like acid deposition, water quality impairments and habitat connectivity issues, the success of Eastern brook trout populations often relies on the action of state agencies in partnership with conservation groups. However, the federal State Wildlife Grants Program is funded at a fraction of what states need to conserve at-risk species like Eastern brook trout. RAWA would address this shortfall. Through the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, Pennsylvania would annually receive an estimated \$20 million in federal funding dedicated to address conservation actions more fully for these species. A steady, reliable source of funding would allow Pennsylvania fish and wildlife organizations like ours to work with landowners, community stakeholders, and relevant agencies to address the many threats facing fish and wildlife populations today, from emerging diseases to invasive species to habitat loss.

Hunting and fishing helps power a Pennsylvania outdoor recreation economy worth \$26.9 billion. According to a recent economic analysis by the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, the Commonwealth is home to nearly 1.3 million anglers and 780,000 hunters. Sportsmen and women spend \$1.3 billion dollars here annually in pursuit of their passions, supporting more than 20,000 jobs in the process. The country's fast-growing outdoor consumer base depends on healthy fish and wildlife populations. Passage of RAWA is critical to ensure that Pennsylvania's outdoor economy continues to thrive.

Our members support the Recovering America's Wildlife Act and its promise of a renewed investment in fish and wildlife conservation.

Signed,

American Sportsfishing Association
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers PA Chapter
National Deer Association
Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen and Conservationists
Ruffed Grouse Society/ American Woodcock Society
Sir Izzak Walton League - PA Chapter
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Trout Unlimited

CC:

Honorable Representative Debbie Dingell, Bill Sponsor

Honorable Senator Martin Heinrich, Sponsor of SB 2372

Honorable Senator Thomas R. Carper, Chairman of Senate Committee on
Environment and Public Works

Honorable Senator Shelley Moore Capito, Ranking Member of Senate Committee
on Environment and Public Works