

Letter to Members of the North Carolina Congressional Delegation:

We, the undersigned North Carolina groups and organizations, support preventing fish and wildlife from becoming endangered by dedicating funds annually to the federal Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program, using existing revenue from the development of energy and mineral resources on federal lands and waters. We believe that collaborative conservation is the most effective way to recover wildlife populations and strongly support the bipartisan **Recovering America's Wildlife Act** (H.R. 4647).

Our nation and state have been blessed with a diverse array of fish and wildlife. While some of these species are thriving, many more are facing increasing challenges and are in steep decline. State fish and wildlife agencies have identified 12,000 species nationwide with 457 in North Carolina that are in need of proactive conservation action.

At the request of Congress, every state has developed a State Wildlife Action Plan (North Carolina had the first plan in the country) to assess the health of its state's fish and wildlife and outline conservation actions necessary to sustain them. Time and time again, proactive, collaborative, and voluntary conservation efforts have allowed our nation to recover wildlife species. America has a successful history of bringing wildlife back from the brink of extinction through professional wildlife management combined with collaborative, on-the-ground conservation. A century ago, prized game species like elk, wood ducks, wild turkeys, bighorn sheep and striped bass were at risk of extinction. Now these species are largely thriving, because license fees and excise taxes paid by America's hunters and anglers have been dedicated to the conservation of their habitat. While collaborative conservation has led to numerous successes, today more than 12,000 wildlife species across our nation are considered "species of greatest conservation need," as identified by various state fish and wildlife Agencies. These species—such as pollinators, frogs, turtles, songbirds and shorebirds, freshwater mussels, oysters, etc.—often receive neither the attention nor funding sufficient to recover them.

This growing wildlife crisis poses a threat to the vibrant outdoor economy of America and North Carolina. Hunters, anglers, birders, hikers, campers, and backyard wildlife watchers have created a fast-growing outdoor economic base that depends on healthy wildlife populations. Today, the outdoor economy contributes \$887 billion to the national economy and \$28 billion to our state economy annually, creating 7.6 million direct jobs with 260,000 in North Carolina, and generating \$124.5 billion in federal, state, and local tax revenue.

The Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources, comprising industry and conservation leaders, recommended that the best way to recover these species of concern is to build upon the conservation model that has produced the remarkable successes for game species by investing a portion of existing energy revenues in proactive, collaborative, voluntary efforts at the state-level. This should be done through the existing Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program, as proposed in the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. This non-regulatory, collaborative approach is a proven means of recovering species and leverages additional funds through innovative public/private partnerships.

Further, by preventing the decline of species so that they do not require the stricter protections of the Endangered Species Act, businesses will be able to operate with more regulatory certainty and reduced risk. As the decline of numerous species and their habitats across the country worsens, preemptive action can reverse this trend and keep species from the critical, yet often costly, "emergency room" measures required by the Endangered Species Act. This will be especially important to rapidly developing states like North Carolina.

Proactive conservation is good for wildlife, good for taxpayers, good for business, and good for North Carolinians. We encourage you to support the protection of our nation's fish and wildlife heritage by supporting efforts to direct dedicated funding into the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program through the Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

Sincerely,

Alamance County Wildlife Club	Coastal Carolina Delta Waterfowl (Bayboro)	Hygeia Marketing Corp.
Albemarle Conservation and Wildlife Chapter (Elizabeth City)	Coastal Carolina Riverwatch	Habitat and Wildlife Keepers (Matthews)
Albemarle Sound Delta Waterfowl (Elizabeth City)	Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society	HoneyBee Realty
Arts & Science Council of Charlotte-Mecklenburg	Community Alliance for Wildlife (Charlotte)	Johnston County Wildlife Association
Audubon North Carolina	Cornerstone Cabarrus, LLC	Julie Jones Team, Realtors (Cornelius)
Bird House on the Greenway	Criterion Investors	Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Hospital
Box Turtle Collaborative	Crystal Coast Waterkeeper	Kirk Palmer & Thigpen, P.A.
Cabarrus Brewing Company	Discovery Place Nature	Lake James Area Wildlife and Nature Society
Carolina Raptor Center	Discovery Place Science Edgemont, Ltd.	Lake Norman Delta Waterfowl
Carolina Thread Trail	Duke Energy	Lake Norman Rod and Gun Club
Carolina Wetlands Association	Fish & Wildlife Conservation Council	Lake Norman Wildlife Conservationists
Charlotte Reconnecting Ourselves with Nature	Field to Cottage Nursery	Law Offices of Robert M. Critz, P.A.
Coco F.A.R.M	Friends of Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge	Lee County Wildlife Club
Concord Engineering & Surveying, Inc.	Gaston County Piedmont Area Wildlife Stewards	Magnolia Coffee Company
Concord Wildlife Alliance	Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation	Mecklenburg Audubon Society
	Greathorn Development	
	Green Acres Family Farms, LLC	

Middle Neuse River Delta Waterfowl (Smithfield)	Piedmont Bird Club	The Carolina Hawking Club
Moccasin Gap Delta Waterfowl (Roxboro)	Plastic Ocean Project, Inc.	The Conservation Fund
Mountain Wild! (Asheville)	Ramseur Records	The LandTrust for Central North Carolina
NC Chapter American Fisheries Society	Ridgeline Development Corporation	The North Carolina Chapter of The Wildlife Society
NC Delta Waterfowl Foundation	Rocky Pee Dee, LLC	The Sedgefield Hunt
NC Falconers Guild	Rocky River Trout Unlimited	The Woodlands at Davidson Development Company
NC Herpetological Society	Sandhills Rod and Gun Club	Town Creek Delta Waterfowl (Tarboro)
NC Hunters for the Hungry	Smokey Mountain Sportsmen Association	Triad Delta Waterfowl (Winston Salem)
NC National Wild Turkey Federation	Solace Salon & Spa (Concord)	Triangle Delta Waterfowl
NC Partners for Reptile and Amphibian Conservation	South East NC Delta Waterfowl (Wilmington)	Triangle Fly Fishers
NC State Advisory Council Quality Deer Management Association	South Wake Conservationists (Holly Springs)	Trips for Kids Charlotte
North American Land Trust	Southern Piedmont Delta Waterfowl (Albemarle)	Twenty-Six Acres Brewing Company
North Carolina BASS Nation	Stallings Nature and Wildlife Chapter	Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation
North Carolina Camouflage Coalition	StreetFare Farm	Wake County Wildlife Club
North Carolina Wildlife Federation	T. Gilbert Pearson Audubon Society	WakeNature Preserves Partnership
North Central Branch QDMA (Roxboro)	Table Rock Trout Unlimited	Watery Swamp Hunt Club
Neuse River Hawks	Team Honeycutt, Realtors	Woodbridge Company
Pamlico Albemarle Wildlife Conservationists (Washington)	Tesh- Troxler Landscapes & Designs, Inc.	
	The Avett Brothers	

