



Wyoming County Commissioners Association

P.O. Box 86 • 408 W 23rd Street • Cheyenne, WY • 82003
(307) 632-5409 • (307) 632-6533 (fax) • www.wyo-wcca.org

July 13, 2017

The Honorable John Barrasso, MD
Chairman
Senate Committee on the Environment
and Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Carper
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Environment
and Public Works
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper,

As President of the Wyoming County Commissioners Association (WCCA), I am writing on behalf of Wyoming's 23 counties in support of the HELP for Wildlife Act. We are appreciative, and urge speedy passage of this legislation. The bill is critical to the continuation of state-led and voluntary wildlife conservation programs that help create healthy populations of large wildlife, and promote activities on public lands that lead to greater public involvement in wildlife conservation.

Nearly half of the land area in Wyoming and nearly two-thirds of the subsurface is owned by the federal government. As County Commissioners, we are on the front lines of protecting and advocating for the economic well-being and health of the entire county - its people, land and wildlife. This necessitates our active and constant involvement with federal land and wildlife agencies as partners and cooperating agencies. While we don't always agree, our intentional efforts to engage the federal agencies has led to helpful lines of communication and important joint efforts. No matter the Administration, we have learned that the most successful land and wildlife conservation programs are those that meaningfully engage local governments at the outset.

That is why we support the reauthorization of the conservation programs in the HELP for Wildlife Act. For example, while Wyoming may not be known for its extensive wetlands, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) reauthorized in Section 4 of the bill has provided over \$40 million in grants and partner funding for critical projects in Wyoming that support our abundant wildlife. Projects like those funded by NAWCA are voluntary and collaborative rather than mandated by the federal government. In other words, they are broadly supported.

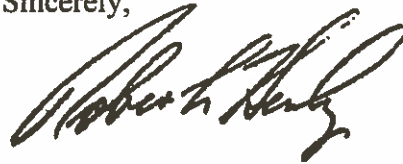
In addition to explicit conservation programs, we support the sections of the bill that promote sport shooting and responsible fishing. These sections help ensure that future generations have the access, tools and abilities to hunt and fish. They represent an investment, both directly

through Pittman-Robertson funding, and indirectly through engaged citizens who build a lifelong love for Wyoming's land, water and wildlife.

Finally, we are keenly interested in passage of sections 7 and 8 of the bill to finalize the Fish and Wildlife rules for state management of gray wolves in Wyoming and the Great Lakes region. Given the Endangered Species Act's very low success rate overall, it is long past time that we celebrate its success with respect to the reintroduction and recovery of the wolf. By every measure the wolf has fully recovered in the Greater Yellowstone Region, a reason to both celebrate and protect the intended purpose of the ESA to remove recovered species from the list rather than continued limbo from court intervention.

We are encouraged by the bipartisan support for the HELP for Wildlife Act, and thank you for your leadership in developing this legislation. We respectfully request its favorable consideration and quick passage in the United States Senate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Hendry", written in a cursive style.

Rob Hendry
President
Wyoming County Commissioners Association