

The Honorable _____
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Representative _____,

I am writing to request that you cosponsor the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, H.R.2773. This legislation would direct \$1.3 billion annually to state-led fish and wildlife conservation, including more than \$50 million per year to Texas—without a new tax. Funds would go towards voluntary projects and programs, such as habitat restoration and land stewardship practices, that help keep at-risk fish and wildlife from becoming threatened or endangered.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act grew out of recommendations from national business, industry, and conservation leaders. It presents a historic opportunity to invest in preventing the decline of species, thus avoiding the “emergency room” measures of the Endangered Species Act. Once species have declined to the point of being endangered, it is much more difficult—and more expensive—to recover them. An ounce of prevention equals a pound of cure; that is the principle behind this bill.

State wildlife agencies have a solid track record working with local partners to accomplish remarkable wildlife restoration successes. Unfortunately, funding is currently at less than 5% of what is needed to conserve the full array of fish and wildlife and address current habitat management challenges. Passage of this legislation will help ensure healthy wildlife populations, support Texas's booming outdoor recreation industry, protect important ecosystem services such as clean water, and preserve our outdoor traditions for future generations. Many iconic species would benefit from the grassland, coastal, and riparian restoration projects that could be expanded—wildlife such as grassland birds, songbirds, freshwater fish, and the pollinators essential for agriculture.

Hunters, anglers, wildlife watchers, and other outdoor enthusiasts have created a fast-growing consumer base that depends on healthy wildlife. The Texas outdoor recreation economy generates 327,000 jobs, \$14.4 billion in salaries and wages, and \$3.5 billion in state and local tax revenue. However, habitat loss, invasive species, and other challenges are leading to rapid decline of many fish and wildlife on which this industry depends. The Recovering America's Wildlife Act will protect this critical economic engine and reap benefits tenfold. Its passage has the potential to add between 23,800 and 33,600 jobs, while generating 3.36 billion of national economic output. All of this would lead to a net positive gain of \$1.96 billion annually to the Gross Domestic Product.

In the 116th Congress, 185 bipartisan representatives cosponsored the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, and it enjoys a broad base of support in Texas. We would greatly appreciate your cosponsoring the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, to keep at-risk species from becoming endangered and to benefit business, agriculture, natural infrastructure, and outdoor recreation—something we need now more than ever.

Sincerely,