

Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA) would provide \$1.3 billion annually from existing federal energy and mineral development revenues for the implementation of state-based action plans designed to proactively conserve wildlife.



RAWA is based on the recommendation of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources, a forum of national business and conservation leaders. The Panel was convened by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to develop recommendations on providing secure funding for all of our nation's fish and wildlife. The panel determined that using funding from existing revenues from the use of our non-

renewable natural resources was a pragmatic and logical solution that would mutually benefit America's industries and agencies as well as our shared fish, wildlife, and economic heritage.

RAWA would reduce the need for future listings under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), support the continued growth of Wyoming's outdoor economy, and more equitably distribute financial responsibility for wildlife conservation.

Economics

Wyoming is blessed with a wide array of natural habitats, fish, wildlife, and outdoor recreational opportunities which underlie our western quality-of-life and is a leading asset for the state's future prosperity and economic development. In 2012, outdoor recreation in Wyoming generated \$4.5 billion in consumer spending, 50,000 Wyoming jobs, \$1.4 billion in wages and salaries, and \$300 million in state and local revenue. Nationally, America sees the outdoor economy contribute \$887 billion to our national economy annually, creates 7.6 million direct jobs, and generates \$124.5 billion in federal, state, and local tax revenue.

The Need for Dedicated Funding

Despite the broad societal benefits, hunters and anglers have long assumed the bulk of the responsibility for funding the conservation of all wildlife species, game and nongame alike. The Wyoming Game



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and Fish Department receives 85% of its revenue from license fees and federal excise taxes on hunting and fishing gear. However, new and intensifying challenges such as emerging diseases, invasive species, growing national energy needs, and burgeoning energy technologies will require greater resources and new revenue streams to ensure Wyoming's world-class wildlife resource remains a hallmark of our state.

Implementing the State Wildlife Action Plans

In 2000, Congress created the State and Tribal Wildlife Grant program to prevent wildlife from becoming endangered in every state. As part of that, every state was required to develop a State Wildlife Action Plan that assessed the health of wildlife within the state and outlined the conservation actions necessary to sustain them.

Through the course of this planning process, the states determined that there are 12,000 species of greatest conservation need. A survey of all the State Wildlife Action Plans revealed that \$1.3 billion annually is what it would cost to implement 75 percent of every state's plan. Currently, states are forced to focus only on just a very few species, with many more at-risk and heading towards becoming endangered.

Wyoming Specifics

Wyoming has repeatedly shown the ability to successfully implement conservation strategies to stabilize or recover threatened wildlife populations as most recently demonstrated by the greater sage-grouse, grey wolf, grizzly bear, and black-footed ferret. Recovering America's Wildlife Act would provide as much as \$19 million to Wyoming to extend this type of success to all species, to advance state-based solutions to sensitive species management, and to avoid the regulations and the costly "emergency room approach" associated with the ESA.



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