



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

25 JUL 2018

Dear Chairman Barrasso:

The National Grazing Lands Coalition (NatGLC) would like to express our support for the Endangered Species Act Amendments of 2018. NatGLC is a producer-led organization founded in 1991 to promote and support voluntary ecologically and economically sound management of all grazing lands for their adaptive uses and multiple benefits to the environment and society through science based technical assistance, research and education.

According to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, “the purpose of the ESA is to protect and recover imperiled species and ecosystems upon which they depend.” While a laudable and important goal, data indicates that fewer than 2% of the species listed under the Act since its inception have been successfully recovered. What was originally intended to be a wildlife recovery program has instead become an E.R. with full conservation hospital rooms, whose limited staff resources are diverted from treating species in desperate need of attention.

If the Endangered Species Act is going to meet the wildlife challenges of the 21st century, it has to be something more than a one-way street into a cul-de-sac of perpetual stasis. The Endangered Species Act Amendments of 2018 takes a critical step forward in modernizing the ESA by doing just this-giving more power to state and local governments to make decisions based on their area’s unique landscapes, individual needs, and conditions on the ground. This emphasis on local involvement ensures that those with firsthand knowledge of a habitat area can provide critical insights to the creation of recovery plans. Furthermore, locals are the best equipped to predict, assess, and quickly react to changing conditions for the benefit of species. The pride of local ownership in the ESA plans will result in increased efficiency and effectiveness of species recovery.

As ranchers and land stewards we take great pride in our integral role in species conservation and recovery. For, generations, livestock producers have been dedicated to improving the health of the landscape. Over the years we have become frustrated in the process by the lack of commonsense ESA implementation and being put on the sidelines while decisions are being made. This legislation will help bring producers back to the table to craft recovery plans that are workable and produce favorable results.

NatGLC appreciates the opportunity to provide input on behalf of our members and grazers across the nation. We urge swift passage of the Endangered Species Act Amendments of 2018.

Sincerely,

Monti Golla, Exec. Dir.

Chad Ellis, Chairman