



National Audubon Society
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December 17, 2019

The Honorable John Barrasso
Chairman
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thomas R. Carper
Ranking Member
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper,

On behalf of the [National Audubon Society's](http://www.audubon.org) 1.6 million plus members, we write to urge your **support of S. 3051, America's Conservation Enhancement Act (ACE Act)** that will be the subject of a December 17th, 2019 mark-up before the committee.

Our diverse array of birds, fish and other wildlife are in crisis with more than one-third of all species at risk of becoming endangered. Challenges facing our birds, fish and other wildlife include habitat loss, climate change, invasive species, and emerging diseases.

Specifically, birds need conservation action now more than ever. A recent study published in the journal *Science* paints a grave picture of population declines in the recent past, showing that North America has lost [3 billion birds](#) since 1970. Audubon's recent report, [Survival By Degrees: 389 Species on the Brink](#), provides us with a stark choice for our future. Audubon scientists found that two-thirds of North American birds are threatened with extinction due to climate impacts.

Therefore, we specifically support the following provisions included in the ACE Act that would benefit both the marine and coastal habitats for birds and other wildlife.

- ***The North American Wetlands Conservation Act (Sec. 106)*** would be reauthorized until 2025. This is a highly successful program that has significantly benefitted birds, other wildlife, and people for 30 years. It has funded nearly 3,000 projects that have positively improved or restored 30 million acres of wildlife habitat, and its 6,200 non-federal partners have contributed more than \$3.5 billion to match \$1.75 billion in grants making it a wise investment for our wetlands, birds and economic health of the regions where these wetlands are found.
- ***Reauthorization of the Chesapeake Bay Program (Secs. 109-110) and Creation of the Chesapeake Watershed Investments for Landscape Defense (WILD) Program (Sec. 111)*** would reauthorize the Chesapeake Bay Program and create a new grant program to support ecosystem preservation and restoration efforts to improve the health of the Bay, enhance Bay ecosystems, and enhance ecological and community resilience to changing watershed conditions. The Chesapeake Bay is the largest estuary in the U.S., which is home to critically important habitats

for birds and other species and commercial fisheries that contribute billions of dollars to the regional economy. However, the health and resilience of the Bay is threatened by pollution, climate change, and other impacts. This legislation would not only improve regional efforts to restore and improve the health of the Bay, but it would also provide vital funding for important restoration and natural infrastructure projects that will benefit both birds and communities.

Again, Audubon's members urge you to vote **"YES"** on S. 3051, America's Conservation Enhancement Act (ACE Act) and we look forward to working with you on issues that protect birds and the places they need now and into the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jesse Walls". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jesse Walls
Government Affairs Director
National Audubon Society