



25 Cadillac Drive, Suite 214
Sacramento, CA 95825
Phone: (916) 444-8122
Email: info@woolgrowers.org

July 9, 2018

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

Dear Chairman Barrasso:

The California Wool Growers Association (CWGA) would like to express our support for the Endangered Species Act Amendments of 2018. CWGA represents more than 500 sheep producers that produce lamb and wool products while being excellent stewards of the land, managing their pastures and rangelands as sustainable resources. Since 1860, CWGA has been the voice of the California sheep industry, delivering lasting value to support and grow all segments of the State's sheep industry.

According to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, "the purpose of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) is to protect and recover imperiled species and the ecosystems upon which they depend." While a worthy and important goal, data indicates that fewer than two percent of the species listed under the Act since its implementation have been successfully recovered. What was originally intended to be a wildlife recovery program has instead become a toolbox of litigation-ready opportunities for agenda-driven outside groups and individuals to exercise control over proper policy making. Policies and mandates, often crafted by legal settlement rather than scientific data, have become the standard.

This top-down approach is a key contributor to the ESA's abysmal success rate and its burden on local communities and land managers. As a result, groups across the political and conservation spectrum have called for updates to the ESA aimed at solving these problems. The gold standard for tackling this challenge has been the Western Governors Association's bipartisan resolution – passed after years of collaboration with impacted stakeholders including local governments, environmental interest groups, and industry leaders – calling on Congress to make the ESA work for the 21st Century by putting more decision-making authority in the hands of the locals who most frequently interact with species.

The Endangered Species Act Amendments of 2018 takes a critical step forward in modernizing the ESA by doing just that – 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 guarantees that those with firsthand knowledge of a habitat area can provide critical insights to the formation of recovery plans. Furthermore, locals are the best equipped to predict, assess, and quickly react to changing conditions for the benefit of species.

California producers use great care in shepherding their flocks in species conservation and recovery. For generations, sheep producers have been dedicated to improving the wellbeing of

President
Ryan Indart
Clovis, CA

Vice President
Dan Macon
Auburn, CA

Treasurer
Ed Anchordoguy
Sebastopol, CA

Executive Director
Erica Sanko
Sacramento, CA

landscapes where wildlife reside. Over the years, our members have grown frustrated by the lack of commonsense ESA implementation and being forced to the sidelines while those decisions are made. This legislation will help bring California sheep producers back to the table to develop recovery plans that are feasible and produce favorable results.

CWGA appreciates the opportunity to provide our input on behalf of our members – California sheep producers. We urge swift passage of the Endangered Species Act Amendments of 2018.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Indart". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "I".

Ryan Indart
President
California Wool Growers Association

President
Ryan Indart
Clovis, CA

Vice President
Dan Macon
Auburn, CA

Treasurer
Ed Anchoroguy
Sebastopol, CA

Executive Director
Erica Sanko
Sacramento, CA