



June 4, 2018

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

Dear Chairman Barrasso,
I am writing to strongly support your proposed legislation to modernize the Endangered Species Act (hereafter ESA), The Endangered Species Act Amendments of 2018.

I began my career in the office of the Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, Department of Interior in 1973, so I was in the office that drafted the 1973 Endangered Species Act and was involved on a daily basis over the following 3 years in the early implementation of measures for the US Fish and Wildlife Services' (FWS) Endangered Species program.

From 1977-1980 I worked as the assistant to the Chief of USFWS Office of Endangered Species and was intimately involved in many species recovery efforts, among them: peregrine falcon, whooping crane, bald eagle, California condor, and grizzly bear. In each of these cases, states and outside government organizations were critical to the success of nascent recovery efforts.

During my tenure as Executive Director of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, I funded millions of dollars of grants for both pre-listing and recovery projects, almost all of which were successful.

My foundation, Land Conservation Assistance Network, LandCAN, hosts an endangered species website, the Habitat Conservation Assistance Network (<http://www.habitatcan.org/>), which we built to assist with the recovery of both the lesser prairie chicken and the greater sage grouse, and we will be adding monarch butterflies to the site in 2018.

I have worked for the past three years to assist the Western Governors Association (WGA) in their efforts to formalize recommendations to modernize ESA reform.

Title 1- Enhancing the Federal-State Partnership; I strongly support these provisions which are two decades overdue. When the 1973 ESA was written, Section 6 establishing cooperative programs with states was almost an afterthought, added to entice states to get involved in endangered species recovery. In the early 1970s, no state had a formalized Endangered Species program; today virtually all states do. States today have more and better resources to commit to endangered species recovery than USFWS. They have more biologists, better data and inventory capacity, better relations with local landowners and better outreach to potential corporate partners. Section 6 is arguably the most

successful provision of the 1973 ESA legislation because it has taken the commitment for species recovery to a nationally scalable basis. Specifically, I support Sec. 108. Award System for State agencies. During my tenure at NFWF (1986-1999), we annually made several Chuck Yeager (General Yeager was one of NFWF's original board members) awards for outstanding performance by agency professionals at both the federal and state levels. Many of our best awardees were state officials engaged in endangered species conservation.

Title 11-Encouraging Conservation Activities Through Regulatory Certainty.Sec.203. I strongly support Sec 203. Voluntary wildlife conservation agreements. Nationwide 80% of endangered species habitat is found on private lands. It is imperative for the Secretary to "establish procedures for developing and entering into voluntary wildlife conservation agreements." In 1993 I gave a NFWF grant to help Texas Parks and Wildlife establish a Private Land Conservation Program. Today this program has enrolled 32 million acres in conservation agreements. Later in the 1990s, I gave grants to develop the California Rangeland Trust, Colorado Cattleman's Agricultural Land Trust, and Texas Agricultural Land Trust. Today these three land trusts, which work voluntarily with farmers and ranchers, are the three largest land trusts in acreage conserved in their respective states. I also gave multiple grants to the Malpais Borderland Group in Arizona/New Mexico, a group of conservation-minded, pro-active ranchers who have done an exemplary job with endangered species conservation for two decades. The most extensive distribution of endangered species lies in Southeastern states and Texas where habitat is overwhelmingly privately owned. We need much greater emphasis and execution of voluntary conservation agreements.

Sec .204. I strongly support, particularly the language prohibiting the Secretary from precluding a party to a CCAA from receiving Federal funds from any other conservation programs. Secretary Babbitt undermined Pacific salmon programs for decades by insisting that Bureau of Reclamation funds not be pooled with additional federal funding sources.

Title VI-Reauthorization. I strongly urge that a significantly increased funding authorization for annual appropriations be provided to enhance Sec 6 state cooperative endangered species programs.

The ESA has been both a national and international success, but after 45 years it is time to modernize the act and build upon its most successful feature which demonstratively has been implementing cooperative programs with states and voluntary participants in conservation. I applaud Senator Barrasso's efforts to modernize ESA.

Respectfully,



Amos S. Eno President / Executive Director LandCAN