



Wyoming
DEPARTMENT OF Agriculture

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The Wyoming Department of Agriculture is dedicated to the promotion and enhancement of Wyoming's agriculture, natural resources and quality of life.
June 12, 2018

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

Dear Senator Barrasso,

The Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) is pleased to review the "Endangered Species Act Amendments of 2018." Your efforts to modernize the Endangered Species Act (ESA) are commendable and timely. WDA works closely with Wyoming agricultural producers and landowners across the state. We recognize their concerns regarding the negative impacts that federally listed wildlife and plant species can have on not only private lands, but also county, state, and federal lands.

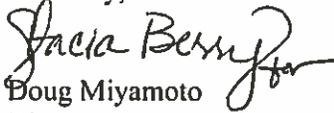
ESA reform is long overdue and we fully support Congress' proposed amendments to the ESA. The misuse of the ESA since the law was passed in 1973 has grown exponentially, including mass listing of hundreds of species, litigating on US Fish and Wildlife Service process, and the inability to clearly identify when species no longer warrant listing. We support the opportunity for State-led conservation activities that help preclude listing species and to reduce the number of species the USFWS must manage.

The draft amendments will greatly increase cooperation and communication with Governors and State Agencies allowing states to direct species conservation efforts within their states. WDA appreciates this cooperative and transparent approach. In addition, allowing states to participate on Recovery Teams and the ability to develop Recovery Plans provides the states the opportunity to lead recovery planning and implementation efforts, and fully engage in Threatened and Endangered Species recovery. We also support the efforts to increase accountability and incentives for positive efforts, as well as streamlining process.

The state of Wyoming has two examples of process streamlining we would encourage at the national level; 1) Statewide 10(j) and Safe Harbor Agreement for Black Footed Ferrets and 2) Greater-Sage Grouse Umbrella Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances for Ranch Management. We believe the USFWS could utilize these as a model to increase participation in programs, while addressing the regulatory mechanisms in place when proposed listings occur.

WDA genuinely appreciates your efforts in reforming the ESA and fully support any changes to increase a State's role in the ESA process and provides the utmost flexibility in delisting or downlisting threatened and endangered species. We appreciate the opportunity to assist you with the amendments provided and we are available to you for any other informational or policy needs you may have.

Sincerely,


Doug Miyamoto
Director

DM/jw

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