

## NCTWS Conservation Annual Report

February 2022-January 2023

**Committee Members:** Rachael Urbanek, Chair; Mike Baranski; Liz Hillard; Liz Rutledge; Allen Boynton; Dr. Rada Petric; Sau Silwal

### Annual Activities

1. New Member: Sau Silwal
2. TWS Solicitation of Federal Policy Priorities 2023-24
  - a. At the October Board meeting, the Board choose the following topics from 14 topics that were suggested by previous Boards and CAN. These topics were entered by Rachael Urbanek on TWS's Google Input Form. Only 2 recommendations were allowed on the form.
    - RAWA with dedicated funding
    - Wildlife corridors/connectivity/crossings – nature-based solutions for sensitive/rare habitats
3. Solicitation for Support from Animal Wellness Action
  - a. Email solicitation from this D.C. – based group was sent to Danny Ray and Gabriella Garrison on 11/28/22. The group was asking NCTWS to endorse their pre-filled forms in support of the following bills:
    - Bear Poaching Elimination Act
    - Lead Endangers Animals Daily Act
  - b. Rachael Urbanek provided this feedback on 11/29/22 on behalf of NCCAC:
    - BPE: Introduced a version in both House (on 7/29/21) and Senate (1/11/22) for a total of 29 cosponsors across both sides.
    - Lead act: Introduced a version in both House (on 2/18/21) and Senate (5/5/22) for a total of 2 cosponsors across both sides.
    - Neither bill is going anywhere, and this is the lame duck session. Congress will stop legislating by December 22 and the new Congress begins January 3. In the next 3 weeks, Congress will have to finalize FY23 budget too and there are higher political stakes for other bills at hand. TWS CAN wants to focus on pushing through RAWA in this lame duck session. So, on behalf of NCTWS, my advice to the Board is not to waste valuable time right now on these items.
    - NCTWS Board agreed not to pursue endorsement at this time.
4. Repealing Excise Tax on Unalienable Rights Now (RETURN) Act of 2022 HR 8167
  - a. Introduced 22 June 2022
    - This bill repeals the excise taxes on firearms and ammunition and on bows and arrows. It also repeals the excise tax on transferring and making firearms under the National Firearm Act.
  - b. Cosponsors: 51
    - NC Cosponsors: Cawthorn, Foxx
  - c. Last Action: 19 July 2022: Sponsor introductory remarks on measure.
  - d. NCCAC provided the summary of the bill to President Danny Ray on 6 July 2022 requesting the NCTWS Board be polled to determine if CAC should draft letters to representatives. No

response was returned.

- e. NCCAC reached out to NCWF for their views. NCWF did not feel the bill would go anywhere. This information was forwarded to President Danny Ray on 7 July 2022.
- 5. USFWS Request for public input on proposed rule modifying the implementation of Section 10(j) of ESA.
  - a. The newly proposed regulatory language is intended to allow for the introduction of experimental populations of federally-listed species to suitable habitats outside their known historical ranges.
  - b. TWS CAN requested on 24 June 2022 feedback from CACs, Working Groups, TWS Unites and members with a deadline of 14 July.
  - NCCAC forwarded the request to President Danny Ray asking if the NCTWS Board would like to review TWS's Google Form, consolidate opinions while NCCAC could consolidate opinions to put forth. No response was returned.

**Monitored but NCCAC did not offer any recommended actions:**

- 1. Recovering America's Wildlife Act HR 2773 and Senate Version 2. 2372
- 2. To end the use of body-gripping traps in the National Wildlife Refuge System, and for other purposes. HR 4716
- 3. Combating Online Wildlife Trafficking Act of 2021 HR 1546
- 4. INVEST in America Act HR 3684 – Wildlife Corridor Conservation Act
- 5. NEPA Regulation Revisions
- 6. Native Species Protection Act S 2070
- 7. To amend the Eliminate, Neutralize, and Disrupt Wildlife Trafficking Act of 2016 to direct the Presidential Task Force on Wildlife Trafficking to develop recommendations to address wildlife trafficking on the internet and on social media, and to direct the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to develop a strategy to address wildlife trafficking on the internet and on social media, and for other purposes. HR1546
- 8. Lead Act of 2021 – HR 405
- 9. Endangered Species Management Self-Determination Act S 668

Respectfully submitted by

Rachael E. Urbanek,  
CWB® NCTWS  
Conservation Affairs Chair



7 March 2022

Dear Eve Barnett,

The North Carolina Chapter of the Wildlife Society (NCTWS) is the professional society for wildlife biologists and managers in North Carolina, with over 250 members representing dozens of federal, state, and local agencies, universities, and non-governmental organizations. As part of our mission, NCTWS “strives to be an acknowledged source of current scientific information and expertise, and acts as a collective voice on matters relating to wildlife biology, management, education, and policy. We commend the Department of Interior for creating the American Conservation and Stewardship Atlas, and more importantly, seeking input from conservation professionals and the public nationwide. Below are our organization’s top three recommendations for the atlas to help meet the core principles:

1. Incentivize states to help municipalities intentionally plan for green space and outdoor recreation opportunities in community plans.
2. Work with state wildlife agencies to monitor newly developed fishing streams and ponds in urban/suburban nature-deprived communities.
3. Use Farm Bill cost share reporting data to determine types of conservation practices implemented on private conservation lands.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our recommendations. Please do not hesitate to reach out to our chapter with questions.

Regards,

Daniel K. Ray

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