

# Wisconsin Coalition for Recovering America's Wildlife Act

## NEWS

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### **Coalition's Letter to Wisconsin Congressional Delegation Asks for Floor Vote Supporting Wildlife Conservation, Help to Prevent Extinctions**

Bipartisan legislation in the U.S. House and Senate will boost Wisconsin's economy, fund locally-led efforts to help prevent extinctions, and help wildlife thrive nationwide. The Recovering America's Wildlife Act will send approximately \$18 million to Wisconsin each year to help the 400 species of concern in Wisconsin that are in trouble, their populations declining or so low they're at risk of becoming threatened or endangered.

"We are facing a looming wildlife crisis. This common sense, bipartisan bill will allow us to get ahead of the problem by stepping in to help at-risk wildlife early with collaborative, voluntary measures," said Mark LaBarbera, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, one of more than 30 conservation groups leading the Wisconsin Coalition for Recovering America's Wildlife Act. They have been calling on members of Congress to support federal legislation to increase funding that would benefit a variety of species and habitats. This week they sent an open letter to Wisconsin's Congressional delegation calling for support of "the most significant conservation legislation in 50 years."

Mike Kuhr of coalition member Trout Unlimited added, "This will create jobs restoring species in the Driftless Area and across the state." A study commissioned by Trout Unlimited found that recreational angling in the four-state Driftless Area generated \$1.6 billion dollars of annual economic benefits to local communities. In addition, Wisconsin consistently ranks among the top states in the nation for bird and wildlife watching, a roughly \$17 billion industry in the United States.

The [Recovering America's Wildlife Act](#) is ready for a floor vote in both the House and the Senate, according to Alex Madorsky of The Nature Conservancy, an active member of the Wisconsin coalition.

"The historic, bipartisan Recovering America's Wildlife Act is by far the most important piece of wildlife legislation in the past half century," said Collin O'Mara, president and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation. "At a time when more than one-third of wildlife species are at heightened risk of extinction, this critical legislation will help recover thousands of at-risk species through proactive, collaborative efforts in every state, territory, and Tribal nation, creating jobs while preventing extinctions. We applaud the incredible bipartisan leadership of Senator Heinrich and

Senator Blunt, and their House partners Rep. Dingell and Rep. Fortenberry, who are all demonstrating once again that wildlife conservation can unite all Americans.”

Nationwide, the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act dedicates \$1.4 billion annually to locally-led wildlife restoration efforts, with most of the money going to wildlife agencies like the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, who will use the money to implement existing plans for at-risk wildlife, according to coalition member Fred Clark of Wisconsin’s Green Fire.

At least 15 percent of the funds will be used to help species that are already considered endangered or threatened. Tribal Nations would share \$97.5 million annually, including about \$1 million for Wisconsin, to fund wildlife conservation efforts on the tens of millions of acres under Tribal management nationwide.

More than 1,500 businesses and organizations have signed on in support of the legislation, including these leading members of the Wisconsin coalition:

Aldo Leopold Foundation	Sauk County Conservation Alliance
American Bird Conservancy	SCI Badgerland Chapter
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers	SCI Northeast Wisconsin Chapter
Dan Small Outdoors, LLC	SCI Southeast WI Bowhunters Chapter
Ducks Unlimited	SCI Wisconsin Chapter
Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy	Superior Rivers Watershed Assoc.
Gathering Waters: Wisconsin's Alliance for Land Trusts	The Nature Conservancy
Wisc. Div.-Izaak Walton League of Am.	The Wildlife Society, WI Chapter
Lafayette County Sportsmen's Alliance	Trout Unlimited
Madison Audubon Society	Wisconsin Conservation Congress
National Deer Alliance	Wisconsin Sharptailed Grouse Society
Natural Resources Foundation of WI	Wisconsin Society for Ornithology
Outdoor Heritage Education Center	Wisconsin Trappers Association
Pheasants Forever	Wisconsin Waterfowl Association
Ruffed Grouse Society	Wisconsin Wetlands Association
	Wisconsin Wildlife Federation
	Wisconsin's Green Fire

The bill complements the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (Pittman-Robertson) and Sport Fish Restoration Act (Dingell-Johnson), which funded state-led recovery efforts for game and fish species facing potential extinction in the 20th century. RAWA will also help leverage existing funds from state agencies, universities, and non-governmental organizations, including sporting conservation groups whose members know that pheasants, deer, turkey, ducks, grouse and other game species will also benefit from this legislation, according to Bruce Ross, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association, which helped launch the coalition.

We’ve shown in Wisconsin that investing in conservation and our natural infrastructure helps local economies, improves air and water quality, increases fish and wildlife populations, creates jobs,

improves health, and helps endangered species recover. The wood turtle and monarch butterfly are just two examples of many wildlife species that would benefit from your support of RAWA.

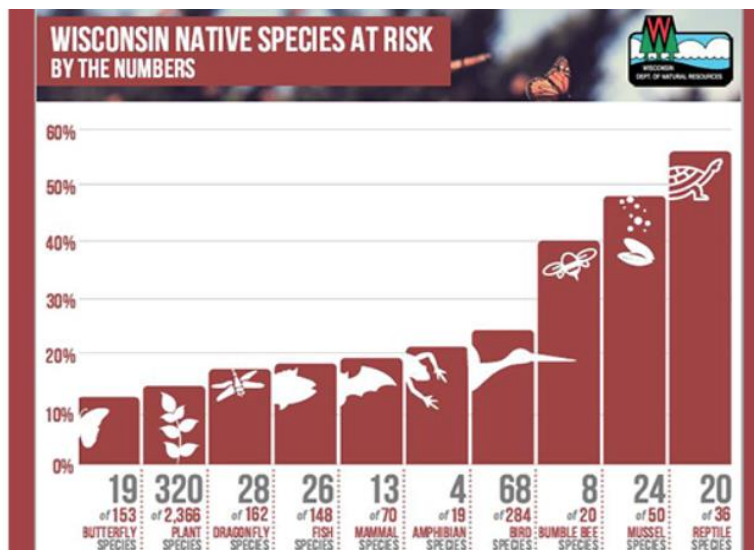
Here in Wisconsin, the increased federal funding would support the Wisconsin conservation community's efforts in cooperation with the DNR to protect and manage Species of Greatest Conservation Need and their habitats shared by game species. Many of the same habitats also serve as natural filters for clean water that we all rely on throughout the state. The public agrees. They voted in favor of RAWA during 2021 Wisconsin Conservation Congress Spring Hearings in the 19 counties where RAWA resolutions were introduced.

The May 10, 2021 Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus Policy Briefing reported that an average of 17.4 jobs are created for every \$1M invested in conservation. That's more bang for your buck than Healthcare, Energy or Military spending, CSC experts revealed.

Wisconsin is also a destination for upland bird hunting and a top harvest state for American woodcock. Hunters' expenditures overall support the state economy. It's a \$4 billion ripple effect, according to Hunting Works for Wisconsin. With regional population status motivating the state to list woodcock as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act would help conserve the species and protect these recreational and economic benefits.

"Recovering America's Wildlife Act is the best opportunity in a generation to help us do what needs to be done here in our state," said Wisconsin Conservation Congress Chairman Tony Blattler, a coalition leader.

"It doesn't matter what is your political affiliation," added David Clutter, Executive Director of the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin, another coalition leader, "We should all be able to agree that healthy and well-managed natural resources are critical in so many ways for our families, our children and our children's children in the future."



**WISCONSIN CONSERVATION CONGRESS***RAWA Support by County Where Asked*

<b>County Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Percent in favor</b>
Adams County	26	6	81%
Bayfield County	132	25	84%
Brown County	130	31	81%
Calumet County	44	19	70%
Dane County	813	50	94%
Dunn County	67	13	84%
Eau Claire County	91	18	83%
Jefferson County	92	22	81%
La Crosse County	100	15	87%
Lafayette County	29	5	85%
Oneida County	173	19	90%
Outagamie	122	23	84%
Portage County	133	31	81%
Price County	76	13	85%
Racine County	83	17	83%
Sauk County	123	14	90%
Sheboygan	80	36	69%
Waukesha	259	47	85%
Wood County	114	21	84%
<b>Total----</b>	<b>2,687 Yes (86%)</b>	<b>425 No (14%)</b>	