

The swift fox, North America's smallest wild canid, has disappeared from about 60 percent of its historic home on the Great Plains. Proactive state and federal efforts have stabilized swift fox populations across much of its remaining range, preventing the need for an Endangered Species Act listing. Photo: AdobeStock



# RECOVERING AMERICA'S WILDLIFE

The bipartisan **Recovering America's Wildlife Act**, introduced by Representatives Dingell (D-MI) and Fortenberry (R-NE), will be the most significant investment in wildlife conservation in a generation. The bill will fund proactive efforts led by the states, territories and tribes to address the nation's looming wildlife crisis and to prevent species from becoming endangered.

**A stitch in time.** The Recovering America's Wildlife Act will dedicate \$1.397 billion annually towards proactive, voluntary conservation efforts for wildlife at-risk. This will prevent species from requiring the emergency room measures of the Endangered Species Act.

**Money to the states.** \$1.3 billion from this bill will be spent by state fish and wildlife agencies, in partnership with state-based conservation entities. The state agencies will use the money to implement their congressionally mandated State Wildlife Action Plans. These detailed plans incorporate science and public input and are approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

**Tribal lands.** The legislation would dedicate \$97.5 million annually for tribal wildlife conservation

efforts. The First Nations own or have influence on nearly 140 million acres.

**Nationwide problem.** The state wildlife agencies have identified more than 12,000 species in need of conservation attention.

**Need for funding.** Federal funding is less than five percent of what is necessary to conserve these species. The Recovering America's Wildlife Act is a innovative solution that matches the magnitude of the problem.

**Helping wildlife at risk.** The money will be used for on-the-ground conservation efforts such as conserving and restoring habitats, fighting invasive species, reintroducing native species and tackling emerging diseases.

## GOOD FOR WILDLIFE, GOOD FOR TAXPAYERS, GOOD FOR BUSINESS.

**Cost effective.** Once a species reaches the point of needing the protection of the Endangered Species Act, recovery becomes significantly more uncertain, more difficult and more expensive. Proactive efforts taken earlier in a species' decline are better for wildlife, cost less money and are less likely to be controversial.

**An economic boost.** Americans spend \$140 billion dollars on wildlife-focused recreation every year. The Recovering America's Wildlife Act will result in more recreational opportunities for all Americans, as a portion of the funds can be used for increasing public access to the great outdoors.

**Benefits people and wildlife.** Diverse fish and wildlife and their habitats provide important contributions like clean water and air, flood prevention, pollination and carbon capture.

## LOCAL DECISIONS, LOCAL BENEFITS

**Connecting people with nature.** A small portion of the funds will go wildlife education efforts and creating opportunities to view wildlife.

**A history of success.** State fish and wildlife agencies have had great success in restoring other species that were once on the brink – like bald eagles, peregrine falcons, white-tailed deer, turkey, elk, striped bass and more. These are all examples of fish and wildlife that now have healthy and thriving numbers thanks to dedicated funding for increased conservation efforts.

**Better for hunters and anglers.** Currently, 80 percent of the funding for our state wildlife agencies comes from state hunting and fishing licenses and permits as well as federal excise taxes on hunting and fishing gear. This funding model has worked for decades but is no longer enough on its own.



Populations of monarch butterflies have declined dramatically in recent decades. State, federal, and private groups are working together to restore monarchs by restoring the native milkweed species monarchs depend on. Photo: Martha Hitchiner

## WILDLIFE IN CRISIS: WORLDWIDE AND HERE AT HOME

**America's wildlife at risk.** A 2018 report from the National Wildlife Federation, the American Fisheries Society, and The Wildlife Society estimated that one-third of all fish and wildlife species in the United States are at an increased risk of extinction.

**Worldwide extinctions.** A new scientific report from IPBES estimates that, worldwide, one million plant and animal species could be headed towards extinction in the coming decades, more than at any other period in human history.



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