



Bringing back the birds

Inside Bird Conservation – August 2018

Jones Beach Legal Settlement Provides Safety for Endangered Birds



Piping Plovers that nest annually at Jones Beach State Park in New York will no longer face the risk of predation from feral cat colonies inside the Park's boundaries. The plover, a small shorebird, is federally protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) as a Threatened species in the Atlantic Coast region, and is listed as Endangered under New York law.

A lawsuit filed by American Bird Conservancy alleged a violation of the ESA based on a concern that New York State Parks was not doing enough

to ensure that feral cats do not harm the protected Piping Plovers and their chicks. Under a settlement agreement and court order, the cats currently living in colonies at Jones Beach will be humanely trapped and removed from the park by the end of the year to a sanctuary where they will be cared for. State Parks has also agreed that any new cats found in the park will be trapped and removed so new cat colonies do not exist at the park in the future. The agreement means that the plovers and their chicks will no longer face the possibility of predation from cats.

"We are delighted to reach this agreement," said Mike Parr, President of American Bird Conservancy. "By removing the cat colonies, New York State Parks has ensured a much safer environment for the plovers to help them nest successfully in the future."

Speak Out for Birds and the Laws that Protect Them

There are several months remaining in the 115th Congress with lots of unfinished business affecting birds, including pending harmful provisions in both the Farm Bill and the Interior Appropriations bill.

Meanwhile, the administration is proposing new regulations affecting the Endangered Species Act and National Environmental Policy Act, while rolling back mitigation requirements and enforcement of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. American Bird Conservancy and partners are fighting all of these harmful changes. Please follow the links below to speak out on behalf of birds and the environment and then forward these alerts to your friends, family, and activist networks.

And our voices are making a difference: harmful ESA riders were dropped from the Defense bill, the [Federal Bird-Safe Buildings Act](#) is making progress in the House and Senate, and funding has been increased for recovering endangered birds in Hawaii. Now is a great time to make your voice heard!

Birds Threatened by Proposed Rollback of Endangered Species Act Protections

The U.S. Department of the Interior is proposing new rules to implement the Endangered Species Act (ESA) that will make it more difficult to recover Threatened and Endangered birds. [Read More>>](#)

[TAKE ACTION: Please click here to help protect the Endangered Species Act](#)

Farm Bill at Risk due to Harmful Riders

Senate Farm Bill increases the Regional Conservation Partnership Program and Conservation Reserve Program and is relatively free of harmful policy changes. But the House Farm Bill contains numerous exemptions to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and other provisions harmful to science-based management of public lands.

[TAKE ACTION: Please ask your Senators and Representative](#) to oppose any version of the Farm Bill that contains legislative riders harmful to wildlife and our environment! With your help, the Farm Bill can continue to be an important conservation tool for conserving America's birds.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA): Bedrock Environmental Law at Risk

The White House Council on Environmental Quality has announced plans to weaken one of our country's bedrock environmental laws, the National Environmental Policy Act.

[TAKE ACTION: Please send a comment letter in support of a strong environment](#)

Migratory Bird Treaty Act: Major Conservation Success at Risk

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act has helped restore populations of many birds, ranging from herons and egrets to shorebirds and waterfowl. A new Interior Department policy has halted enforcement against activities known to kill birds which can be prevented or reduced through use of best management practices. American Bird Conservancy and other groups are challenging this weakening of the law, and building support in Congress for strong protection for migratory birds.

[TAKE ACTION: Stop efforts by members of Congress and the administration to weaken the Migratory Bird Treaty Act](#)

Bird Smart Wind Campaigner Holly Goyert Joining ABC Advocacy Team

American Bird Conservancy is pleased to announce that Holly Goyert, Ph.D., will be our new Bird Smart wind campaigner beginning August 16. Holly comes to ABC from the University of Massachusetts where she researched avian exposure to offshore wind development and tracked the movements of the Endangered Roseate Tern and the Threatened Piping Plover and Red Knot. Holly will be leading efforts to halt improperly sited wind projects in the Great Lakes and other important

bird areas, to influence policies and leasing decisions affecting offshore wind development and impacted species, and to advance mitigation policies to reduce bird mortality. Holly's email will be hgovert@abcbirds.org.

[Bird Conservationists Raise Concerns about "Icebreaker" Wind Energy Project in Lake Erie](#)

Bird conservation groups testified about the impact on birds from Lake Erie's first proposed offshore wind project, "Icebreaker," at a public hearing before the Cleveland City Council. [Read More>>](#)