



Shaping the future for birds

To: All Bird and Habitat Conservation Activists
From: Steve Holmer and Jennifer Cipolletti, American Bird Conservancy
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National Environmental Policy Act - Climate and Forest Protections at Risk

The White House Council on Environmental Quality and U.S.D.A. Forest Service have proposed rules that would weaken the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) — one of our most important environmental laws. If enacted, these revisions would reverse important progress to control industrial greenhouse gas emissions causing climate change and greatly reduce public involvement and scientific review of management decisions affecting the National Forests and numerous bird species that depend on them such as the amazing Marbled Murrelet that nests in the tops of old-growth trees.

ACTION ALERT: [Please ask Forest service officials and your members of Congress to strengthen NEPA and reject plans to weaken long-standing environmental protections.](#)

Making Progress on Bird Conservation Legislation – Thanks to Your Letters

As summer begins, it's a good time to assess how the 116th Congress is doing at conserving birds. The news so far is encouraging. The House of Representatives has reordered spending priorities, reaffirmed support for our nation's environmental laws, taken fast-action to protect birds and to conserve public lands, and to address climate change. The Senate needs to be encouraged to take similar actions.



As we make our rounds on the Hill, we keep hearing from congressional staff that they are receiving letters from their constituents about bird conservation priorities. Your voices are making this progress possible. Here's a quick rundown on the bills and issues in play, and how you, and the groups you work with, can make a big difference.

Photo: Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi with Steve Holmer of American Bird Conservancy at League of Conservation Voters annual dinner.

House Approves \$22 Million Funding Increase for Bird Conservation

Migratory birds and other wildlife will benefit from new funding increases in the House Interior Appropriations bill. This includes a \$22 million increase for key bird conservation programs: \$1 million more for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA), Migratory Bird Joint Ventures (\$3 million), North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) (\$8 million), State and Tribal Wildlife Grants (\$6 million), and Invasive Species Monitoring and Control (\$4 million). The bill also continues the essential State of the Birds Activities for Hawaiian birds that was proposed for elimination in the administration's budget at \$3 million.

The House Interior bill also is an improvement for what it does not contain, such as the Endangered Species Act listing exemptions for Greater Sage Grouse and other species. Another provision preventing regulation of toxic lead ammunition and fishing tackle was also dropped. The Senate is likely to continue these harmful riders, setting the stage for a major fight with the House during conference committee negotiations.

ACTION: Individuals can take action by [asking your members of Congress](#) to support funding for birds!

ACTION: Groups can sign on to the [migratory bird funding initiative](#) now endorsed by over 150 organizations including Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Defenders of Wildlife, and National Audubon Society.

House of Representatives to Vote on Albatross and Petrel Conservation Act

Albatrosses, petrels and shearwaters face unique threats from fisheries, and they cannot be protected by the actions of one country alone. That's why recently re-introduced legislation that would implement the Agreement for the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels — an international treaty among fishing nations for the protection of 31 species of seabirds — is so important. The House Natural Resources Committee voted 21-12 to approve the bill which now awaits a vote by the full House of Representatives.

ACTION: For individuals and groups, please [ask your members of Congress](#) to cosponsor the Albatross and Petrel Conservation Act (**H.R. 1305**).

Bird Safe Buildings Act Hearing Held, Committee Vote Pending

U.S. Rep. Mike Quigley (D-IL) and Rep. Morgan Griffith (R-VA) have reintroduced the Bird-Safe Buildings Act [H.R. 919](#). Both Representatives testified in support of the bill at a Committee hearing, setting the stage for an upcoming vote in the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. This bipartisan bill is designed to reduce bird mortality by calling for federal buildings to incorporate bird-safe building materials, design features and lighting. As many as a billion birds a year die in collisions with buildings in North America alone. You can take action and ask your members of Congress to support this bill.

ACTION: Individuals and groups, [please ask your members of Congress](#) to cosponsor the Bird Safe Buildings Act.

House Committee Considers the Migratory Bird Protection Act

The House Natural Resources Committee's Water, Oceans, and Wildlife Subcommittee held [a hearing and heard testimony](#) June 13 regarding the Migratory Bird Protection Act discussion draft. This draft legislation outlines how the Migratory Bird Treaty Act could be updated and strengthened to explicitly cover incidental take and to regulate industrial sources of bird mortality. [American Bird Conservancy submitted a statement of support](#) for the discussion draft and greatly appreciates Rep. Lowenthal's leadership.

ACTION: Individuals can please [send a letter to your members of Congress](#) asking for a stronger Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

For more information, please see the Bird Conservation Alliance website at <https://abcbirds.org/get-involved/bird-conservation-alliance/> or contact Jennifer Cipolletti at jcipolletti@abcbirds.org, or Steve Holmer at sholmer@abcbirds.org.