



*Bringing back the birds*

## FY 2025 BIRD CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

### Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Park Service, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), USDA Forest Service (USFS), and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)*

To help recover endangered species, reduce environmental threats, and bolster programs needed to reverse bird declines and the loss of three billion birds since 1970, American Bird Conservancy respectfully requests funding increases for the following bird conservation programs in the FY 2025 Interior Appropriations bill.

#### FY 25 Bird Conservation Recommendations

*(all figures in millions)*

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Program</u>	<u>FY24 Final</u>	<u>FY25 President's Budget</u>	<u>FY25 to Bring Back Birds (ABC Recommendation)</u>
EPA	Pesticides Licensing	\$48.7	\$75.7	\$75.7
EPA	Marine Pollution Program	\$10.2	\$12.7	\$13
NPS	Window Collision Mitigation	\$0	\$0	\$10
NOAA	Seabird Recovery Technical Assistance	\$0	\$0	\$10
USFWS	ESA Pesticide Consultations	\$1	\$1	\$10
USFWS	Red Knot Recovery	\$0	\$0	\$5
USFWS, NMFS	Marbled Murrelet Recovery	\$0	\$0	\$5
USFWS	Lesser Prairie-chicken Recovery	\$0	\$0	\$5
USFWS, NPS, USGS	Hawaiian ESA Recovery	\$15.51	\$15	\$20
USFWS	NMBCA	\$5.1	\$5.1	\$6.5
USFWS	Migratory Bird Joint Ventures	\$16.82	\$17.7	\$25
USFWS	California Central Coast Joint Venture	\$0	\$0	\$0.6
USFWS	Non-Lead Exchange	\$0	\$0	\$20
USFWS	MBTA Incidental Take Mitigation	\$0	\$0	\$10
BLM	Sage Grouse Conservation	\$73	\$73	\$73

**EPA and USFWS Pesticide Reviews** | To address a 40-year backlog of reviews, and court-mandated Endangered Species Act compliance, we ask that Congress appropriate \$75.7 million to the EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs to expedite registration and registration review procedures mandated by the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act.

**EPA Plastic Pollution Mitigation** | Plastic pollution is among the leading threats to seabirds. We recommend that the EPA's Marine Pollution Program receive at least \$13 million to support their goals of reducing marine litter, capturing trash, and protecting human health and the marine environment.

**Reducing Window Collisions** | Please provide \$10 million to continue work by the National Park Service and other agencies to retrofit Department of the Interior buildings to make them bird-safe.

**USFWS Pesticide Consultations** | We also ask that an additional \$10 million be appropriated to the USFWS to be used expressly for pesticide consultations, including programmatic expenses and an additional 20 FTE, under the Planning and Consultation division of Ecological Services.

**Red Knot Recovery** | We recommend \$5 million to support the FWS Red Knot recovery program. Added funds should be used to improve state horseshoe crab egg density surveys and provide grants to reduce horseshoe crab bait fishing and bleeding for pharmaceutical purposes. Red Knot depend on horseshoe crab eggs to survive their migration and successfully breed.

**Marbled Murrelet Recovery** | We recommend an additional \$5 million for recovery of the threatened Marbled Murrelet, a rapidly declining critically endangered seabird which only nests in the inland Old Growth forests of the Pacific Northwest. Funds are needed to support campground cleanup campaigns to reduce the number of ravens and jays preying Murrelet nests.

**Lesser Prairie-Chicken Recovery** | We recommend \$5 million to initiate a robust recovery program that will incentivize landowners to provide for high quality habitat needed to maintain the currently declining population. A coordinated outreach campaign, technical support, and funding are needed to implement grazing rest and other practices that will improve the range.

**Hawai'i ESA Recovery** | ABC recommends funding Hawaiian Forest Bird Conservation through State of the Birds Activities and associated National Park Service and U.S. Geological Survey programs at \$20 million for FY25. Funds are being used to halt the spread of avian malaria threatening 12 of Hawaiian forest birds.

**Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act** | Please increase funding for migratory bird conservation including wintering grounds in Latin America and the Caribbean by providing \$6.5 million for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act. This program is essential to the conservation of wintering habitats, building capacity of our Latin American and Caribbean partners, and providing greater access to conservation resources in a region where it is urgently needed.

**North American Waterfowl Management Joint Ventures** | The national network of Joint Ventures (JVs) are essential to address the conservation needs of migratory birds, and they leverage significant matching contributions from partner organizations and foundations. We recommend that to help reverse bird declines the Joint Ventures be allocated \$20 million.

**California Central Coast Joint Venture** | We request \$600,000 for the California Central Coast Joint Venture's (C3JV, <https://www.c3jv.org/>) and its BIRDS (Bridging Information for the Recovery of Declining Species) Project, including the preparation of a State of the Birds Report, launch of the Central Coast Bird Monitoring Network, and development of an Indigenous Stewardship Program.

**Non-Lead Exchange Program** | We recommend \$20 million appropriated to State Wildlife Agencies through the Department of the Interior for non-lead tackle and non-lead ammunition exchange programs.

**Migratory Bird Treaty Act** | We appreciate the President's FY25 Budget Justification from USFWS in regard to protections for birds under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and are hopeful the Service will soon propose a draft rule establishing an incidental take permitting system and general sector permits to reduce preventable mortality and ask Congress to support and designate \$10 million towards this effort.

**Climate Change and Energy Development** | Please include in wildlife incidental take mitigation funding. We also recommend report language emphasizing environmentally appropriate siting and minimizing wildlife impacts of renewable energy facility development and encouraging federal agencies to avoid ecologically important areas on public lands and in federal waters and to apply available best management practices that reduce wildlife mortality.

**Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation** | We remain deeply concerned by the Greater Sage-Grouse ESA listing rider given a recent USGS report indicating the species is in severe decline, and that that trend is anticipated to continue. We request the listing moratorium for all Sage Grouse populations be ended.

1. We appreciate the proposed \$73 million for sage grouse conservation in the House recommendation, and the Senate report language offering helpful guidance for the restoration program.
2. The remaining grouse strongholds are at risk and require immediate protection. We ask Congress to please include the following bill language to recover grouse populations:

*No less than \$3 million will be spent on the designation and planning for a network of ACECs deemed sufficient to prevent further long-term greater sage-grouse population declines in accordance with 43 U.S.C. §§ 1702(a) and 1712(c)(3).*

## Recommended Report Language

**Pesticides and Birds** | Please include report language directing EPA to:

1. In conjunction with the Center for Pollinator Conservation, conduct a scientific review of the impacts of neonicotinoid insecticides on birds, insects, and the environment and report these findings to Congress
2. Clarify that the Treated Article Exemption, FIFRA §152.25(a) should not include pesticide-coated seeds
3. Request that FWS ban the use of conventional pesticides used for crop production on National Wildlife Refuges and other important bird habitats
4. Direct the Government Accountability Office to study the impact of pesticides used in crop production on National Wildlife Refuges

**Public Lands Protection and Forest Carbon** | We are encouraged by the Executive Order to map and conserve Old Growth and Mature Forests which could make a major contribution to address climate change. Please include report language recommending:

*The protection of existing carbon stores in mature and old growth forests that provide habitat for the threatened Marbled Murrelet, Northern Spotted Owl, and California Spotted Owl.*

**Reducing Window Collisions** | Please include previous report language:

*All agencies under the jurisdiction of this Act are directed to monitor visitor and nature centers and office buildings for bird collisions with glass to address bird collision risk. At a minimum, facilities identified as high-risk should take low cost or no cost action, such as turning off interior lights at night or applying films or other adhesives to glass windows to reduce bird collisions.*

## **Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)**

**Reducing Seabird Bycatch** | U.S. fisheries have taken great strides to reduce seabird bycatch. To further assist ongoing efforts, we recommend \$10 million in technical assistance and seabird bycatch mitigation funding be provided to NOAA Fisheries in the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill. We recommend that at least \$100,000 of that money be directly appropriated to the National Seabird Program for staffing. This is necessary to boost program capacity and enhance internal coordination.

## **Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies FY2025 – Draft FY2025 Appropriations Report Language**

*The Committee recognizes the scientific, economic, supply chain, environmental, and animal protection benefits to utilizing synthetic safety approaches to test for bacterial endotoxins in vaccines, injectable therapies, and medical devices. Without clear guidance that the Food and Drug Administration accepts modern approaches in lieu of traditionally accepted animal-based methods, regulated entities are unlikely to adopt new approaches that accurately detect fever-causing contaminants with lower impact on animals and the environment. The Committee directs the FDA to update its 2012 Guidance for Industry on Pyrogen and Endotoxins Testing within 120 days of enactment of this Act to reflect acceptance of recombinant Bacterial Endotoxins Test (rBET) methods for new and existing products. FDA must also provide staff training on rBET. The Committee requests a written update by 180 days of enactment of this Act.*

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