

American Bird Conservancy \* Animal Welfare Institute \* Berkshire Environmental Action Team  
Blue Heron Productions \* Born Free USA \* Center for Biological Diversity \* Clean Water Action  
Defenders of Wildlife \* Delaware Ecumenical Council on Children and Families \* Earthjustice  
Endangered Habitats League \* Endangered Species Coalition Friends of Blackwater, Inc.  
Friends of the Earth \* Great Old Broads for Wilderness \* Heartwood  
Hip Hop Caucus \* Humane Society Legislative Fund \* International Fund for Animal Welfare  
International Marine Mammal Project of Earth Island Institute \* League of Conservation Voters  
Maine Audubon \* Natural Resources Defense Council \* NH Audubon  
Northcoast Environmental Center \* Northern Jaguar Project \* NY4WHALES \* Rocky Mountain Wild  
Save Animals Facing Extinction \* Save Wolves Now Network \* Sierra Club  
The Humane Society of the United States \* Western Nebraska Resources Council  
Western Watersheds Project \* World Wildlife Fund \* Wolf Conservation Center

June 18, 2019

The Honorable Jim McGovern  
Chairman  
The Committee on Rules  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-312 The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Ranking Member  
The Committee on Rules  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-152 The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**OPPOSE MAKING IN ORDER DAMAGING ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT AMENDMENTS TO THE FY20  
HOUSE INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS BILL**

Dear Chairman McGovern and Ranking Member Cole,

On behalf of our millions of members and supporters, the undersigned organizations write to urge you to oppose making in order any amendments aimed at eroding the protections of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Unfortunately, some House members have requested the opportunity to offer amendments damaging to the ESA when the full House takes up the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies appropriations bill (H.R. 3055). If made in order, these amendments would have far-reaching consequences for our nation's wildlife and would improperly legislate over what the ESA dictates should be science-based decisions. The amendments are as follows:

- **Amendment #37** would prevent funds from being used to treat the Mexican wolf as an endangered or threatened species.
- **Amendment #45** would prohibit funds from being used to list the grizzly bear in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem Area under the ESA.
- **Amendment #49** would prohibit funds from being used to enforce the listing of the Panama City Crayfish under the ESA.
- **Amendment #70** would prohibit funds from being used to treat the gray wolf as an endangered or threatened species under the ESA.

- **Amendment #77** would prohibit funding to list the greater sage-grouse as an endangered or threatened species under the ESA.

These amendments would undermine the science-based decision-making process of the ESA by legislating determinations about which species need protections, rather than leaving those decisions to the scientists and experts at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These amendments have no place in the must-pass funding bill and are a blatant attempt to skirt the ESA and deny individual species the protections they need. The Rules Committee should not validate legislating over the clear mandate of the Act to the detriment of our nation's wildlife by permitting the full House to consider, and possibly even approve, these amendments.

The ESA remains our nation's most effective law for protecting wildlife in danger of extinction. Over 90 percent of American voters support the ESA, and nearly three-fourths of registered voters believe that decisions about which species should or should not be protected under the Act should be made by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists, not by members of Congress.<sup>1</sup> We strongly urge you to stand with the ESA and not rule these harmful amendments in order.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

American Bird Conservancy  
 Animal Welfare Institute  
 Berkshire Environmental Action Team (BEAT)  
 Blue Heron Productions  
 Born Free USA  
 Center for Biological Diversity  
 Clean Water Action  
 Defenders of Wildlife  
 Delaware Ecumenical Council on Children and Families  
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<sup>1</sup> Defenders of Wildlife, New National Poll Finds 90 Percent of American Voters Support the Endangered Species Act, available at <https://defenders.org/press-release/new-national-poll-finds-90-percent-american-voters-support-endangered-species-act>.

