

Meeting Date: November 14, 2019

Agenda Item No. 10

Agenda Item: Discussion of House Bill 3742,
Recovering America's Wildlife Act of
2019

Bureau Chief Approval: _____

Prepared by: Rex Sallabanks, Wildlife Diversity Program Manager

Background:

HR3742, the "Recovering America's Wildlife Act of 2019", was introduced into the House of Representatives of the 116th Congress on July 12, 2019. This national, bipartisan legislation is the direct result of a recommendation from the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources. The bill proposes to amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to make supplemental funds available for management of fish and wildlife species of greatest conservation need as determined by State fish and wildlife agencies. It recommends that \$1.3 billion in existing revenues from the general U.S. Treasury fund be invested annually in fish and wildlife conservation through the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program under the Pittman-Robertson Act. The Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program was created in statute in 2000 as a mechanism to distribute conservation funding to states to develop, revise and implement their respective State Wildlife Action Plans, focusing on state identified Species of Greatest Conservation Need, support wildlife conservation education, and wildlife-associated recreation. New funding would help relieve the disproportionate fiscal conservation responsibility currently born by hunters, recreational shooters, anglers, and boaters.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:

Title 36-103 (a), Wildlife Policy, declares all wildlife, including all wild animals, wild birds, and fish, within in the state of Idaho to be the property of the state that shall be preserved, protected, perpetuated, and managed. Title 36-103 (b) authorizes the Commission to administer this Policy.

Public Involvement Process:

None.

Justification:

State fish and wildlife agencies have a strong track record of conservation success, especially when they have adequate funding. RAWA's objective is to provide new, dedicated and sustainable funding, complimentary to traditional funding through the North American Conservation model, to build capacity for implementation of proactive conservation actions for Species of Greatest Conservation Need to maintain healthy, sustainable wildlife populations and prevent federal listing under the Endangered Species Act. Such actions would help the Idaho Fish and Game Commission maintain state-led management authority for Idaho's fish and wildlife.

Staff Recommendation:

None — this item is for information only.

Action Requested:

None — this item is for information only.