

From: Affiliate Executive Directors
[mailto:EXECUTIVEDIRECTORS@LISTS.NATIONALWILDLIFE.ORG] **On**
Behalf Of Collin O'Mara
Sent: Friday, December 21, 2018 2:15 PM
To: EXECUTIVEDIRECTORS@LISTS.NATIONALWILDLIFE.ORG
Subject: 2018 Farm Bill!

Federation Family,

Despite the hours ticking away here in Washington before a partial government shutdown, I wanted to share some incredibly exciting news from this week. After months of brutal negotiations and sleepless nights, the 2018 Farm Bill has been signed into law—and it has the highest wildlife funding levels and some of the best conservation provisions (and fewest bad provisions) in any Farm Bill, ever. And even though there are plenty of subsidies and programs that we would love to reform, we can be proud that in this time of unified government, we were able to make conservation a true bipartisan priority.

Under the remarkable leadership of Aviva Glazer, Julie Sibbing, and Laura Daniel Davis, our Federation has been a leading voice advocating for a strong conservation title, through many months of negotiations and consensus-building and advocacy work with coalition partners (conservation, agriculture clean water, and sportsmen coalitions), as well as through direct lobbying and hill engagement. Our affiliates have been actively working on it through mini-grants, fly-ins, letters, and district meetings. Many of the wins for wildlife in the final bill are on the exact issue areas that our Federation led on, including wildlife funding (\$600M+!), sodsaver, cover crops/crop insurance, and wetland compliance.

The team at the National Advocacy Center worked closely with the regional offices and our state and territorial affiliates over the last year and a half – from helping us set nationwide priorities to helping to educate members and building champions to doing public sign-on letters and media to getting constituents to weigh in and advocate for

priorities. We especially want to thank Prairie Rivers Network (IL), Conservation Federation of Missouri & Missouri Prairie Foundation, Minnesota Conservation Federation, Kansas Wildlife Federation, New Hampshire Audubon, Montana Wildlife Federation, South Dakota Wildlife Federation, Colorado Wildlife Federation, Iowa Wildlife Federation, Arkansas Wildlife Federation.

One of things that I'm most proud of is that we continue to be one of the very few organizations that can work with members of both parties. This year, we saw members ranging from Ranking member Stabenow (D-MI), Senator Thune (R-SD), Senator Bennet (D-CO), Senator Daines (R-MT), Senator Bennet (D-CO), Senator Klobuchar (D-MN), Senator Heinrich (D-NM), Senator Boozeman (R-AK), Representative Fudge (D-OH), Rep. Marshall (R-KS), Rep. Kuster (D-NH), Rep. Dingell (D-MI), and others—all led on important conservation provisions. In particular, Senator Stabenow and her staff deserves an unbelievable amount of credit for ensuring that key conservation provisions survived the final bicameral negotiations. (There are some draft tweets and posts below if anyone wants to share to help us thank our champions!)

Now, as for the substance, our team has developed a reputation for being the leading, trusted voices on these issues for Hill staff and within the community. I'd especially like to recognize Jan Goldman-Carter on wetland compliance, Mike Leahy on Forestry, Kit Fischer and Bob McCready on vacant grazing allotments, Ryan Stockwell on cover crops and ag data act, Sarah Bates on watershed restoration on national forest lands, Aviva on sodsaver, wildlife funding, and the Conservation Reserve Program. I also want to thank Max Broad, Lekha Knuffman, David DeGennaro, Emilene Sivagnanam, Jessica Espenshade, Elizabeth Lillard, and RaShawn Mitchell for their great work!

Here are some of the key wins:

- **Full conservation funding:** At a time when there is huge demand from farmers and ranchers to enroll in conservation programs, this bill holds the line in maintaining strong funding for conservation

programs that will help farmers and ranchers protect soil, water and wildlife.

- **Increased wildlife funding:** The bill increases the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funds dedicated to wildlife habitat practices from a minimum of 5 percent to a minimum of 10 percent of total EQIP funds. This will dramatically increase the amount of money available for farmers and ranchers to create wildlife habitat for species such as the greater sage grouse and monarch butterfly on working lands.
- **Clean bill:** The bill is free from attacks on the Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act and other bedrock environmental laws.
- **Wetland conservation provisions intact:** The bill maintains the integrity of the wetland conservation compliance provisions, known as Swampbuster, that require protection of wetlands as a condition of retaining eligibility for federal subsidies and benefits.
- **Cover crops:** This Farm Bill provides vital improvements in the federal crop insurance program regarding the management of cover crops, providing clarity to farmers using cover crops to reduce risk while protecting water quality.
- **Ag data use:** This bill takes some important first steps for collecting and putting USDA data to use in improving conservation practices and helping farmers make important land management decisions.
- **Grasslands and grazing management:** The bill includes numerous provisions to help provide ranchers with the tools needed to advance sustainable grazing management. And while the “Sodsaver” provision to protect native grasslands through discouraging conversion to cropland was unfortunately not expanded beyond the current six-state region, the bill does close a damaging loophole in current law.
- **Regional Conservation Partnership Program:** Mandatory funding for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program is

increased and administration of the program is streamlined and improved to better enable partner and landowner participation.

- **Conservation Easements:** The Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) is funded at strong levels and important provisions are added to ensure greater flexibility in participation. Unfortunately however, the bill makes a change to no longer require conservation plans for agricultural conservation easements, potentially undermining the conservation value of this program.
- **Conservation Reserve Program:** The bill increases the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to 27 million acres, achieved through lowering the rental rates paid to landowners while maintaining some incentive payments. Expanded use of CRP for haying and grazing is allowed, but key safeguards are added to help protect vegetation and wildlife. However, it will be critical to ensure that these changes are implemented in a way that does not reduce demand for the program or threaten the habitat value of the land.
- **Increased Access:** The bill includes \$50 million over 5 years for the Voluntary Public Access- Habitat Incentives Program – an increase of \$10 million from the last Farm Bill. This program will help farmers and ranchers restore habitat and open up private lands for walk-in hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation.
- **Watershed Protection on Forest Service Land:** With nearly half of the watersheds on national forests classified by the Forest Service as “functioning at risk” or “impaired,” targeted watershed restoration with diverse partners will be essential to ensure clean, abundant water for fish, wildlife and people. The Farm Bill includes important measures to support such efforts: the Water Source Protection Program and the Watershed Condition Framework.
- **Addressing pressing wildlife threats:** The bill provides funding to deal with several pressing threats to wildlife, including funding for feral swine eradication and for making research around chronic wasting disease a high priority.

Anyways, apologies for the long email, but this is the type of work that I am so proud that our One Federation family is executing every single day. It may not garner massive headlines, but it's critical conservation work for wildlife on the 60% of our nation that is private lands and we are so grateful to the foundations and donors who support this critical work.

So even though, most days are rough right now in Washington with the dysfunction—I want each of you to know the important contribution that our One Federation family played in this important bipartisan conservation win!

Your Happy Warrior,
Collin

From: FARMBILLWARROOM

[<mailto:FARMBILLWARROOM@LISTS.NATIONALWILDLIFE.ORG>] **On**

Behalf Of Aviva Glaser

Sent: Thursday, December 20, 2018 4:34 PM

To: FARMBILLWARROOM@LISTS.NATIONALWILDLIFE.ORG

Subject: The 2018 Farm Bill has been SIGNED!

Hi all-

President Trump just signed into law the [2018 Farm Bill](#), which includes significant wins for wildlife! These wins include full funding of the conservation title (the largest source of federal conservation funding), no anti-environmental riders, a large increase in funding for farmers and ranchers to create wildlife habitat on working lands (over \$600 million!), and many more wins that you can read about below. I wanted to give a HUGE thank you to each of you who worked to ensure that this bill had strong conservation provisions. It was an incredible team effort among affiliates and staff across the Federation, and while the bill isn't perfect, the final result is a bill that we can all be proud of.

I wanted to share with you the following resources:

- Σ NWF's [press release](#) lauding the bill being signed into law
- Σ A great [blog post](#) by Lekha Knuffman that goes through highlights of the conservation wins in the Farm Bill.
- Σ An updated side-by-side chart (attached) comparing the funding levels of Farm Bill conservation programs in the 2014 Farm Bill, the House and Senate versions of the 2018 Farm Bill, and the final 2018 Farm Bill
- Σ A thank you [LTE template](#) that we encourage affiliates and grassroots to use to thank their members. We have a few members and messages listed, but are happy to provide more – feel free to reach out to KnuffmanL@nwf.org if you are interested.
- Σ Thank you tweets to members who championed various wildlife wins in the bill (see bottom of email). Please take a look and like/retweet them!

Thanks again to everyone who has helped and supported this work. Moving forward, we'll be doing a more thorough analysis of the bill and everything that is in it, and then we will turn our focus on farm bill implementation, but for now we will celebrate this victory!

-Aviva

THANK YOU TWEETS:

Σ Thank you to our wildlife champions in Congress! The final, passed version of the [#FarmBill](#) has some incredible wins for [#wildlife](#), ranging from increased funding for habitat restoration to efforts to stem the spread of disease & invasive species.

http://natwild.life/FarmBill18_VOTE <https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1073696222194618369>

Σ The final [#FarmBill](#) will help [#wildlife](#) across through country by providing farmers & ranchers the tools they need to create habitat, protect water quality, & improve soil health. Thank you [@SenStabenow](#) for your leadership in ensuring that this bill was a

win for [#wildlife](#).

<https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1073697614271533061>

Σ Thank you [@ConawayTX11](#) and [@collinpeter](#) for passing a 2018 [#FarmBill](#) with strong conservation funding that will protect our nation's valuable soil, water, and [#wildlife](#).

http://natwild.life/FarmBill18_VOTE <https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1073698822591836160>

Σ Thank you [@SenPatRoberts](#) for your work to get a 2018 [#FarmBill](#) with wins for [#wildlife](#) and for farmers & ranchers passed through Congress. The final version is a win for wildlife, including the state bird of [#Kansas](#), the western meadowlark!

http://natwild.life/FarmBill18_VOTE <https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1073699740435529729>

Σ From NY's New England cottontail to Kentucky's golden-winged warbler, vulnerable [#wildlife](#) in the home states of [@SenSchumer](#) & [@senatemajldr](#) could benefit from the habitat restoration programs funded by the final [#FarmBill](#). Thank you for your leadership!

http://natwild.life/FarmBill18_VOTE <https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1073700641997025287>

Σ The Swainson's hawk and other California [#wildlife](#) that depend on healthy habitat on working lands can thank [@NancyPelosi](#) for her leadership in ensuring the [#FarmBill](#) was a win for wildlife.

http://natwild.life/FarmBill18_VOTE <https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1073701280034578432>

Σ [@SenJohnThune](#) and [@amyklobuchar](#): Thank you for working to protect America's prairies through the Sodsaver provision in the [#FarmBill](#) & for taking important steps to collect data to improve conservation & farming practices - thanks to your work this bill is a win for [#wildlife](#)!

<https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1075785905716240386>

Σ Thank you, [@SenBennetCO](#) for your work to get wildlife wins in the [#FarmBill](#)! The bill doubles funding for wildlife habitat for species like sage grouse, helps provide more public access for hunting and fishing on private lands, and

goes a long way towards protecting #grasslands.
<https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1075786884620697600>

- Σ The 2018 #FarmBill includes increased funding for farmers & ranchers to create wildlife habitat for species like the sage grouse, and increased funding for public access for hunting and fishing on private lands. Thank you @SteveDaines for your work on these wildlife wins!
<https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1075788839929688064>
- Σ Thank you @MartinHeinrich for working to increase funding for collaborative science-based landscape restoration and for improving watershed protection and restoration for forests, water, and wildlife in the #FarmBill!
<https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1075792277002510336>
- Σ We are thrilled that the final #FarmBill includes \$50 million for the Voluntary Public Access-Habitat Incentive Program, to allow hunting and fishing on private lands. Thanks @RogerMarshallMD and @RepDebDingell for your leadership on this important program for sportsmen & women!
<https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1075794936811925507>
- Σ Thank you to @CongressmanGT, @RepCheri @RodneyDavis @RepJaredPolis for ensuring the the #FarmBill has increased funding for the Voluntary Public Access-Habitat Incentives Program - this is a win for #wildlife and outdoor recreation!
<https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1075796472883486721>
- Σ Thank you @RepMarciaFudge and @SenSherrodBrown for ensuring that the #FarmBill includes full funding for conservation programs and critical water quality and

conservation provisions to help species such as the monarch butterfly and Blanding's turtle.

<https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1075797686316646401>

- Σ Thank you @RepAnnieKuster for your leadership on #conservation in the #FarmBill and supporting efforts to increase funding to help farmers and foresters protect wildlife habitat!

<https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1075798524514705408>

- Σ Thank you @SenBobCasey and @ChrisVanHollen and @for working to ensure a strong Regional Conservation Partnership Program in the #FarmBill and important provisions to help the Chesapeake Bay!

#CleanWater <https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1075800709742936064>

- Σ Thanks to @SenHydeSmith and @CongressmanGT for your work to ensure the #2018FarmBill makes chronic wasting disease a high priority research and extension initiative. This is critical for deer, elk, and moose herds that are vulnerable to this grave threat.

<https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1075802942668726272>

- Σ Thank you @JohnBoozman for ensuring that the final #FarmBill includes key provisions to encourage wetland easements. This is a huge win for Arkansas wildlife like hooded mergansers & lake sturgeon who depend on healthy wetlands.

<https://twitter.com/wildlifeaction/status/1075804135289688065>



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