



## State-Level Wildlife Funding Initiatives

### ***Reliable Funding is Needed for Wildlife Conservation***

America's state fish and wildlife agencies bear the primary responsibility for the management of all wildlife species, but are almost entirely funded by a variety of user fees on hunters and anglers. With these dedicated and robust funding sources, many game species like the wild turkey and white-tailed deer have recovered from the brink of extinction to healthy, thriving populations. Despite such successes, state wildlife agencies receive little from the estimated \$95.8 billion in economic activity generated by other kinds of wildlife-related recreation like wildlife viewing each year. As a result, thousands of species lack the funding needed for proactive conservation measures that will prevent them from becoming endangered. This neglect leaves the undue burden of managing all wildlife upon those Americans who hunt and fish and creates a serious gap in wildlife conservation funding.

In recognition of this funding gap, Congress established the State Wildlife Grants Program. Since 2001, over \$400 million in federal grants have been matched by at least \$200 million in state funds to provide over \$600 million in new funding for practical, "on-the-ground" conservation efforts. Now, the state wildlife action plans, created as part of the State Wildlife Grants Program, will provide a call to action, spurring new opportunities to attain increased and reliable funding for wildlife conservation on the state and federal levels.

### ***A Supportive Public Generates Success Stories***

Fortunately, the American public supports the mission of wildlife conservation and over 70% favor their state governments spending more to implement the wildlife action plans. Land conservation organizations have discovered that public support translates into success at the ballot box. Since 1996, ballot initiatives have generated over \$35 billion for land conservation, with a 75% success rate. In a growing list of states including Arizona, Arkansas, Missouri and Virginia, state wildlife agencies have found legislatures and voters receptive to the establishment of significant new funding mechanisms for wildlife conservation. In 2004 alone, these four states generated over \$130 million in such funding. Most recently, New Jersey's legislature passed a bill automatically providing sufficient general fund appropriations to match future State Wildlife Grants.

### ***Wildlife Action Plans Provide New Opportunities***

The wildlife action plans provide a new call to action and tools for many more states to seek dedicated funding mechanisms. Persuasive statements of need have been key to the success of previous funding initiatives; the wildlife action plans now provide that statement of need for all states. A diverse array of wildlife conservation organizations are also excited about the actions in these plans and are eager to contribute their expertise and resources for legislative or ballot campaigns to fund them. The Association will work to support and coordinate these efforts, with the ultimate goal of dramatically increasing wildlife agency budgets across the nation.

### ***How the Assn. of Fish & Wildlife Agencies is Supporting State-Level Wildlife Funding:***

- **Information clearinghouse:** The Association will research funding initiatives and will provide advice and expertise to agencies based on experience with various strategies

Teaming with Wildlife

A coalition of more than 3,000 groups working together to prevent wildlife from becoming endangered.

c/o Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

444 North Capitol Street, Suite 725, Washington, D.C. 20001

Phone: 202/624-7890 Fax: 202/624-7891 Email: [teaming@fishwildlife.org](mailto:teaming@fishwildlife.org)

[www.teaming.com](http://www.teaming.com)

and mechanisms around the country. *Investing in Wildlife*, a new report analyzing fifteen state wildlife funding initiatives is being distributed, and The Association will continue to work with our conservation partners to share their experiences with similar efforts.

- **National partner support and coordination:** The Association has convened meetings of national conservation and sportsmen's organizations with state-level resources to discuss how their chapters and affiliates can contribute to this effort. As states prepare to launch funding campaigns these organizations will have the interest and resources to become active partners.
- **Communications support:** Informed by a national survey and focus groups, The Association has developed a "Message Kit" full of resources for communicating to the general public about the wildlife action plans. Subsequent polling of wildlife advocates helps inform how we communicate to those audiences that matter most for building a campaign. All these resources have been shared online and through numerous workshops.
- **A revitalized Teaming with Wildlife Coalition:** The Association and the National TWW Steering Committee are launching an effort to invigorate and expand the 4,000-organization-strong Teaming with Wildlife Coalition around the goal of securing increased federal, state and private funding. A strong TWW coalition in your state will be essential for promoting a funding mechanism to your legislature or voting public. In addition to re-engaging the national organizations of the TWW coalition, The Association will continue to host coalition building workshops for state agencies and their partners and is continually improving the "Coalition Toolkit," a CD and website with over 100 links to coalition building tools.
- **Outreach to the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses:** The Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, a member of the Teaming with Wildlife Steering Committee, is fostering the development of Legislative Sportsmen's Caucuses, now in 29 state legislatures. In December, the Association will participate in the NASC Annual Conference for the second year in a row, informing state legislators about the wildlife action plans and new opportunities for wildlife funding.

Teaming with Wildlife

A coalition of more than 3,000 groups working together to prevent wildlife from becoming endangered.

c/o Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

444 North Capitol Street, Suite 725, Washington, D.C. 20001

Phone: 202/624-7890 Fax: 202/624-7891 Email: [teaming@fishwildlife.org](mailto:teaming@fishwildlife.org)

[www.teaming.com](http://www.teaming.com)