

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Norm Dicks
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Michael Simpson
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Dicks and Congressman Simpson:

We are writing to express our support for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program in fiscal year 2011. We appreciate your support and leadership for this program, now in its 10th year, and for the increase in funding for fiscal year 2010, as many of us requested last year. Although funding for the program is still below what is needed, in light of the severe budget constraints this year, we are seeking your support for a modest increase in the program to \$100 million for fiscal year 2011. We would also appreciate your help to decrease the non-federal match requirement for implementation projects to 35%. This would greatly help states who have seen dramatic cuts in state matching funds and allow them to continue implementing job-creating conservation actions.

The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program is the nation's core program to prevent wildlife from becoming endangered in every state. It is a mission-critical element of the Interior Department's budget as no other program in the federal budget is focused on this goal. As you know, United States laws and policies place the primary responsibility for wildlife management in the hands of the states. Since the 1930's, the federal government has worked in partnership with the states by providing funding for wildlife conservation programs. This funding has focused on, and been largely responsible for an enormously successful program to ensure conservation and sustainable use of important wildlife species hunted or fished by millions of sportsmen and women across America.

At the same time, more than 10,000 species of wildlife that are not hunted or fished have declined and some are teetering on extinction. The amount of federal funding needed to restore federally listed threatened and endangered species may far exceed the money required to prevent their decline in the first place. In the future we can expect more federal endangered species listings unless we invest now in proactive preventive and strategic conservation measures targeted at imperiled wildlife and their habitats. By doing so we can help retain and create thousands of American jobs that will save wildlife and taxpayer dollars.

When Congress created the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program in FY 2001, we asked every state and territorial wildlife agency to complete a comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy (state wildlife action plan). The plans were developed by scientists, managers, sportsmen, environmentalists, and other private citizens who worked together to identify practical conservation measures (i.e. invasive species control, habitat restoration, land protection) to prevent wildlife from becoming endangered. These plans are being implemented in every

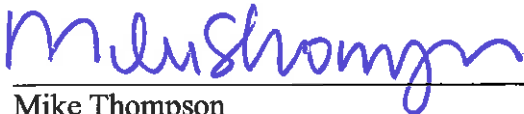
state and territory, creating thousands of jobs that are stimulating the economy. Congress needs to honor our commitment to this effort by providing the federal share of resources needed to undertake this monumental multi-year effort.

Adequate and consistent funding for State and Tribal Wildlife Grants is essential to fulfilling the shared federal-state responsibility for keeping our nation's wildlife from becoming endangered. Taking action to conserve wildlife before it becomes endangered is environmentally sound and fiscally responsible. Now more than ever, we should be focusing limited resource on this kind of smart, effective conservation investment.

We recognize that fiscal discipline is paramount in this time of large deficits and that the Committee is operating with finite resources. To the degree possible and without exceeding Interior Appropriations allocation levels, we respectfully request that you prioritize funding for this program at \$100 million for fiscal year 2011.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



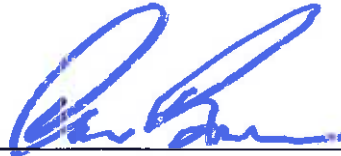
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Ron Kind
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Paul Tonko
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Dan Boren
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David Scott
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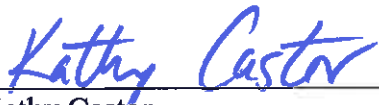
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Ron Klein
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Dina Titus
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Gregorio Sablan
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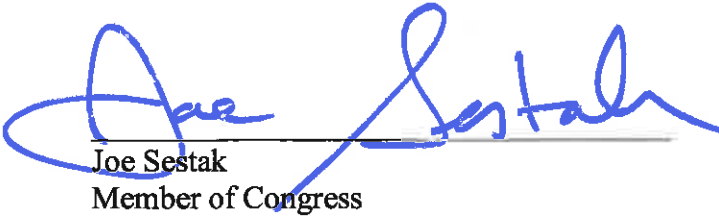
Larry Kissell
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Cynthia Lummis
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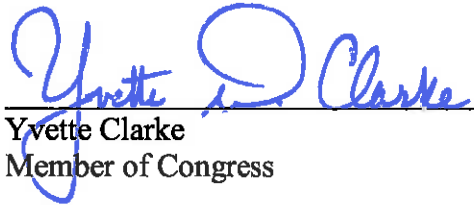
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Albio Sires
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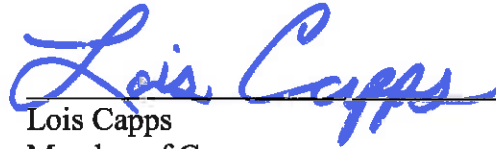
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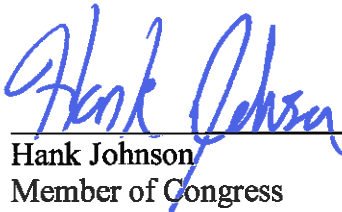
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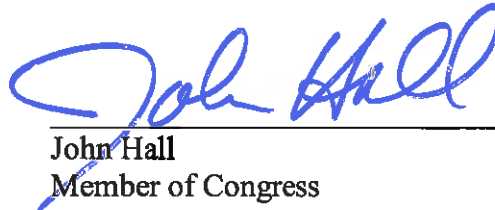
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Russ Carnahan

Russ Carnahan
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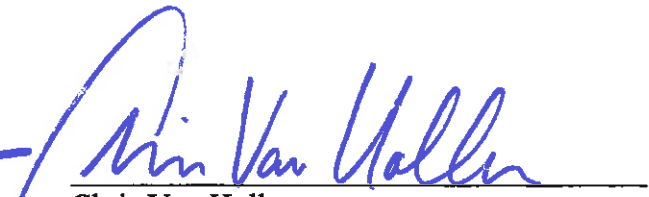
Michael H. Michaud

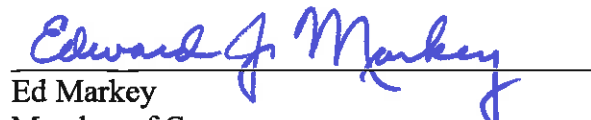
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Chris Van Hollen
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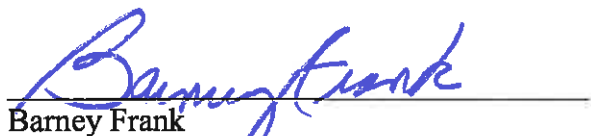

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Ike Skelton
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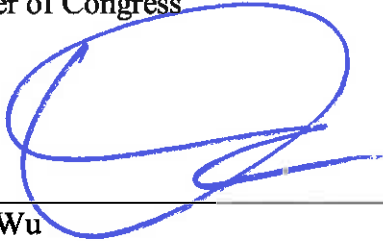

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Jerrold Nadler
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David Wu
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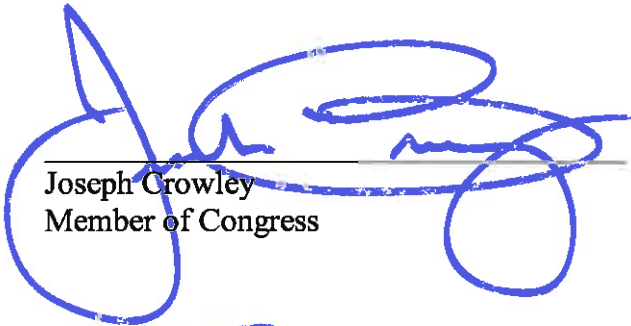
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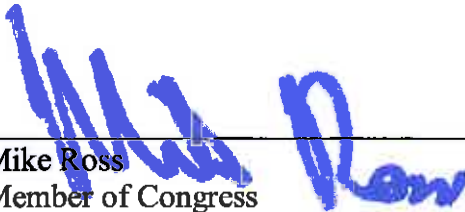
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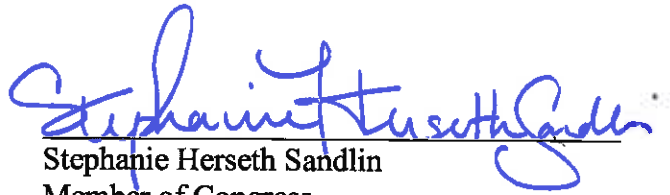
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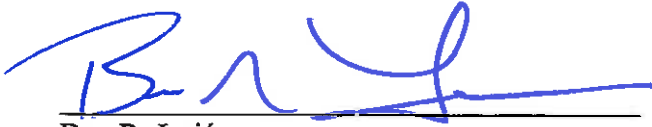
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Joe Courtney
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Stephanie Herseth Sandlin
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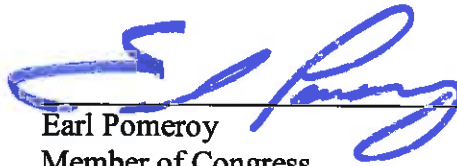
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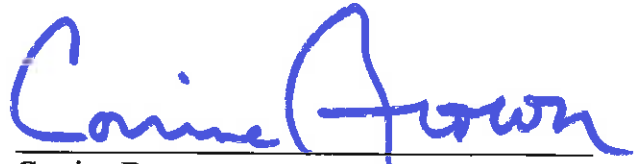
Martin Heinrich
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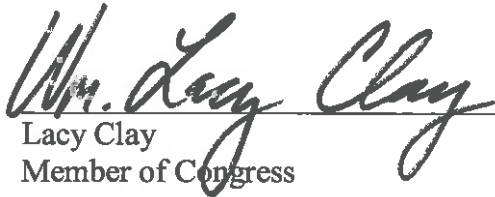
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Earl Blumenauer
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Corrine Brown
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Lacy Clay
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