

Defenders of Wildlife Fundraiser Toolkit

Celebrating 250 Years of America the Beautiful

Thank you for stepping up to protect wildlife. By fundraising, you're helping ensure that America's wildlife—wolves, bison, orcas, monarchs and more—remain part of our story for the next 250 years.

This toolkit gives you everything you need to get started and make an impact.

Getting started in 3 simple steps

Step 1: Create Your GoFundMe Page

- Use our campaign link: [America's Wildlife Challenge](#) to learn more.
- Leverage the GoFundMe platform to create a personal fundraising page and campaign link just for you.
- Set a goal: we suggest a goal of \$250+ to honor America's 250th anniversary and when you raise \$250 or more, you will receive a thank you package with our exclusive wildlife t-shirt—but every dollar helps protect wildlife.

Step 2: Tell Your Story

Share why wildlife matters to you. People give because *you* ask them—not just because of the cause. Not sure what to say? Start here:

- Why do you care about wildlife?
- What's your favorite animal or wild place?
- Why does protecting wildlife matter for future generations?
- What does "America" mean to you—and how does wildlife fit into that?

Why Defenders of Wildlife?

- Defenders of Wildlife is a national, nonpartisan nonprofit organization focused on protecting and restoring wildlife and their habitats across the U.S.
- For nearly 80 years, Defenders has worked on the front lines of conservation through policy, advocacy and on-the-ground wildlife and human coexistence efforts.
- Defenders' work prioritizes protecting and restoring endangered species, preserving critical habitats and strengthening conservation laws like the Endangered Species Act.
- Defenders works in Congress, in the courts and in communities to ensure wildlife and wild places are protected for future generations.
- Defenders focuses on both wildlife and people, recognizing that healthy ecosystems support clean water, biodiversity and long-term environmental stability.
- Defenders is nonpartisan and focused on shared values, bringing people together around the importance of protecting wildlife and natural spaces.

- When wildlife is at risk, Defenders steps in to advocate, educate and drive meaningful change. Defenders is *the* voice for animals.
- Defenders' mission is rooted in the belief that every species plays a role in the balance of nature, and protecting wildlife helps protect the planet as a whole.

What your donation to Defenders of Wildlife can support:

- Real solutions that help people and wildlife coexist, like livestock guardian dogs and secure trash cans to prevent unwanted wildlife in communities.
- Advocacy and education within communities across the U.S. and on Capitol Hill. As a nonpartisan organization, Defenders works to protect all wildlife who need us most.
- Legal action to protect wildlife and wild places. Defenders is a voice for the animals with no voice.

How Defenders of Wildlife impacts the animals we love:

- **Defending the Endangered Species Act (ESA).** Defenders invests resources on federal and state advocacy, litigation and policy work which has successfully helped block legislation that would weaken ESA protections.
- **Large-scale habitat protection.** Defenders protects habitat at ecosystem scale rather than focusing on individual animals including efforts that contributed to protection of millions of acres of critical habitat, such as revised protections for Florida manatee habitat.
- **Predator recovery and coexistence.** For nearly 80 years, Defenders has led efforts in wolf conservation, including gray wolf restoration and coexistence programs that reduce conflicts with ranchers. In recent years this has included support for gray wolf restoration in Colorado and advocacy for wolverine reintroduction efforts.
- **Conservation litigation.** Defenders' legal team regularly challenges government actions that threaten wildlife or habitat, providing leverage far beyond the value of a single action because court rulings can affect entire species or ecosystems.
- **Science and conservation innovation.** Defenders employs scientists, policy experts and legal specialists to develop conservation strategies and improve endangered-species recovery programs.

Step 3: Share with Your Network

Once your campaign page has been created, you can use Your Link to post your campaign on social media, text friends and send emails. The more you share, the more you raise for the animals and wild places that need it most.

“I’m fundraising for Defenders of Wildlife because [personal reason]. In honor of America’s 250th anniversary, I want to make sure wildlife like [species/place] are still part of our future. Will you join me?”

Social Media Post (General)

I'm raising funds to protect America's wildlife in honor of our country's 250th anniversary. Wildlife is part of our shared heritage—and it needs our help.

Join me in supporting Defenders of Wildlife: [Your Link]

Text Message

Hey! I'm raising money to protect U.S. wildlife for America's 250th anniversary. Would you consider donating or sharing? Here's my page: [Your Link]

Email Ask

Subject: Join me in protecting America's wildlife

Hi [Name],

I'm fundraising for Defenders of Wildlife to help protect the animals and wild places that are part of America's story.

As we reflect on the 250th anniversary of our country, I'm thinking about the legacy we leave behind—and I want wildlife to be part of it.

Would you consider donating or sharing my page? [Your Link]

Thank you so much,
[Your Name]

Follow-Up Message

Just a quick reminder—I'm still fundraising to protect wildlife! Every donation helps. Thank you to everyone who has supported me so far! [Your Link]

Engaging with your audiences

Keep your page and posts fresh by sharing:

- Photos from hikes, parks, or nature
- Your favorite wildlife species
- Progress updates (“I’m halfway to my goal!”)
- Thank-you shoutouts to donors

Tips for Success

- Start strong: Ask close friends/family first
- Be personal: Your story matters more than perfect wording
- Post often: Share a few times per week
- Say thank you: Always acknowledge donors
- Keep going: Most donations come after multiple reminders

Frequently Asked Questions

Campaign Basics

Q: Where can I find details about Defenders' peer-to-peer campaign?

A: Our America the Beautiful campaign runs through the end of July and campaign details can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3Qt2dXZ>. You may also create your own fundraiser to support Defenders' mission at any time by clicking here: <https://dfnd.us/49Len50>.

Q: What exactly is a GoFundMe peer-to-peer fundraiser?

A: A peer-to-peer fundraiser allows supporters to create their own fundraising page through the GoFundMe platform on behalf of Defenders of Wildlife and invite friends, family and colleagues to contribute to the cause.

Q: Why is Defenders launching this campaign?

A: The campaign helps expand awareness of Defenders' mission while providing supporters with an easy way to help raise funds for wildlife conservation through their personal networks.

Q: Who can create a fundraiser?

A: Anyone who supports Defenders' mission is welcome to create a fundraiser, subject to the platform's terms and any applicable campaign guidelines.

Q: Is there a minimum fundraising goal?

A: No. Participants may set their own fundraising goal or use a suggested amount. Every contribution helps protect wildlife.

Q: The campaign says that fundraisers who raise \$250 or can choose to receive a t-shirt – how does that happen?

A: When a fundraiser's campaign raises \$250 or more, a member of Defenders' team will reach out to the fundraiser to congratulate them and find out where they'd like their t-shirt sent. If you reach that goal and haven't heard from us, you may contact us by email info@defenders.org or by phone at 1-800-385-9712.

Q: What happens if I make the Leaderboard?

A: That's wonderful! It means your campaign is leading the way for raising awareness and support for wildlife. Be sure to share this great news with your friends and family to keep your name at the top of the board.

Donations and Finances

Q: Do donations go directly to Defenders of Wildlife?

A: Yes. Donations made through the campaign are directed to Defenders of Wildlife through the fundraising platform.

Q: Are donations tax-deductible?

A: Donations are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law. Donors to this campaign will receive a donation receipt with the amount of their gift, the date it was made and Defenders' federal tax ID.

Q: Are there processing fees?

A: The fundraising platform may assess transaction or processing fees. Donors can review fee information during the donation process.

Q: As a fundraiser, will I be required to handle any of the donated funds?

A: No. Donations are processed through the platform and sent directly to Defenders. Fundraisers do not collect or manage donor funds.

Creating and Managing a Fundraiser

Q: How long does it take to create a fundraiser?

A: Most people can create and personalize a page in just a few minutes.

Q: Can I customize my fundraising page?

A: Yes. Fundraisers are encouraged to personalize their page with photos, stories and reasons they care about wildlife conservation. The platform provides additional details and suggestions to make the process simple!

Q: Can I choose a specific wildlife program or species to support?

A: Donations support Defenders' overall mission and priorities. Fundraisers can highlight personal interests, but funds are generally used where they are needed most.

Q: Can I update my goal after creating my fundraiser?

A: In most cases, yes. Fundraisers can adjust their goals and page content through the platform.

Messaging and Outreach

Q: What should I say when asking people to donate?

A: Share your authentic connection to wildlife and conservation. Explain why you care, why you support Defenders and how donations help advance wildlife protection.

Q: Does Defenders provide sample messages or graphics?

A: Yes. In partnership with GoFundMe's peer-to-peer platform, Defenders has provided

sample emails, social media posts, images and fundraising tips to help participants get started.

Expectations and Policies

Q: Am I expected to raise a certain amount?

A: No. Participation is voluntary, and there are no fundraising quotas or requirements.

Q: What if nobody donates to my fundraiser?

A: That's okay. Simply sharing the campaign and raising awareness about wildlife conservation helps advance Defenders' mission.

Q: Can I create a fundraiser as a team?

A: Once a fundraiser is created, it can be shared by multiple people, across multiple social platforms, to expand the outreach and impact.

Q: Can I fundraise in honor of a birthday, holiday or special occasion?

A: Absolutely. Many supporters use birthdays, anniversaries, holidays and other milestones as opportunities to support wildlife conservation.

Q: Will Defenders know whether I create a fundraiser?

A: Yes, Defenders is able to see everyone that creates a fundraiser for us, which allows us to thank and support those who choose to engage with us and further our mission in this way. That said, fundraising participation is voluntary and intended as an opportunity for those who wish to further support the mission through personal outreach.

Q: What if friends ask questions about Defenders' finances or programs?

A: Defenders' annual reports, financial information, program descriptions and other resources to help fundraisers answer questions accurately can be found on our website at www.defenders.org. If there are additional questions, you may direct your supporters to contact us at info@defenders.org or 1-800-385-9712 during normal business hours.

Q: How do I know my donation will make a difference?

A: Individual donations have sustained Defenders of Wildlife for nearly 80 years. They help to support and expand our work to protect wildlife and habitats in the United States through advocacy, science, partnerships and public engagement.

Q: Why support Defenders instead of another conservation organization?

A: Defenders brings a unique focus on wildlife conservation in the United States including policy advocacy, habitat protection and coexistence strategies that help wildlife thrive in an increasingly complex and evolving world.

Q: How much of my donation supports programs versus administration?

A: Defenders of Wildlife is a 501(c)(3) non-profit conservation organization and an officially accredited charity with the Better Business Bureau®, recognized with a 2025 Platinum Seal

of Transparency from Candid, and is extremely proud of its 4-star Charity Navigator rating. Nearly 75% of your donation will go directly to support our program work and our current financial reporting can be found any time at <https://defenders.org/about/annual-reports>.

If you have any additional questions about your gift, you may contact us at info@defenders.org or 1-800-385-9712 during normal business hours.