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COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND THE INTERNET
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

NATIONAL PARKS, FOREST, AND PUBLIC LANDS
WATER AND POWER

SELECT COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND
GLOBAL WARMING

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4701

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March 18, 2010

The Honorable James P. Moran
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

Dear Chairman Moran and Ranking Member Simpson:

As members who share your commitment to the conservation of our nation's wildlife, fish, plants and their habitats, we are writing to urge needed increases for the US Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) endangered species operating accounts and the very successful Cooperative Endangered Species Fund in the FY 2011 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill. While we understand that this will be a challenging budget year, we ask that you make every effort to support these core conservation program by providing an increase of \$52.7 million over the FY 2010 funding levels for the four USFWS endangered species operating accounts to a total of \$217 million and an increase in the Cooperative Endangered Species Fund to a total of \$100 million, which is still less than the FY2001 funding level for that program.

When Congress passed the Endangered Species Act in 1973, it recognized that America has an obligation to protect its most vulnerable species of wildlife, fish and plants and to ensure a rich conservation legacy for our children and grandchildren. Congress also understood that protecting natural habitats that are home to endangered species yields direct benefits to our families and communities that include water, soil and air purification; sources for future medicines; improved crop pollination; sources of raw materials; and coastal storm protection and flood control as just these few examples show:

- combined value of native insect pollination and pest control services estimated at \$7.6 billion per year;
- value of water flowing from national forests conservatively estimated at more than \$4.3 billion annually;
- coastal storm protection provided by marshes and mangroves estimated at more than \$23 billion annually;
- natural compounds found in the wild included in 56 percent of the 25 top-selling prescription drugs; and
- raw materials from forested ecosystems estimated at \$130 billion annually.

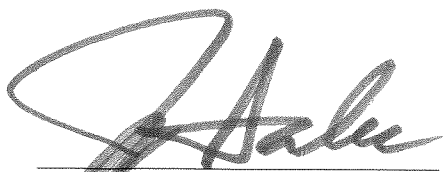
Unfortunately, we are falling short of that commitment by failing to provide needed funding to protect and adequately recover endangered and threatened plants and animals, decreasing chances for recovery while increasing the costs. Currently, there are insufficient resources to protect a backlog of 249 domestic and 20 foreign candidate species under the Act, many of which have awaited protection for years. The number of expert scientific staff in the Candidate Conservation and Recovery programs have decreased by 15 percent and 16 percent respectively since 2002 and funding is also needed to implement recovery and candidate conservation actions on the ground. Moreover, a May 2009 Government Accountability Office analysis, "*ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Has Incomplete Information about Effects on Listed Species for Section 7 Consultations (GAO-09-550)*" found that, under the Consultation program, the USFWS lacks systematic measures for tracking monitoring reports required by biological opinions and for tracking cumulative take of listed species at least in part due to staffing and budgetary shortfalls. In addition, the development and implementation of Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs), intended to allow non-federal activities to proceed while still protecting listed plants and animals, continues to grow, with funding critically needed to help ensure timely and effective development and monitoring of 739 existing and nearly 40 HCPs under development. Finally, given our nation's effort to greatly expand development of renewable energy, sufficient resources will be needed in the Consultation program to ensure that projects move forward expeditiously without harming threatened and endangered species and their habitats.

We appreciate the Subcommittee's efforts in providing some modest increases over the past two years. While we understand that this will be a challenging budget year, we ask that you make every effort to support this core conservation program by providing an increase of \$37.7 million over the FY 2010 funding levels for the four USFWS endangered species operating accounts to a total of \$217 million, with the increases allocated as follows: \$9.9 million for Listing, \$9.7 million for Recovery, \$15.7 million for Consultation, and \$2.4 million for Candidate Conservation.

Also of great importance, because most listed species depend on habitat found on state and private lands, the Cooperative Endangered Species Fund provides critical support to states in their work to conserve threatened and endangered species. We ask that the FY 2011 level be increased by \$15 million over the FY 2010 level to a total of \$100 million, which is still less than the amount received by this program in FY 2001.

Thank you for your kind consideration of these requests. We look forward to working with you as the FY 2011 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill moves forward in the House in the weeks ahead.

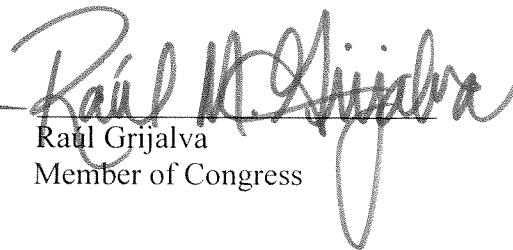
Sincerely,



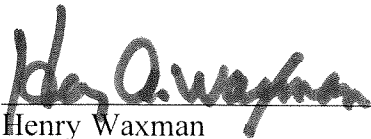
Jay Inslee
Member of Congress




Madeleine Bordallo
Member of Congress



Raul Grijalva
Member of Congress



Henry Waxman
Member of Congress



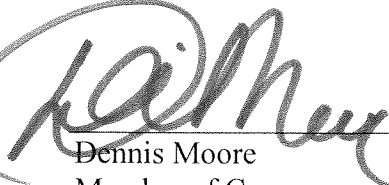
Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Lois Capps
Member of Congress



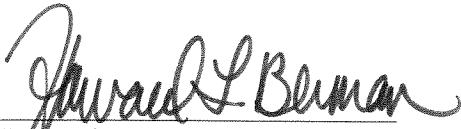
Ron Kind
Member of Congress



Dennis Moore
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



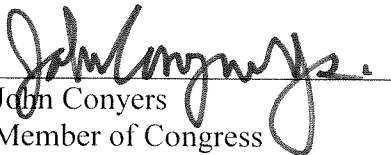
Howard Berman
Member of Congress



Kathy Castor
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Yvette Clarke
Member of Congress



John Conyers
Member of Congress



Bill Delahunt
Member of Congress



Rosa DeLauro
Member of Congress



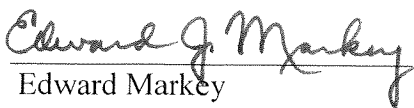
Alcee Hastings
Member of Congress



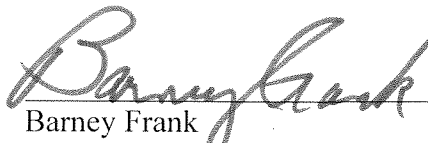
Mazie Hirono
Member of Congress



Rush Holt
Member of Congress



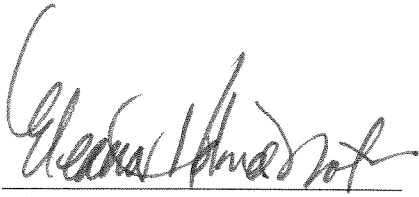
Edward Markey
Member of Congress



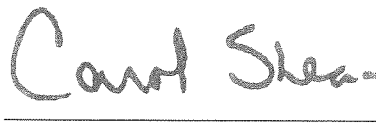
Barney Frank
Member of Congress



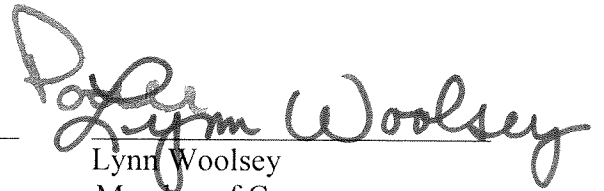
Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress



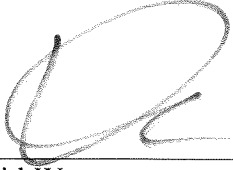
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



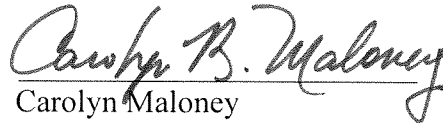
Carol Shea-Porter
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Lynn Woolsey
Member of Congress



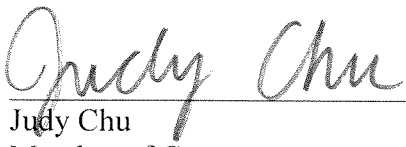
David Wu
Member of Congress



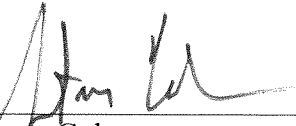
Carolyn Maloney
Member of Congress



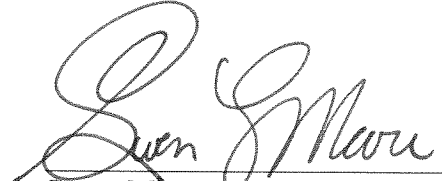
Brad Sherman
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



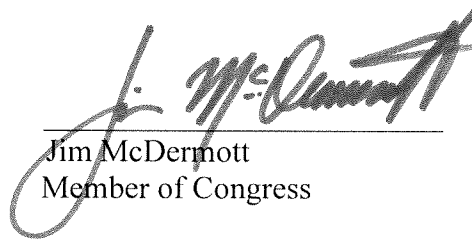
Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



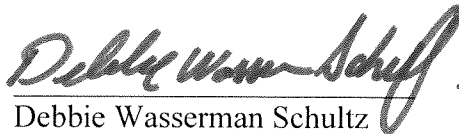
Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



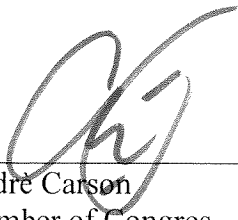
Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



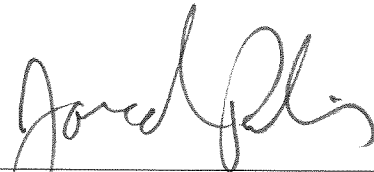
Pedro Pierluisi
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Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
Member of Congress



André Carson
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Jared Polis
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