



March 25, 2025

The Honorable Harriet Hageman  
Chair  
Committee on Natural Resources  
Subcommittee on Water,  
Wildlife and Fisheries  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Val Hoyle  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Natural Resources  
Subcommittee on Water,  
Wildlife and Fisheries  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Hageman, Ranking Member Hoyle and Members of the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries:

On behalf of Associated Builders and Contractors, a national construction industry trade association with 67 chapters representing more than 23,000 members, we appreciate your efforts to examine the Endangered Species Act and thank you for holding today's hearing considering [H.R. 1897](#), the ESA Amendments Act of 2025, introduced by Chairman Bruce Westerman, R-Ark., in the 119th Congress.

ABC supports the Endangered Species Act's purpose of protecting species threatened with extinction and recognizes the need for science-based, data-driven actions that conserve those species and the habitats on which they depend. ABC knows that much-needed reforms to modernize the ESA and make ESA consultations more efficient and effective will be required to most effectively leverage the federal spending for critical infrastructure, energy and technology projects throughout the country.

The ABC-supported ESA Amendments Act addresses some of the necessary reforms to the ESA, establishing clear statutory definitions, focusing on species recovery and streamlining the ESA permitting process. Specifically, H.R. 1897 streamlines the approval of voluntary conservation agreements and incidental take permits by removing duplicative permitting processes. Furthermore, the bill clarifies the ESA Section 7 permitting process and provides regulatory certainty that a critical habitat will not be designated if a private landowner is working to implement a plan that conserves the listed species in question. Each of these provisions will provide additional clarity to the ESA that is critical for allowing construction projects to be completed on time and on budget. In addition to key permitting reform measures, H.R. 1897 takes steps toward improving federal recovery efforts of species by requiring agencies to establish recovery goals for threatened species and provide regulatory relief as recovery goals are met.

ABC recognizes the importance of protecting endangered species while also ensuring that critical infrastructure projects can proceed efficiently and effectively. The reforms outlined in H.R. 1897 are essential for balancing the needs of conservation with the demands of infrastructure development. ABC remains committed to working with lawmakers and stakeholders to modernize the ESA in a way that benefits both endangered species and the communities that rely on well-maintained infrastructure. We look forward to further collaboration and thank you for considering our perspectives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kristen Swearingen', written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kristen Swearingen  
Vice President, Legislative & Political Affairs