



March 24, 2025

The Honorable Bruce Westerman
Chairman
Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jared Huffman
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources
1332 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Harriett Hageman
Chairwoman
Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Val Hoyer
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife, and Fisheries
1332 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Chairwoman Hageman and Ranking Member Hoyer:

The undersigned livestock organizations write to express our full support of H.R.1897, the *Endangered Species Act Amendments Act of 2025*, which would restore common sense and efficacy to the Endangered Species Act (ESA or “the Act”). This bill represents a critical step forward in modernizing the Act to better optimize conservation efforts, prioritize resources, and create a more transparent and accountable process for recovering listed species.

For far too long, the ESA has been exploited as a subversive tool to restrict land management by activist groups who wish to exclude certain user groups and interests, rather than as a tool for meaningful wildlife conservation. This exploitation of process and politics has often led to decisions not based on the best available science. The goalposts for species recovery are constantly shifting, creating unnecessary regulatory uncertainty and making it nearly impossible for livestock producers to plan for the long term. Instead of working in partnership with those who are directly impacted by listed species, federal agencies and the courts have allowed ideological interests to dictate policy—at the expense of both wildlife and the rural communities that steward these landscapes. If the ESA is to be effective, it must operate on transparent, science-based standards and respect the role of local stakeholders in the conservation.

One of the most glaring failures of the current ESA framework is the inability of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to navigate the blatantly political motivations for the listing status of predator species, including the gray wolf, grizzly bear, and Mexican gray wolf. Despite clear scientific information that demonstrates robust populations and bipartisan agreement that the species should be delisted, activist groups continue to block state management of species out of an alleged fear of more aggressive management. Return of species management to state authority is exactly what the ESA was designed to do once a species was recovered, but protracted delisting delays and costly litigation have become an impediment to balanced management. Livestock producers continue to suffer devastating losses due to unchecked predation, yet the ESA offers them little relief and few management tools to protect their herds. This is not a theoretical issue—it is an economic and operational crisis for producers across the U.S.

The consequences of this broken system were made clear in a hearing before this Committee's Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations (March 4, 2025), in which two NCBA and PLC livestock producers provided firsthand testimony about the real-world impacts of predator reintroductions under Section 10(j) of the ESA and the broad implications of the ESA. Rather than acknowledging their concerns, proponents of the status quo dismissed their lived experiences as "misinformation," ignoring the very people who bear the consequences of these policies.

These producers made it clear that Congress must act to ensure listing and delisting decisions are rooted in transparent, peer-reviewed, and objective science. The ESA must also be reformed to prevent activist litigation from undermining species recovery efforts. As it stands, endless lawsuits force agencies to spend their limited resources in the courtroom instead of on-the-ground conservation. This bill strengthens the ESA by limiting judicial review within the five-year post-delisting monitoring period, giving the agency the ability to assess the success of its decisions without being immediately forced back into legal battles.

Additionally, this legislation takes a much-needed step toward recognizing and incentivizing the voluntary conservation efforts that producers have long championed. Livestock producers are not opponents of conservation; we are its most dedicated practitioners. Yet too often, we see our proactive conservation measures ignored or weaponized against us. By streamlining the approval of voluntary conservation agreements, this bill ensures that producers who invest in habitat restoration and species protection are recognized as partners, not adversaries, in species conservation.

We believe these reforms will not only improve conservation outcomes but also restore integrity to the ESA by reducing bureaucratic barriers, ensuring sound science drives decision-making, and providing regulatory certainty for those most affected. The ESA Amendments Act of 2025 will create a more effective, balanced approach to species conservation—one that supports both wildlife and the rural communities that sustain them.

We wholeheartedly support the passage of this legislation and encourage swift action to move it forward. Its enactment will strengthen wildlife conservation efforts while ensuring that America's livestock producers can continue their essential role as stewards of our nation's natural resources and landscapes. We appreciate your leadership on this critical issue and look forward to seeing this bill signed into law.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We appreciate your support for meaningful ESA reform and the agricultural industry at large.

Sincerely,

National Cattlemen's Beef Association
Public Lands Council
Association of National Grasslands
American Sheep Industry Association
Arizona Cattle Feeders' Association
Arizona Cattle Growers' Association
California Cattlemen's Association
California Wool Growers Association

Colorado Cattlemen's Association
Colorado Public Lands Council
Colorado Wool Growers Association
Florida Cattlemen's Association
Idaho Cattle Association
Indiana Beef Cattle Association
Kansas Livestock Association
Michigan Cattlemen's Association
Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association
Montana Public Lands Council
Montana Stockgrowers Association
New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association
North Dakota Stockmen's Association
Ohio Cattlemen's Association
Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association
Oregon Cattlemen's Association
South Dakota Public Lands Council
Utah Cattlemen's Association
Utah Public Lands Council
Utah Wool Growers Association
Virginia Cattlemen's Association
Washington Cattle Feeders Association
Washington Cattlemen's Association
Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association
Wyoming Stock Growers Association
Wyoming Wool Growers Association