

(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 8195

To require the Secretary of the Interior to develop regional management frameworks for the take of double-crested cormorants.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. WALBERG introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To require the Secretary of the Interior to develop regional management frameworks for the take of double-crested cormorants.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Responsible Cormorant
5 Management and Control Act of 2026”.

1 **SEC. 2. REGIONAL MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS FOR TAKE**
2 **OF DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS.**

3 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the
4 date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary, in
5 coordination with the applicable Regional Flyway Council,
6 shall develop a regional management framework for the
7 take of double-crested cormorants for each region covered
8 by a Regional Flyway Council based on existing informa-
9 tion.

10 (b) **REQUIREMENTS.**—Each regional management
11 framework developed under subsection (a) shall—

12 (1) ensure the breeding population of double-
13 crested cormorants is maintained at a sustainable
14 level—

15 (A) in accordance with the Migratory Bird
16 Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703 et seq.); and

17 (B) beginning with the first update re-
18 quired by subsection (e), as informed by the
19 most recent survey carried out under subsection

20 (d);

21 (2) include, with respect to double-crested cor-
22 morants—

23 (A) allowed methods of take; and

24 (B) allowed time periods of take;

25 (3) identify entities that may take double-
26 crested cormorants, which shall include—

- 1 (A) State and Tribal agencies; and
- 2 (B) entities licensed or otherwise author-
- 3 ized in a manner the Secretary determines ap-
- 4 propriate, which shall include—
- 5 (i) State licensed or otherwise author-
- 6 ized hunters;
- 7 (ii) lake managers; and
- 8 (iii) pond managers;
- 9 (4) provide for—
- 10 (A) States and Indian Tribes to take spe-
- 11 cific management actions with respect to dou-
- 12 ble-crested cormorants in accordance with the
- 13 regional management framework; and
- 14 (B) the implementation of management ac-
- 15 tions identified under subsection (c); and
- 16 (5) account for the effects of an overabundant
- 17 population of double-crested cormorants on—
- 18 (A) fisheries;
- 19 (B) sensitive vegetation;
- 20 (C) populations of other migratory birds;
- 21 (D) human health and safety;
- 22 (E) water quality; and
- 23 (F) species listed as threatened species or
- 24 endangered species under section 4 of the En-

1 dangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C.
2 1533).

3 (c) INCORPORATION OF NATIONAL WILDLIFE REF-
4 UGE SYSTEM.—In developing each regional management
5 framework under subsection (a), the Secretary, in co-
6 operation with the heads of State and Tribal game and
7 fish agencies and the applicable Regional Flyway Council,
8 shall identify appropriate management actions that can be
9 taken within units of the National Wildlife Refuge System
10 to meet management objectives of States, Indian Tribes,
11 the Regional Flyway Councils, and such units with respect
12 to double-crested cormorants while fulfilling the primary
13 purposes of such units.

14 (d) POPULATION SURVEYS.—Not later than 5 years
15 after the date of the enactment of this section and every
16 5 years thereafter, the Secretary, in coordination with the
17 Regional Flyway Councils, shall carry out a survey of the
18 population of double-crested cormorants.

19 (e) UPDATES.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 years after
21 the date of the enactment of this section and every
22 5 years thereafter, the Secretary, in coordination
23 with the applicable Regional Flyway Council, shall
24 review and update each regional management frame-
25 work developed under subsection (a).

1 (2) INCORPORATION OF POPULATION SUR-
2 VEYS.—In reviewing and updating a regional man-
3 agement framework under paragraph (1), the Sec-
4 retary shall incorporate the results of the most re-
5 cent survey carried out under subsection (d).

6 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

7 (1) DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT.—The term
8 “double-crested cormorant” means the species
9 *Nannopterum auritum*.

10 (2) REGIONAL FLYWAY COUNCIL.—The term
11 “Regional Flyway Council” means—

12 (A) the Atlantic Flyway Council;

13 (B) the Central Flyway Council;

14 (C) the Mississippi Flyway Council; and

15 (D) the Pacific Flyway Council.

16 (3) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe”
17 has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the
18 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance
19 Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

20 (4) LAKE MANAGER.—The term “lake man-
21 ager” means a person that is licensed or otherwise
22 authorized by a State regulatory agency to manage
23 a private lake.

24 (5) MIGRATORY BIRD.—The term “migratory
25 bird” has the meaning given the term “migratory

1 birds” in section 11 of the Migratory Bird Conserva-
2 tion Act (16 U.S.C. 715j).

3 (6) POND MANAGER.—The term “pond man-
4 ager” means a person that is licensed or otherwise
5 authorized by a State regulatory agency to manage
6 a private pond.

7 (7) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
8 the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Di-
9 rector of the United States Fish and Wildlife Serv-
10 ice.

11 (8) TAKE.—The term “take” has the meaning
12 given the term in section 10.12 of title 50, Code of
13 Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of the
14 enactment of this section).