

**National Wildlife Federation
Conservation Congress
We Believe**

America's experience with cherished landscapes and wildlife has helped define and shape our national character and identity for generations. Protecting these natural resources is a cause that has long united Americans from all walks of life and political stripes. To hunters, anglers, hikers, birders, wildlife watchers, boaters, climbers, campers, cyclists, gardeners, farmers, forest stewards and other outdoor enthusiasts, this conservation ethic has evolved and is now integral to our heritage and fundamental to the very pursuit of happiness enshrined at the founding of this great country. It is this heritage that we will defend and pass on to our children. And for all Americans, whether they venture into nature or not, whether they live in the middle of our most densely populated cities or in small towns or rural communities or somewhere in between, we all depend on clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment. Our ties to the land provide spiritual sustenance and a path to virtue; they suggest a perfection in nature that exceeds anything humans can create. As Americans we share a sacred duty and obligation to protect and build upon our conservation heritage for the sake of native wildlife, ourselves, our neighbors, and most of all for future generations.

To this end, we believe...

- Our nation's wildlife, fish, healthy waters, clean air, and public lands are a birthright of all Americans.
- Government has a sacred duty to conserve and steward these public trust resources for all, including future generations, using the best available science and providing robust financial resources.
- Conservation on private land plays an essential role in supporting healthy fish and wildlife populations and providing and connecting their habitat.
- Our nation's healthy lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, marine and coastal waters, forests, and other wild lands are vital to our public health, economy, wildlife, and quality of life.
- Diverse and abundant wildlife habitat is essential for urban, suburban and rural communities.
- We all have a right to enjoy sustainable and responsible outdoor recreation including: hunting, fishing, camping, birding, wildlife watching, hiking, climbing, swimming, boating, and gardening.
- Our nation must address climate change, continue moving toward cleaner energy sources, and make wildlife habitat and communities more resilient to such change.
- We have a national responsibility to get our children outdoors, for their health, their intellectual enrichment, their daily happiness, and to instill a conservation ethic in future generations.

As the National Wildlife Federation – a nationwide federation of state and territorial affiliate organizations and nearly six million members and supporters across the country:

- We embrace a national responsibility to conserve wildlife and wild places wherever they may be and to broaden the conservation movement so that it encompasses America in all its diversity.
- We dedicate ourselves to share respectfully with our neighbors our understanding and appreciation of our natural environment, of conservation, of cultural preservation, and of America's outdoor heritage.
- We commit to nurturing with resources, attention, and talent a diverse national conservation movement that inspires local, state, and national action and engagement on issues that transcend political boundary.
- And we fully accept our profound responsibility to speak up, to advocate, and to engage on behalf of America's wildlife.