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SAFE Act Critical to Confronting Climate Impacts

Washington, DC (November 16, 2011) – The Safeguarding America’s Future and Environment (SAFE) Act, requiring federal and state governments to plan for the impacts of climate change by protecting our natural resources, was introduced in the U.S. Senate today. Co-sponsored by Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT) and Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), the SAFE Act would take critical steps towards protecting communities and wildlife from climate impacts.

“Climate change is the defining conservation issue of our generation, already forcing our communities and wildlife to confront more frequent and severe droughts, floods, and wildfires,” said [Bruce Stein](#), director of climate change adaptation for the National Wildlife Federation. “The SAFE Act is commonsense legislation that will help us prepare for climate impacts while protecting and enhancing our natural resources.”

The SAFE Act supports efforts already underway at the federal and state levels to plan for climate change and integrates these activities into existing management plans such as State Wildlife Action Plans and Coastal Zone Management Plans. Protecting wetlands, forests, coasts, and other ecosystems supports wildlife in the face of climate change and helps safeguard our communities from climate impacts.

“Wildlife is Montana’s brand” said [Sterling Miller](#), senior wildlife biologist in the National Wildlife Federation’s Northern Rockies and Prairies Regional Center in Missoula, MT. “Montana’s economy and the lifestyles of many of our citizens depend on healthy wildlife populations that will take efforts like those authorized in this bill to maintain because of challenges caused by rapid climate change.”

“Rhode Island, the Ocean State, has 400 miles of coastline. Many communities are impacted by rising sea levels and stronger storms eroding our shores and threatening homes,” said Paul Beaudette, member of the National Wildlife Federation board of directors and a resident of East Greenwich, RI. “Sen. Whitehouse’s bill is essential to our tourism economy, the beauty of our shores, and the activities that our citizens have enjoyed for generations.”

Protecting wildlife from global warming is one of National Wildlife Federation’s priority issues. NWF collaborates extensively with federal and state agencies and other environmental organizations to help natural resource managers develop quality conservation plans in the face of climate change. An NWF climate change vulnerability assessment tool, [Scanning the Conservation Horizon \(PDF\)](#), recently won a Department of the Interior Partners in Conservation Award and is now a popular training course. Other NWF projects include partnerships with state wildlife agencies to conduct vulnerability assessments and update State Wildlife Action Plans for climate change.

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Celebrating 75 years of inspiring Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future.