



Our Nature. Our Nation. Our Future.

Montana

What is the Alliance for America's Fish & Wildlife?

The purpose of the Alliance for America's Fish & Wildlife is to secure funding for much needed conservation of our most precious natural resources, our fish and wildlife.

This campaign has expanded out of the strong partnership created by the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish & Wildlife Resources, whose members represent the outdoor recreation retail and manufacturing sector, the energy and automotive industries, private landowners, educational institutions, conservation organizations, sportsmen's groups and state and federal fish and wildlife agencies.

How Our Wildlife is Currently Funded

Congress requires each state to develop a State Wildlife Action Plan – a proactive, comprehensive conservation strategy which recommends actions to conserve wildlife and vital habitat before they become more rare and costly to protect. License fees and excise taxes help, but without adequate, dedicated funding to implement these plans, Montana won't be able to conserve the full array of its treasured fish and wildlife.

America's Fish and Wildlife Heritage

Our nation's fish and wildlife are among its most valuable resources, along with clean air, water, healthy forests and agricultural lands that support all of us. Our quality of life, outdoor heritage and prosperity are tied to the health and sustainability of these treasures. The benefits of connecting Americans with nature include:

- Increasing quality time with family and carrying on traditions through fishing, hunting, birdwatching, camping, biking, boating and various other forms of outdoor recreation.
- Physical and mental health increases when we spend time in nature. Even a short amount of time outdoors each day can improve concentration, reduce stress, lower blood pressure and improve mental health, all of which can help prevent disease.
- Ensuring the next generation understands the important benefits of conservation in their communities.

Americans hold their country's resources dear, and our goal is to make sure future generations will have the same available resources and outdoor opportunities.

Trumpeter Swan



Primary Challenge to Conserving Montana's Wildlife

As our nation's population increases, so does the stress we put on our shared natural resources. When a species is pushed to the brink and becomes endangered, society risks losing a piece of our natural environment that we may never get back.

If this trend of federal underfunding continues, fewer Montanans will understand the importance of or need for fish and wildlife conservation. Among the species of greatest conservation need are those familiar to all Montana residents, including the golden eagle, trumpeter swan and Arctic grayling.

Established in 1995, the Big Hole Watershed Committee is a group and central hub of diverse viewpoints on resource and community concerns. A consensus-based nonprofit organization dedicated to conservation of the Big Hole River and surrounding watershed, its work is comprehensive, spanning floodplains, communities, wildlife, water, and fisheries.

The Committee adopted a drought management plan that called for voluntary curtailments of irrigation water use and angling when the river dropped below target levels. The introduction of a relatively new U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service program called a Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances, or CCAA, in 2005 proved the perfect tool to get conservation measures on the ground to jumpstart the grayling's recovery.

The agreements created site-specific conservation plans tailor made to mesh with a rancher's operation to protect riparian habitat, improve in-stream flows, protect fish passage and keep fish from being lost in irrigation ditches. In return, ranchers who signed onto the program received peace of mind knowing they'd be protected should a judge decide that Arctic grayling belong on the endangered species list. Today, there are over 30 ranching families involved in the program that's been instrumental in doubling grayling populations and improving riparian habitat for dozens of other native species.

Although there have been great strides in conservation made for important species, without much needed funding, states won't be able to stay ahead of the pressures that keep pushing our fish and wildlife further toward becoming endangered.



Arctic Grayling



Golden Eagle

Working Together for the Future of all our Precious Resources

A lot is at stake if we don't act soon. Every American benefits when we have healthy and accessible fish and wildlife. We need to start down a new path where we invest proactively in conservation rather than reactively to avoid contentious endangered species battles that inhibit business, slow the economy and pass on the high cost of species recovery to the next generation.

We invite you to join us in our quest to advance a 21st century vision for conservation of our valuable natural resources. Please visit OurNatureUSA.com to write a letter to your U.S. Representative requesting their support for the Recovering America's Wildlife Act.



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