

119TH CONGRESS
2D 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

APRIL 2, 2026

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

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”.

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

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
9 date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary, in
10 coordination with the applicable Regional Flyway Council,

1 shall develop a regional management framework for the
2 take of double-crested cormorants for each region covered
3 by a Regional Flyway Council based on existing informa-
4 tion.

5 (b) REQUIREMENTS.—Each regional management
6 framework developed under subsection (a) shall—

7 (1) ensure the breeding population of double-
8 crested cormorants is maintained at a sustainable
9 level—

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

12 (B) beginning with the first update re-
13 quired by subsection (e), as informed by the
14 most recent survey carried out under subsection
15 (d);

16 (2) include, with respect to double-crested cor-
17 morants—

18 (A) allowed methods of take; and

19 (B) allowed time periods of take;

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

22 (A) State and Tribal agencies; and

23 (B) entities licensed or otherwise author-
24 ized in a manner the Secretary determines ap-
25 propriate, which shall include—

1 (i) State licensed or otherwise author-
2 ized hunters;

3 (ii) lake managers; and

4 (iii) pond managers;

5 (4) provide for—

6 (A) States and Indian Tribes to take spe-
7 cific management actions with respect to dou-
8 ble-crested cormorants in accordance with the
9 regional management framework; and

10 (B) the implementation of management ac-
11 tions identified under subsection (c); and

12 (5) account for the effects of an overabundant
13 population of double-crested cormorants on—

14 (A) fisheries;

15 (B) sensitive vegetation;

16 (C) populations of other migratory birds;

17 (D) human health and safety;

18 (E) water quality; and

19 (F) species listed as threatened species or
20 endangered species under section 4 of the En-
21 dangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C.
22 1533).

23 (c) INCORPORATION OF NATIONAL WILDLIFE REF-
24 UGE SYSTEM.—In developing each regional management
25 framework under subsection (a), the Secretary, in co-

1 operation with the heads of State and Tribal game and
2 fish agencies and the applicable Regional Flyway Council,
3 shall identify appropriate management actions that can be
4 taken within units of the National Wildlife Refuge System
5 to meet management objectives of States, Indian Tribes,
6 the Regional Flyway Councils, and such units with respect
7 to double-crested cormorants while fulfilling the primary
8 purposes of such units.

9 (d) POPULATION SURVEYS.—Not later than 5 years
10 after the date of the enactment of this section and every
11 5 years thereafter, the Secretary, in coordination with the
12 Regional Flyway Councils, shall carry out a survey of the
13 population of double-crested cormorants.

14 (e) UPDATES.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 years after
16 the date of the enactment of this section and every
17 5 years thereafter, the Secretary, in coordination
18 with the applicable Regional Flyway Council, shall
19 review and update each regional management frame-
20 work developed under subsection (a).

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

1 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

2 (1) DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT.—The term
3 “double-crested cormorant” means the species
4 *Nannopterum auritum*.

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

7 (A) the Atlantic Flyway Council;

8 (B) the Central Flyway Council;

9 (C) the Mississippi Flyway Council; and

10 (D) the Pacific Flyway Council.

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

15 (4) LAKE MANAGER.—The term “lake man-
16 ager” means a person that is licensed or otherwise
17 authorized by a State regulatory agency to manage
18 a private lake.

19 (5) MIGRATORY BIRD.—The term “migratory
20 bird” has the meaning given the term “migratory
21 birds” in section 11 of the Migratory Bird Conserva-
22 tion Act (16 U.S.C. 715j).

23 (6) POND MANAGER.—The term “pond man-
24 ager” means a person that is licensed or otherwise

1 authorized by a State regulatory agency to manage
2 a private pond.

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

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

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