

WILDLIFE INNOVATION AND LONGEVITY DRIVER  
REAUTHORIZATION ACT

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JANUARY 30, 2024.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State  
of the Union and ordered to be printed

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Mr. WESTERMAN, from the Committee on Natural Resources,  
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 5009]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Natural Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 5009) to reauthorize wildlife habitat and conservation programs, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE LEGISLATION

The purpose of H.R. 5009 is to reauthorize wildlife habitat and conservation programs, and for other purposes.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (Partners Program) “provides free technical and financial assistance to landowners, managers, tribes, corporations, schools and nonprofits interested in improving wildlife habitat on their land.”<sup>1</sup> The Partners Program was started by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in 1987 and authorized by Congress in 2006 as a part of the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Act.<sup>2</sup> The Partners Program is currently authorized at \$75 million annually, but has been funded by Congress at lower levels, with Congress appropriating \$60.2 million for the pro-

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<sup>1</sup>“Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program.” U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. <https://www.fws.gov/program/partners-fish-and-wildlife>.

<sup>2</sup>P.L. 109-294.

gram in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023.<sup>3</sup> In FY 2022, there were 1,847 projects completed across the country.<sup>4</sup> Since its inception, the Partners Program has restored more than 7 million acres of habitat, while leveraging private dollars at a 4:1 ratio compared to taxpayer dollars.<sup>5</sup>

The Multinational Species Conservation Fund (MSCF) is made up of five subaccounts: the African Elephant Conservation Fund, the Asian Elephant Conservation Fund, the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Fund, the Great Ape Conservation Fund, and the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund.<sup>6</sup> The Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Fund is authorized at \$10 million each fiscal year, with the other four funds each being authorized at \$5 million per fiscal year.<sup>7</sup> These programs also derive funding from the Multinational Species Conservation Fund Semipostal Stamp, with the sales proceeds from the stamp being divided equally among the funds.<sup>8</sup>

From 2015 to 2022, these funds have provided over \$92.5 million through grants and cooperative agreements for conservation projects, leveraging \$200 million in additional funds.<sup>9</sup> In FY 2023, Congress authorized \$21 million combined for the five funds and in FY 2024, the USFWS requested \$22 million (a \$200,000 increase for each fund).<sup>10</sup> The USFWS' stated intent for the requested increase is to fund more projects that increase habitat, decrease human-conflict, and reduce trafficking and poaching operations for the respective species.<sup>11</sup>

H.R. 5009 would reauthorize, at existing authorization of appropriations levels, the Partners Program and the programs that make up the MSCF through FY 2028. These programs expired at the end of FY 2023.

#### COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 5009 was introduced on July 27, 2023, by Rep. David P. Joyce (R-OH). The bill was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries. On October 18, 2023, the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries held a hearing on the bill. On October 26, 2023, the Committee on Natural Resources met to consider the bill. The Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 5009 by unanimous consent. H.R. 5009 was ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent.

#### HEARINGS

For the purposes of clause 3(c)(6) of House rule XIII, the following hearing was used to develop or consider this measure: hear-

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Justifications. <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fy2024-fws-greenbook.pdf-508.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup>*Id.*

<sup>5</sup>*Id.*

<sup>6</sup>*Id.*

<sup>7</sup>P.L. 116-9.

<sup>8</sup>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Justifications. <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fy2024-fws-greenbook.pdf-508.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup>*Id.*

<sup>10</sup>*Id.*

<sup>11</sup>*Id.*

ing by the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries held on October 18, 2023.

#### SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

##### *Section 1. Short title*

Section 1 establishes the short title of the bill as the “Wildlife Innovation and Longevity Driver reauthorization Act” or the “WILD Act.”

##### *Section 2. Partners for Fish and Wildlife Act*

Section 2 reauthorizes, at existing authorization levels, the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Act through FY 2028.

##### *Section 3. African Elephant Conservation Act*

Section 3 reauthorizes, at existing authorization levels, the African Elephant Conservation Act through FY 2028.

##### *Section 4. Asian Elephant Act of 1997*

Section 4 reauthorizes, at existing authorization levels, the Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997 through FY 2028.

##### *Section 5. Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994*

Section 5 reauthorizes, at existing authorization levels, the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994 through FY 2028.

##### *Section 6. Great Ape Conservation Act of 2000*

Section 6 reauthorizes, at existing authorization levels, the Great Ape Conservation Act of 2000 through FY 2028.

##### *Section 7. Marine Turtle Conservation Act of 2004*

Section 7 reauthorizes, at existing authorization levels, the Marine Turtle Conservation Act of 2004 through FY 2028.

#### COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Natural Resources’ oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

#### COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII AND CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT

1. *Cost of Legislation and the Congressional Budget Act.* With respect to the requirements of clause 3(c)(2) and (3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and sections 308(a) and 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the following estimate for the bill from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

<b>H.R. 5009, WILD Act</b>			
As ordered reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources on October 26, 2023			
By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2024	2024-2028	2024-2033
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	76	483	525
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2034?	No	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	No
		<b>Mandate Effects</b>	
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2034?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

H.R. 5009 would reauthorize the appropriation of \$75 million annually over the 2024–2028 period for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to implement the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program. The program provides grants to landowners to restore fish and wildlife habitats on private land. In 2023, USFWS allocated \$60 million for that program. The bill also would reauthorize the appropriation of \$30 million annually over the 2024–2028 period to support international efforts to conserve certain wild animals. In 2023, \$21 million was appropriated for those purposes. In addition, the bill would allow USFWS to provide multiyear grants for up to five years for those efforts. The costs of the multiyear grants would be covered by the bill’s authorized appropriations.

Using historical spending patterns for those programs and assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 5009 would cost \$483 million over the 2024–2028 period and \$42 million after 2028.

The costs of the legislation, detailed in Table 1, fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

TABLE 1.—ESTIMATED INCREASES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION UNDER H.R. 5009

	By fiscal year, millions of dollars—					
	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2024–2028
<b>Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program:</b>						
Authorization .....	75	75	75	75	75	375
Estimated Outlays .....	58	69	72	74	75	348
<b>Species Conservation Programs:</b>						
Authorization .....	30	30	30	30	30	150
Estimated Outlays .....	18	27	30	30	30	135
<b>Total:</b>						
Authorization .....	105	105	105	105	105	525
Estimated Outlays .....	76	96	102	104	105	483

On November 6, 2023, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for S. 2395, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works on July 26, 2023. The two bills are similar and CBO’s estimates of their budgetary effects are the same.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Lilia Ledezma. The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

PHILLIP L. SWAGEL,  
*Director, Congressional Budget Office.*

2. *General Performance Goals and Objectives.* As required by clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII, the general performance goal or objective of this bill is to reauthorize wildlife habitat and conservation programs, and for other purposes.

#### EARMARK STATEMENT

This bill does not contain any Congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined under clause 9(e), 9(f), and 9(g) of rule XXI of the rules of the House of Representatives.

#### UNFUNDED MANDATES REFORM ACT STATEMENT

According to the Congressional Budget Office, H.R. 5009 contains no unfunded mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

#### EXISTING PROGRAMS

*Directed Rule Making.* This bill does not contain any directed rule makings.

*Duplication of Existing Programs.* This bill does not establish or reauthorize a program of the federal government known to be duplicative of another program. Such program was not included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139 or identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance published pursuant to the Federal Program Information Act (Public Law 95–220, as amended by Public Law 98–169) as relating to other programs.

#### APPLICABILITY TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that the legislation does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act.

#### PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

Any preemptive effect of this bill over state, local, or tribal law is intended to be consistent with the bill's purposes and text and the Supremacy Clause of Article VI of the U.S. Constitution.

#### CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3(e) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italics, and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

**PARTNERS FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE ACT**

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**SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act not more than \$75,000,000 for each of fiscal years **[2019 through 2023]** *2024 through 2028*.

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**AFRICAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION ACT**

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**TITLE II—AFRICAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION**

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**PART I—AFRICAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE**

**SEC. 2101. PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may provide financial assistance under this part from the Fund for approved projects for research, conservation, management, or protection of African elephants.

(b) **PROJECT PROPOSAL.**—Any African government agency responsible for African elephant conservation and protection, the CITES Secretariat, and any organization or individual with experience in African elephant conservation may submit to the Secretary a project proposal under this section. Each such proposal shall contain—

- (1) the name of the person responsible for conducting the project;
- (2) a succinct statement of the need for and purposes of the project;
- (3) a description of the qualifications of the individuals who will be conducting the project;
- (4) an estimate of the funds and time required to complete the project;
- (5) evidence of support of the project by governmental entities of countries within which the project will be conducted, if such support may be important for the success of the project; and
- (6) any other information the Secretary considers to be necessary or appropriate for evaluating the eligibility of the project for funding under this title.

(c) **PROJECT REVIEW AND APPROVAL.**—The Secretary shall review each project proposal to determine if it meets the criteria set forth in subsection (d) and otherwise merits assistance under this title. Not later than six months after receiving a project proposal, and subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary shall approve or disapprove the proposal and provide written notification to the person who submitted the proposal.

(d) **CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL.**—The Secretary may approve a project under this section if the project will enhance programs for African elephant research, conservation, management, or protection by—

(1) developing in a usable form sound scientific information on African elephant habitat condition and carrying capacity, total elephant numbers and population trends, or annual reproduction and mortality; or

(2) assisting efforts—

(A) to ensure that any taking of African elephants in the country is effectively controlled and monitored;

(B) to implement conservation programs to provide for healthy, sustainable African elephant populations; or

(C) to enhance compliance with the CITES Ivory Control System.

(e) **PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY.**—To the maximum extent practical, in determining whether to approve project proposals under this section, the Secretary shall give consideration to projects that will enhance sustainable conservation programs to ensure effective long-term conservation of African elephants.

(f) **PROJECT REPORTING.**—Each entity that receives assistance under this section shall provide such periodic reports to the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service as the Director considers relevant and appropriate. Each report shall include all information requested by the Director for evaluating the progress and success of the project.

(g) **MULTIYEAR GRANTS.**—

(1) **AUTHORIZATION.**—*The Secretary may award to a person who is otherwise eligible for a grant under this section a multiyear grant of up to 5 years to carry out a project that the person demonstrates is an effective, long-term conservation strategy for African elephants and the habitat of African elephants.*

(2) **EFFECT.**—*Nothing in this subsection precludes the Secretary from awarding a grant on an annual basis.*

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### **PART III—MISCELLANEOUS**

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#### **SEC. 2306. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Fund and to the Secretary a total of not to exceed \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years **[2019 through 2023]** *2024 through 2028* to carry out this title, to remain available until expended.

(b) **ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.**—Of amounts available each fiscal year to carry out this title, the Secretary may expend not more than 3 percent or \$100,000, whichever is greater, to pay the administrative expenses necessary to carry out this title.

#### **ASIAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION ACT OF 1997**

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**SEC. 5. ASIAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary, subject to the availability of funds and in consultation with the Administrator, shall use amounts in the Fund to provide financial assistance for projects for the conservation of Asian elephants for which final project proposals are approved by the Secretary in accordance with this section.

(b) **PROJECT PROPOSAL.**—Any relevant wildlife management authority of a nation within the range of Asian elephants whose activities directly or indirectly affect Asian elephant populations, the CITES Secretariat, or any person with demonstrated expertise in the conservation of Asian elephants, may submit to the Secretary a project proposal under this section. Each proposal shall include the following:

- (1) The name of the individual responsible for conducting the project.
- (2) A succinct statement of the purposes of the project.
- (3) A description of the qualifications of the individuals who will conduct the project.
- (4) An estimate of the funds and time required to complete the project.
- (5) Evidence of support of the project by appropriate governmental entities of countries in which the project will be conducted, if the Secretary determines that the support is required for the success of the project.
- (6) Information regarding the source and amount of matching funding available to the applicant.
- (7) Any other information the Secretary considers to be necessary for evaluating the eligibility of the project for funding under this Act.

(c) **PROJECT REVIEW AND APPROVAL.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Within 30 days after receiving a final project proposal, the Secretary shall provide a copy of the proposal to the Administrator. The Secretary shall review each final project proposal to determine if it meets the criteria set forth in subsection (d).

(2) **CONSULTATION; APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL.**—Not later than 6 months after receiving a final project proposal, and subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary, after consulting with the Administrator, shall—

- (A) request written comments on the proposal from each country within which the project is to be conducted;
- (B) after requesting those comments, approve or disapprove the proposal; and
- (C) provide written notification of that approval or disapproval to the person who submitted the proposal and the Administrator.

(d) **CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL.**—The Secretary may approve a final project proposal under this section if the project will enhance programs for conservation of Asian elephants by assisting efforts to—

- (1) implement conservation programs;
- (2) address the conflicts between humans and elephants that arise from competition for the same habitat;
- (3) enhance compliance with provisions of CITES and laws of the United States or a foreign country that prohibit or regu-

late the taking or trade of Asian elephants or regulate the use and management of Asian elephant habitat;

(4) develop sound scientific information on the condition of Asian elephant habitat, Asian elephant population numbers and trends, or the threats to such habitat, numbers, or trends; or

(5) promote cooperative projects on those topics with other foreign governments, affected local communities, nongovernmental organizations, or others in the private sector.

(e) PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY.—To the maximum extent practical, in determining whether to approve project proposals under this section, the Secretary shall give consideration to projects which will enhance sustainable integrated conservation development programs to ensure effective, long-term conservation of Asian elephants.

(f) PROJECT REPORTING.—Each person who receives assistance under this section for a project shall provide periodic reports, as the Secretary considers necessary, to the Secretary and the Administrator. Each report shall include all information required by the Secretary, after consulting with the Administrator, for evaluating the progress and success of the project.

(g) MATCHING FUNDS.—In determining whether to approve project proposals under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to those projects for which there exists some measure of matching funds.

(h) LIMITATION ON USE FOR CAPTIVE BREEDING.—Amounts provided as a grant under this Act may not be used for captive breeding of Asian elephants other than for release in the wild.

(i) MULTIYEAR GRANTS.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION.—*The Secretary may award to a person who is otherwise eligible for a grant under this section a multiyear grant of up to 5 years to carry out a project that the person demonstrates is an effective, long-term conservation strategy for Asian elephants and the habitat of Asian elephants.*

(2) EFFECT.—*Nothing in this subsection precludes the Secretary from awarding a grant on an annual basis.*

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**SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Fund \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years **[2019 through 2023]** *2024 through 2028* to carry out this Act, which may remain available until expended.

(b) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Of amounts available each fiscal year to carry out this Act, the Secretary may expend not more than 3 percent or \$100,000, whichever is greater, to pay the administrative expenses necessary to carry out this Act.

**RHINOCEROS AND TIGER CONSERVATION ACT OF 1994**

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**SEC. 5. RHINOCEROS AND TIGER CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, subject to the availability of appropriations and in consultation with the Administrator, shall use

amounts in the Fund to provide financial assistance for projects for the conservation of rhinoceros and tigers.

(b) **PROJECT PROPOSAL.**—A country whose activities directly or indirectly affect rhinoceros or tiger populations, the CITES Secretariat, or any other person may submit to the Secretary a project proposal under this section. Each proposal shall—

- (1) name the individual responsible for conducting the project;
- (2) state the purposes of the project succinctly;
- (3) describe the qualifications of the individuals who will conduct the project;
- (4) estimate the funds and time required to complete the project;
- (5) provide evidence of support of the project by appropriate governmental entities of countries in which the project will be conducted, if the Secretary determines that the support is required for the success of the project; and
- (6) provide any other information the Secretary considers to be necessary for evaluating the eligibility of the project for funding under this Act.

(c) **PROJECT REVIEW AND APPROVAL.**—Within 30 days of receiving a final project proposal, the Secretary shall provide a copy of the proposal to the Administrator. The Secretary shall review each final project proposal to determine if it meets the criteria set forth in subsection (d). Not later than 6 months after receiving a final project proposal, and subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary, after consulting with the Administrator, shall approve or disapprove the proposal and provide written notification to the person who submitted the proposal and to the Administrator.

(d) **CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL.**—The Secretary may approve a project under this section if the project will enhance programs for conservation of rhinoceros or tigers by assisting efforts to—

- (1) implement conservation programs;
- (2) enhance compliance with provisions of CITES and laws of the United States or a foreign country that prohibit or regulate the taking or trade of rhinoceros or tigers or the use of rhinoceros or tiger habitat; or
- (3) develop sound scientific information on that species' habitat condition and carrying capacity, total numbers and population trends, or annual reproduction and mortality.

(e) **PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY.**—To the maximum extent practical, in determining whether to approve project proposals under this section, the Secretary shall give consideration to projects which will enhance sustainable conservation programs to ensure effective long-term conservation of rhinoceros and tigers.

(f) **PROJECT REPORTING.**—Each person that receives assistance under this section for a project shall provide periodic reports, as the Secretary considers necessary, to the Secretary and the Administrator. Each report shall include all information requested by the Secretary, after consulting with the Administrator, for evaluating the progress and success of the project.

(g) **MULTIYEAR GRANTS.**—

- (1) **AUTHORIZATION.**—*The Secretary may award to a person who is otherwise eligible for a grant under this section a multiyear grant of up to 5 years to carry out a project that the*

*person demonstrates is an effective, long-term conservation strategy for rhinoceroses or tigers and the habitat of rhinoceroses or tigers.*

*(2) EFFECT.—Nothing in this subsection precludes the Secretary from awarding a grant on an annual basis.*

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**SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Fund \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years **[2019 through 2023]** *2024 through 2028* to carry out this Act, to remain available until expended.

(b) **ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.**—Of amounts available each fiscal year to carry out this Act, the Secretary may expend not more than 3 percent or \$100,000, whichever is greater, to pay the administrative expenses necessary to carry out this Act.

**GREAT APE CONSERVATION ACT OF 2000**

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**SEC. 4. GREAT APE CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.** Subject to the availability of funds and in consultation with other appropriate Federal officials, the Secretary shall use amounts in the Fund to provide financial assistance for projects for the conservation of great apes for which project proposals are approved by the Secretary in accordance with this section.

(b) **PROJECT PROPOSALS.**—

(1) **ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.**—A proposal for a project for the conservation of great apes may be submitted to the Secretary by—

- (A) any wildlife management authority of a country that has within its boundaries any part of the range of a great ape if the activities of the authority directly or indirectly affect a great ape population;
- (B) the CITES Secretariat; or
- (C) any person or group with the demonstrated expertise required for the conservation of great apes.

(2) **REQUIRED ELEMENTS.**—A project proposal shall include—

- (A) a concise statement of the purposes of the project;
- (B) the name of the individual responsible for conducting the project;
- (C) a description of the qualifications of the individuals who will conduct the project;
- (D) a concise description of—
  - (i) methods for project implementation and outcome assessment;
  - (ii) staff and community management for the project; and
  - (iii) the logistics of the project;
- (E) an estimate of the funds and time required to complete the project;
- (F) evidence of support for the project by appropriate governmental entities of the countries in which the project

- will be conducted, if the Secretary determines that such support is required for the success of the project;
- (G) information regarding the source and amount of matching funding available for the project; and
- (H) any other information that the Secretary considers to be necessary for evaluating the eligibility of the project for funding under this Act.
- (c) PROJECT REVIEW AND APPROVAL.—
- (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—
- (A) not later than 30 days after receiving a project proposal, provide a copy of the proposal to other appropriate Federal officials; and
- (B) review each project proposal in a timely manner to determine if the proposal meets the criteria specified in subsection (d).
- (2) CONSULTATION; APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL.—Not later than 180 days after receiving a project proposal, and subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary, after consulting with other appropriate Federal officials, shall—
- (A) consult on the proposal with the government of each country in which the project is to be conducted;
- (B) after taking into consideration any comments resulting from the consultation, approve or disapprove the proposal; and
- (C) provide written notification of the approval or disapproval to the person who submitted the proposal, other appropriate Federal officials, and each country described in subparagraph (A).
- (d) CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL.—The Secretary may approve a project proposal under this section if the project will enhance programs for conservation of great apes by assisting efforts to—
- (1) implement conservation programs;
- (2) address the conflicts between humans and great apes that arise from competition for the same habitat;
- (3) enhance compliance with CITES and other applicable laws that prohibit or regulate the taking or trade of great apes or regulate the use and management of great ape habitat;
- (4) develop sound scientific information on, or methods for monitoring—
- (A) the condition and health of great ape habitat;
- (B) great ape population numbers and trends; or
- (C) the current and projected threats to the habitat, current and projected numbers, or current and projected trends;
- (5) promote cooperative projects on the issues described in paragraph (4) among government entities, affected local communities, nongovernmental organizations, or other persons in the private sector; or
- (6) address root causes of threats to great apes in range states, including illegal bushmeat trade, diseases, lack of regional or local capacity for conservation, and habitat loss due to natural disasters.
- (e) PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY.—To the maximum extent practicable, in determining whether to approve project proposals under this section, the Secretary shall give preference to conservation

projects that are designed to ensure effective, long-term conservation of great apes and their habitats.

(f) **MATCHING FUNDS.**—In determining whether to approve project proposals under this section, the Secretary shall give preference to projects for which matching funds are available.

(g) **PROJECT REPORTING.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Each person that receives assistance under this section for a project shall submit to the Secretary periodic reports (at such intervals as the Secretary considers necessary) that include all information that the Secretary, after consultation with other appropriate government officials, determines is necessary to evaluate the progress and success of the project for the purposes of ensuring positive results, assessing problems, and fostering improvements.

(2) **AVAILABILITY TO THE PUBLIC.**—Reports under paragraph (1), and any other documents relating to projects for which financial assistance is provided under this Act, shall be made available to the public.

(h) **LIMITATIONS ON USE FOR CAPTIVE BREEDING.**—Amounts provided as a grant under this Act—

(1) may not be used for captive breeding of great apes other than for captive breeding for release into the wild; and

(2) may be used for captive breeding of a species for release into the wild only if no other conservation method for the species is biologically feasible.

(i) **PANEL.**—

(1) **CONVENTION.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act, and every 5 years thereafter, the Secretary may convene a panel of experts on great apes to identify the greatest needs and priorities for the conservation of great apes.

(2) **COMPOSITION.**—The Secretary shall ensure that the panel referred to in paragraph (1) includes, to the maximum extent practicable, 1 or more representatives—

(A) from each country that comprises the natural range of great apes; and

(B) with expertise in great ape conservation.

(3) **CONSERVATION PLANS.**—In identifying the conservation needs and priorities under paragraph (1), the panel referred to in that paragraph shall consider any relevant great ape conservation plan or strategy, including scientific research and findings relating to—

(A) the conservation needs and priorities of great apes;

(B) any regional or species-specific action plan or strategy;

(C) any applicable strategy developed or initiated by the Secretary; and

(D) any other applicable conservation plan or strategy.

(4) **FUNDS.**—Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary may use amounts available to the Secretary to pay for the costs of convening and facilitating any meeting of the panel referred to in paragraph (1).

(5) APPLICABILITY OF CHAPTER 10 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE.—Chapter 10 of title 5, United States Code shall not apply to a panel convened under paragraph (1).

(j) MULTIYEAR GRANTS.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary may award to a person who is otherwise eligible for a grant under this section a multiyear grant of up to 5 years to carry out a project that the person demonstrates is an effective, long-term conservation strategy for great apes and the habitat of great apes.

(2) EFFECT OF SUBSECTION.—Nothing in this subsection precludes the Secretary from awarding a grant on an annual basis.

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**SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Fund \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years **[2019 through 2023]** *2024 through 2028*.

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**MARINE TURTLE CONSERVATION ACT OF 2004**

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**SEC. 4. CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of funds and in consultation with other Federal officials, the Secretary shall use amounts in the Fund to provide financial assistance for projects for the conservation of marine turtles, freshwater turtles, or tortoises for which project proposals are approved by the Secretary in accordance with this section.

(b) PROJECT PROPOSALS.—

(1) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.—A proposal for a project for the conservation of marine turtles, freshwater turtles, or tortoises may be submitted to the Secretary by—

(A) any wildlife management authority of a foreign country or territory of the United States that has within its boundaries marine turtle, freshwater turtle, or tortoise habitat, if the activities of the authority directly or indirectly affect marine turtle, freshwater turtle, or tortoise conservation; or

(B) any other person or group with the demonstrated expertise required for the conservation of marine turtles, freshwater turtles, or tortoises.

(2) REQUIRED ELEMENTS.—A project proposal shall include—

(A) a statement of the purposes of the project;

(B) the name of the individual with overall responsibility for the project;

(C) a description of the qualifications of the individuals that will conduct the project;

(D) a description of—

(i) methods for project implementation and outcome assessment;

(ii) staff and community management for the project; and

(iii) the logistics of the project;

- (E) an estimate of the funds and time required to complete the project;
  - (F) evidence of support for the project by appropriate governmental entities of the countries in which the project will be conducted, if the Secretary determines that such support is required for the success of the project;
  - (G) information regarding the source and amount of matching funding available for the project; and
  - (H) any other information that the Secretary considers to be necessary for evaluating the eligibility of the project for funding under this Act.
- (c) PROJECT REVIEW AND APPROVAL.—
- (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—
    - (A) not later than 30 days after receiving a project proposal, provide a copy of the proposal to other Federal officials, as appropriate; and
    - (B) review each project proposal in a timely manner to determine whether the proposal meets the criteria specified in subsection (d).
  - (2) CONSULTATION; APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL.—Not later than 180 days after receiving a project proposal, and subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary, after consulting with other Federal officials, as appropriate, shall—
    - (A) consult on the proposal with the government of each country and territory of the United States in which the project is to be conducted;
    - (B) after taking into consideration any comments resulting from the consultation, approve or disapprove the project proposal; and
    - (C) provide written notification of the approval or disapproval to the person that submitted the project proposal, other Federal officials, and each country and territory of the United States described in subparagraph (A).
- (d) CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL.—The Secretary may approve a project proposal under this section if the Secretary determines that the project will help to restore, recover, and sustain a viable population of marine turtles, freshwater turtles, or tortoises in the wild by assisting efforts in a foreign country or territory of the United States to implement a marine turtle, freshwater turtle, or tortoise conservation program.
- (e) PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY.—To the maximum extent practicable, in determining whether to approve project proposals under this section, the Secretary shall give preference to conservation projects that are designed to ensure effective, long-term conservation of marine turtles, freshwater turtles, or tortoises and the habitats of marine turtles, freshwater turtles, or tortoises.
- (f) MATCHING FUNDS.—In determining whether to approve project proposals under this section, the Secretary shall give preference to projects for which matching funds are available.
- (g) PROJECT REPORTING.—
- (1) IN GENERAL.—Each person that receives assistance under this section for a project shall submit to the Secretary periodic reports (at such intervals as the Secretary may require) that include all information that the Secretary, after consultation with other government officials, determines is necessary to

evaluate the progress and success of the project for the purposes of ensuring positive results, assessing problems, and fostering improvements.

(2) AVAILABILITY TO THE PUBLIC.—Reports under paragraph (1), and any other documents relating to projects for which financial assistance is provided under this Act, shall be made available to the public.

(h) MULTIYEAR GRANTS.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION.—*The Secretary may award to a person who is otherwise eligible for a grant under this section a multiyear grant of up to 5 years to carry out a project that the person demonstrates is an effective, long-term conservation strategy for marine turtles, freshwater turtles, or tortoises and the habitat of marine turtles, freshwater turtles, or tortoises.*

(2) EFFECT.—*Nothing in this subsection precludes the Secretary from awarding a grant on an annual basis.*

**SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Fund \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years ~~2019 through 2023~~ 2024 through 2028.

(b) ALLOCATION.—Of the amounts made available for each fiscal year pursuant to subsection (a)—

(1) not less than \$1,510,000 shall be used by the Secretary for marine turtle conservation purposes in accordance with this Act; and

(2) of the amounts in excess of the amount described in paragraph (1), not less than 40 percent shall be used by the Secretary for freshwater turtle and tortoise conservation purposes in accordance with this Act.

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