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119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4543

To create dedicated funds to conserve butterflies in North America, plants in the Pacific Islands, freshwater mussels in the United States, and desert fish in the Southwest United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 14, 2026

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. BOOKER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

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A BILL

To create dedicated funds to conserve butterflies in North America, plants in the Pacific Islands, freshwater mussels in the United States, and desert fish in the Southwest United States, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Extinction Prevention Act of 2026''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—NORTH AMERICA BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION ACT OF 2026

Sec. 101. Short title.
Sec. 102. Purposes.
Sec. 103. Definitions.
Sec. 104. North America butterfly conservation assistance.
Sec. 105. North America Butterfly Conservation Fund.
Sec. 106. Authorization of appropriations.
Sec. 107. Report to Congress.

TITLE II—PACIFIC ISLANDS PLANT CONSERVATION FUND ACT OF 2026

Sec. 201. Short title.
Sec. 202. Purposes.
Sec. 203. Definitions.
Sec. 204. Pacific Islands plant conservation assistance.
Sec. 205. Pacific Islands Plant Conservation Fund.
Sec. 206. Authorization of appropriations.
Sec. 207. Report to Congress.

TITLE III—FRESHWATER MUSSEL CONSERVATION FUND ACT OF 2026

Sec. 301. Short title.
Sec. 302. Purposes.
Sec. 303. Definitions.
Sec. 304. United States freshwater mussel conservation assistance.
Sec. 305. Freshwater Mussel Conservation Fund.
Sec. 306. Authorization of appropriations.
Sec. 307. Report to Congress.

TITLE IV—SOUTHWEST DESERT FISH CONSERVATION FUND ACT OF 2026

Sec. 401. Short title.
Sec. 402. Purposes.
Sec. 403. Definitions.
Sec. 404. Southwest desert fish conservation assistance.
Sec. 405. Southwest Desert Fish Conservation Fund.
Sec. 406. Authorization of appropriations.
Sec. 407. Report to Congress.

TITLE I—NORTH AMERICA BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION ACT OF 2026

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''North America Butterfly Conservation Fund Act of 2026''.

SEC. 102. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this title are—

(1) to perpetuate healthy populations of butterflies in North America;

(2) to assist in the conservation of threatened and endangered butterflies by supporting conservation initiatives in North America; and

(3) to provide financial resources and to foster international cooperation for those initiatives.

SEC. 103. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) NORTH AMERICA BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION.—The term ''North America butterfly conservation'' means the use of all methods and procedures necessary to protect habitats of butterflies in North America and of butterflies in those habitats, including—

(A) protection, restoration, and management of habitats;

(B) onsite research and monitoring of populations, habitats, annual reproduction, and butterfly species population trends;

(C) assistance in the development, implementation, and improvement of national and regional management plans;

(D) enforcement and implementation of applicable conservation laws; and

(E) community outreach and education.

(2) FUND.—The term ''Fund'' means the North America Butterfly Conservation Fund established by section 105.

(3) BUTTERFLY; BUTTERFLIES.—The terms ''butterfly'' and ''butterflies'' mean any member of the order Lepidoptera.

(4) NORTH AMERICA.—The term ''North America'' means the United States, Canada, Mexico, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 104. NORTH AMERICA BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE.

(a) ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, in consultation with other Federal officials, use amounts in the Fund to provide competitive financial assistance,

including multiyear grants, for North America butterfly conservation projects.

(2) USE OF EXISTING AUTHORITIES.—Assistance provided under this section shall be carried out in a manner consistent with authorities available to the Secretary under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

(b) PROJECT PROPOSALS.—

(1) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.—A proposal for a North America butterfly conservation project may be submitted to the Secretary under this section by—

(A) a State or Tribal agency, research institution, nonprofit organization, or wildlife management authority in North America that—

(i) exercises control or has jurisdiction over butterfly habitat; and

(ii) directly or indirectly affects North America butterfly conservation; or

(B) any other individual or entity, as the Secretary determines appropriate, with the demonstrated expertise required to carry out North America butterfly conservation.

(2) FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES.—A Federal agency may not be a lead entity or receive funding for a project under this section, but may be

included as a partner or collaborator on a project that receives such funding.

(3) REQUIRED ELEMENTS.—A project proposal submitted under this section shall include—

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

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

(C) a description of—

(i) the qualifications of the individual or entity that will conduct the project;

(ii) methods for project implementation and outcome assessment;

(iii) staffing and stakeholder engagement for the project, including mechanisms to encourage adequate local public participation in project development and implementation;

(iv) the logistics of the project, including cost estimates and timelines; and

(v) anticipated outcomes of the project;

(D) evidence of free, informed, and prior consent by indigenous communities in the area in which the project will be conducted, if the

Secretary determines that such consent is required for the success of the project;

(E) assurances that the project will be implemented in consultation with relevant wildlife management authorities, Tribes, and other appropriate government officials;

(F) demonstrated sensitivity to local historic and cultural resources and compliance with applicable laws;

(G) information that demonstrates the potential of the project to contribute to North America butterfly conservation;

(H) evidence of support for the project from each appropriate governmental entity of each country, Tribe, and indigenous community in which the project will be conducted, if the Secretary determines that such support is required for the success of the project;

(I) information regarding the source and amount of any matching funding available for the project; and

(J) such other information as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(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 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, the Secretary shall, after consulting with other Federal officials, as appropriate, with respect to each project proposal submitted under this section—

(A) consult on the project proposal with the government of each country in which the project is to be conducted;

(B) after taking into consideration any comments resulting from such consultation, approve or disapprove the project proposal; and

(C) provide written notification of the approval or disapproval to the individual or entity that submitted the project proposal, such other Federal officials, and each country described in subparagraph (A).

(d) CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may approve a project proposal under this section if the project will help recover and sustain viable populations of butterflies in the wild by assisting efforts to implement North America butterfly conservation programs.

(2) PRIORITY.—In selecting projects for approval, the Secretary shall give priority to projects that conserve species of butterflies that are listed as a threatened or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

(3) PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY.—To the maximum extent practicable, in determining whether to approve a project proposal under this section, the Secretary shall give preference to projects that are designed to ensure effective and long-term North America butterfly conservation.

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

(5) WAIVER.—The Secretary may waive the application of paragraphs (2), (3), or (4) with respect to a project if the Secretary—

(A) has identified the project as of high priority; and

(B) finds that such waiver is necessary to support the project.

(e) PROJECT REPORTING.—

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

(2) AVAILABILITY TO THE PUBLIC.—The Secretary shall make available to the public each report submitted under paragraph (1) and any other document relating to a project for which financial assistance is provided under this title.

SEC. 105. NORTH AMERICA BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION FUND.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury a separate account, to be known as the ''North America Butterfly Conservation Fund'', consisting of—

(1) amounts transferred to the Secretary for deposit into the Fund under subsection (e);

(2) amounts appropriated to the Fund under section 106; and

(3) any interest earned on investment of amounts in the Fund under subsection (c).

(b) EXPENDITURES FROM FUND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), at the request of the Secretary, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer from the Fund to the Secretary, without further appropriation, such amounts as the Secretary determines are necessary to carry out section 104.

(2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Of the amounts in the Fund available for each fiscal year, the Secretary may expend the greater of 3 percent of such amounts or $80,000 to pay the administrative expenses necessary to carry out this title.

(c) INVESTMENT OF AMOUNTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall invest such portion of the Fund as is not, in the judgment of the Secretary of the Treasury, required to meet current withdrawals. Such investments may be made only in interest-bearing obligations of the United States.

(2) ACQUISITION OF OBLIGATIONS.—For the purpose of investments under paragraph (1), obligations may be acquired—

(A) on original issue at the issue price; or

(B) by purchase of outstanding obligations at market price.

(3) SALE OF OBLIGATIONS.—Any obligation acquired by the Fund may be sold by the Secretary of the Treasury at market price.

(4) CREDITS TO FUND.—The interest on, and the proceeds from the sale or redemption of, any obligations held in the Fund shall be credited to and form a part of the Fund.

(d) TRANSFERS OF AMOUNTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer at least monthly the amounts required to be transferred to the Fund under this section from the general fund of the Treasury to the Fund on the basis of estimates made by the Secretary of the Treasury.

(2) ADJUSTMENTS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall make proper adjustment in amounts subsequently transferred to the extent prior estimates were in excess of or less than the amounts required to be transferred.

(e) ACCEPTANCE AND USE OF DONATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may accept for the Government a gift of any of the following to provide assistance under section 104:

(A) Money.

(B) An obligation of the Government included in the public debt made only on the condition that the obligation be canceled and retired and not reissued.

(C) Other intangible personal property made only on the condition that the property is sold on the best terms available and the proceeds are deposited in the Fund.

(2) DISCRETION TO REJECT A GIFT.—The Secretary may reject a gift under this section when the rejection is in the interest of the Government.

(3) TAXES.—If a gift received under this subsection is subject to a gift or inheritance tax, the Secretary may pay the tax out of the proceeds of the gift or the proceeds of the redemption or sale of the gift.

SEC. 106. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary $5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2032 to carry out this title.

SEC. 107. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 31 of each calendar year after the date of the enactment of this title, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report regarding the Fund and the status of butterflies in North America during the preceding calendar year.

(b) CONTENTS OF REPORTS.—Each report submitted under subsection (a) shall include, with respect to the calendar year for which such report is submitted—

(1) the total amount deposited into and expended from the Fund;

(2) the costs associated with carrying out this title;

(3) a summary of the projects for which the Secretary provided assistance under section 104 and an evaluation of such projects; and

(4) an evaluation of the status of threatened and endangered populations of butterflies in North America.

TITLE II—PACIFIC ISLANDS PLANT CONSERVATION FUND ACT OF 2026

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Pacific Islands Plant Conservation Fund Act of 2026''.

SEC. 202. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this title are—

(1) to assist in the conservation of threatened and endangered species of plants in the Pacific Islands; and

(2) to support and provide financial resources for projects to conserve such species of plants and the ecosystems of such species of plants and to address other threats to the survival of such species of plants.

SEC. 203. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) PACIFIC ISLANDS PLANT CONSERVATION.—The term ''Pacific Islands plant conservation'' means the use of all methods and procedures necessary to protect species of plants in the Pacific Islands including—

(A) protection, restoration, and management of ecosystems;

(B) onsite research and monitoring of populations, ecosystems, annual reproduction, and plant population trends;

(C) assistance in the development, implementation, and improvement of management plans;

(D) enforcement and implementation of applicable conservation laws; and

(E) community outreach and education.

(2) FUND.—The term ''Fund'' means the Pacific Islands Plant Conservation Fund established by section 205.

(3) PACIFIC ISLANDS.—The term ''Pacific Islands'' means the Hawaiian Islands and the United States territories of Guam, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

(4) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 204. PACIFIC ISLANDS PLANT CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE.

(a) ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, in consultation with other Federal officials, use amounts in the Fund to provide competitive financial assistance, including multiyear grants, for Pacific Islands plant conservation projects.

(2) USE OF EXISTING AUTHORITIES.—Assistance provided under this section shall be carried out in a manner consistent with authorities available to the Secretary under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

(b) PROJECT PROPOSALS.—

(1) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.—A project proposal for Pacific Islands plant conservation may be submitted to the Secretary under this section by a State, territory, or Tribal agency or any other individual or entity, as determined appropriate by the Secretary, with the expertise required to carry out Pacific Islands plant conservation.

(2) FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES.—A Federal agency may not be a lead entity or receive funding for a project under this section, but may be included as a partner or collaborator on a project that receives such funding.

(3) REQUIRED ELEMENTS.—A project proposal submitted under this section shall include—

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

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

(C) a description of—

(i) the qualifications of the individual or entity that will conduct the project;

(ii) methods for project implementation and outcome assessment;

(iii) staffing and stakeholder engagement for the project, including mechanisms to ensure adequate local public participation in project development and implementation;

(iv) the logistics of the project, including cost estimates and timelines;

(v) anticipated outcomes of the project; and

(vi) how the project will promote sustainable, effective, long-term programs to conserve plant populations on the Pacific Islands;

(D) assurances that the project will be implemented in consultation with relevant wildlife management authorities, Tribes, and other appropriate government officials;

(E) demonstrated sensitivity to local historic and cultural resources and compliance with applicable laws;

(F) information that demonstrates the potential of the project to contribute to Pacific Islands plant conservation;

(G) information regarding the source and amount of any matching funding available for the project; and

(H) such other information as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(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 to determine whether the proposal meets the criteria specified in subsection (d).

(2) CONSULTATION; APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL.—The Secretary shall, after consulting with other Federal officials, as appropriate, with respect to each project proposal submitted under this section—

(A) consult on the project proposal with the government of each State or territory in which such project is to be conducted;

(B) after taking into consideration any comments resulting from such consultation, approve or disapprove the project proposal; and

(C) provide written notification of the approval or disapproval to the individual or entity that submitted the project proposal, such other Federal officials, and each State or territory described in subparagraph (A).

(d) CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may approve a project proposal under this section if the project will help recover and sustain viable populations of threatened and endangered plants by assisting efforts to implement Pacific Islands plant conservation programs.

(2) PRIORITY.—In selecting projects for approval, the Secretary shall give priority to projects that conserve species of plants that are listed as a threatened or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

(3) PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY.—To the maximum extent practicable, in determining whether to approve a project proposal under this section, the Secretary shall give preference to projects that are designed to ensure effective and long-term Pacific Islands plant conservation.

(4) MATCHING FUNDS.—In determining whether to approve a project proposal under this section,

the Secretary shall give preference to projects for which matching funds are available.

(5) WAIVER.—The Secretary may waive the application of paragraphs (2), (3), or (4) with respect to a project if the Secretary—

(A) has identified the project as of high priority; and

(B) finds that such waiver is necessary to support the project.

(e) PROJECT REPORTING.—

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

(2) AVAILABILITY TO THE PUBLIC.—The Secretary shall make available to the public each report submitted under paragraph (1) and any other document relating to a project for which financial assistance is provided under this title.

SEC. 205. PACIFIC ISLANDS PLANT CONSERVATION FUND.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury a separate account, to be known as the ''Pacific Islands Plant Conservation Fund'', consisting of—

(1) amounts transferred to the Secretary for deposit into the Fund under subsection (e);

(2) amounts appropriated to the Fund under section 206; and

(3) any interest earned on investment of amounts in the Fund under subsection (c).

(b) EXPENDITURES FROM FUND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), at the request of the Secretary, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer from the Fund to the Secretary, without further appropriation, such amounts as the Secretary determines are necessary to carry out section 204.

(2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Of the amounts in the Fund available for each fiscal year, the Secretary may expend the greater of 3 percent of such amounts or $80,000 to pay the administrative expenses necessary to carry out this title.

(c) INVESTMENT OF AMOUNTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall invest such portion of the Fund as is not, in the judgment of the Secretary of the Treasury,

required to meet current withdrawals. Such investments may be made only in interest-bearing obligations of the United States.

(2) ACQUISITION OF OBLIGATIONS.—For the purpose of investments under paragraph (1), obligations may be acquired—

(A) on original issue at the issue price; or

(B) by purchase of outstanding obligations at market price.

(3) SALE OF OBLIGATIONS.—Any obligation acquired by the Fund may be sold by the Secretary of the Treasury at market price.

(4) CREDITS TO FUND.—The interest on, and the proceeds from the sale or redemption of, any obligations held in the Fund shall be credited to and form a part of the Fund.

(d) TRANSFERS OF AMOUNTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer at least monthly the amounts required to be transferred to the Fund under this section from the general fund of the Treasury to the Fund on the basis of estimates made by the Secretary of the Treasury.

(2) ADJUSTMENTS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall make proper adjustment in amounts

subsequently transferred to the extent prior estimates were in excess of or less than the amounts required to be transferred.

(e) ACCEPTANCE AND USE OF DONATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may accept for the Government a gift of any of the following to provide assistance under section 204:

(A) Money.

(B) An obligation of the Government included in the public debt made only on the condition that the obligation be canceled and retired and not reissued.

(C) Other intangible personal property made only on the condition that the property is sold on the best terms available and the proceeds are deposited in the Fund.

(2) DISCRETION TO REJECT A GIFT.—The Secretary may reject a gift under this section when the rejection is in the interest of the Government.

(3) TAXES.—If a gift received under this subsection is subject to a gift or inheritance tax, the Secretary may pay the tax out of the proceeds of the gift or the proceeds of the redemption or sale of the gift.

SEC. 206. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary $5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2032 to carry out this title.

SEC. 207. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 31 of each calendar year after the date of the enactment of this title, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report regarding the Fund and the status of species of plants in the Pacific Islands during the preceding calendar year.

(b) CONTENTS OF REPORTS.—Each report submitted under subsection (a) shall include with respect to the calendar year for which the report is submitted—

(1) the total amount deposited into and expended from the Fund;

(2) the costs associated with carrying out this title;

(3) a summary of the projects for which the Secretary provided assistance under section 204 and an evaluation of such projects; and

(4) an evaluation of the status of threatened and endangered populations of plants in the Pacific Islands.

TITLE III—FRESHWATER MUSSEL CONSERVATION FUND ACT OF 2026

SEC. 301. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Freshwater Mussel Conservation Fund Act of 2026''.

SEC. 302. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this title are—

(1) to assist in the conservation of threatened and endangered freshwater mussels and the habitats of such freshwater mussels in the United States; and

(2) to support and provide financial resources for projects to conserve such freshwater mussels and the habitats of such freshwater mussels and to address other threats to the survival of such freshwater mussels.

SEC. 303. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) UNITED STATES FRESHWATER MUSSEL CONSERVATION.—The term ''United States freshwater mussel conservation'' means the use of all methods and procedures necessary to protect habitats of freshwater mussel species in the United States and of the freshwater mussel species in those habitats, including—

(A) protection, restoration, and management of habitats;

(B) onsite research and monitoring of populations, habitats, annual reproduction, and freshwater mussel species population trends;

(C) assistance in the development, implementation, and improvement of national and regional management plans;

(D) enforcement and implementation of applicable conservation laws; and

(E) community outreach and education.

(2) FUND.—The term ''Fund'' means the Freshwater Mussel Conservation Fund established by section 305.

(3) FRESHWATER MUSSEL; FRESHWATER MUSSELS.—The terms ''freshwater mussel'' and ''freshwater mussels'' mean any member of the order Unioinida.

(4) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 304. UNITED STATES FRESHWATER MUSSEL CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE.

(a) ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, in consultation with other Federal officials, use amounts in

the Fund to provide competitive financial assistance, including multiyear grants, for United States freshwater mussel conservation projects.

(2) USE OF EXISTING AUTHORITIES.—Assistance provided under this section shall be carried out in a manner consistent with authorities available to the Secretary under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

(b) PROJECT PROPOSALS.—

(1) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.—A project proposal for United States freshwater mussel conservation may be submitted to the Secretary under this section by a State or Tribal agency, research institution, nonprofit organization, or any other individual or entity, as determined appropriate by the Secretary, with the expertise required to carry out United States freshwater mussel conservation.

(2) FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES.—A Federal agency may not be a lead entity or receive funding for a project under this section, but may be included as a partner or collaborator on a project that receives such funding.

(3) REQUIRED ELEMENTS.—A project proposal submitted under this section shall include—

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

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

(C) a description of—

(i) the qualifications of the individual or entity that will conduct the project;

(ii) methods for project implementation and outcome assessment;

(iii) staffing and stakeholder engagement for the project, including mechanisms to ensure adequate local public participation in project development and implementation;

(iv) the logistics of the project, including cost estimates and timelines;

(v) anticipated outcomes of the project; and

(vi) how the project will promote sustainable, effective, long-term programs to conserve freshwater mussels in the United States;

(D) assurances that the project will be implemented in consultation with relevant wildlife

management authorities, Tribes, and other appropriate government officials;

(E) demonstrated sensitivity to local historic and cultural resources and compliance with applicable laws;

(F) information that demonstrates the potential of the project to contribute to United States freshwater mussel conservation;

(G) information regarding the source and amount of any matching funding available for the project; and

(H) such other information as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(c) PROJECT REVIEW AND APPROVAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

(A) solicit project proposals for assistance under this section;

(B) provide a copy of each project proposal submitted in response to such solicitation to other Federal officials, as appropriate; and

(C) review each such proposal on a timeline that recognizes the urgency of the declining number of freshwater mussels in the United States to determine whether the pro-

posal meets the criteria specified in subsection (d).

(2) CONSULTATION; APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL.—The Secretary shall, after consulting with other Federal officials, as appropriate, with respect to each project proposal submitted under this section—

(A) consult on the project proposal with the government of each State in which the project is to be conducted;

(B) after taking into consideration any comments resulting from such consultation, approve or disapprove the project proposal; and

(C) provide written notification of the approval or disapproval to the individual or entity that submitted the project proposal, such other Federal officials, and each State described in subparagraph (A).

(d) CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may approve a project proposal under this section if the project shows promise for contributing to recovering and sustaining freshwater mussel populations in the wild in the United States.

(2) PRIORITY.—In selecting projects for approval, the Secretary shall give priority to projects that conserve species of freshwater mussels that are listed as a threatened or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

(3) PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY.—To the maximum extent practicable, in determining whether to approve a project proposal under this section, the Secretary shall give preference to projects that are designed to ensure effective and long-term United States freshwater mussel conservation.

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

(5) WAIVER.—The Secretary may waive the application of paragraphs (2), (3), or (4) with respect to a project if the Secretary—

(A) has identified the project as of high priority; and

(B) finds that such waiver is necessary to support the project.

(e) PROJECT REPORTING.—

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

(2) AVAILABILITY TO THE PUBLIC.—The Secretary shall make available to the public each report submitted under paragraph (1) and any other document relating to a project for which financial assistance is provided under this title.

SEC. 305. FRESHWATER MUSSEL CONSERVATION FUND.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury a separate account, to be known as the ''Freshwater Mussel Conservation Fund'', consisting of—

(1) amounts transferred to the Secretary for deposit into the Fund under subsection (e);

(2) amounts appropriated to the Fund under section 306; and

(3) any interest earned on investment of amounts in the Fund under subsection (c).

(b) EXPENDITURES FROM FUND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), at the request of the Secretary, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer from the Fund to the Secretary, without further appropriation, such amounts as the Secretary determines are necessary to carry out section 304.

(2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Of the amounts in the Fund available for each fiscal year, the Secretary may expend the greater of 3 percent of such amounts or $80,000 to pay the administrative expenses necessary to carry out this title.

(c) INVESTMENT OF AMOUNTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall invest such portion of the Fund as is not, in the judgment of the Secretary of the Treasury, required to meet current withdrawals. Such investments may be made only in interest-bearing obligations of the United States.

(2) ACQUISITION OF OBLIGATIONS.—For the purpose of investments under paragraph (1), obligations may be acquired—

(A) on original issue at the issue price; or

(B) by purchase of outstanding obligations at market price.

(3) SALE OF OBLIGATIONS.—Any obligation acquired by the Fund may be sold by the Secretary of the Treasury at market price.

(4) CREDITS TO FUND.—The interest on, and the proceeds from the sale or redemption of, any obligations held in the Fund shall be credited to and form a part of the Fund.

(d) TRANSFERS OF AMOUNTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer at least monthly the amounts required to be transferred to the Fund under this section from the general fund of the Treasury to the Fund on the basis of estimates made by the Secretary of the Treasury.

(2) ADJUSTMENTS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall make proper adjustment in amounts subsequently transferred to the extent prior estimates were in excess of or less than the amounts required to be transferred.

(e) ACCEPTANCE AND USE OF DONATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may accept for the Government a gift of any of the following to provide assistance under section 304:

(A) Money.

(B) An obligation of the Government included in the public debt made only on the condition that the obligation be canceled and retired and not reissued.

(C) Other intangible personal property made only on the condition that the property is sold on the best terms available and the proceeds are deposited in the Fund.

(2) DISCRETION TO REJECT A GIFT.—The Secretary may reject a gift under this section when the rejection is in the interest of the Government.

(3) TAXES.—If a gift received under this subsection is subject to a gift or inheritance tax, the Secretary may pay the tax out of the proceeds of the gift or the proceeds of the redemption or sale of the gift.

SEC. 306. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary $5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2032 to carry out this title.

SEC. 307. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 31 of each calendar year after the date of the enactment of this title, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report re-

garding the Fund and the status of freshwater mussels in the United States during the preceding calendar year.

(b) CONTENTS OF REPORTS.—Each such report shall include with respect to the calendar year for which the report is submitted—

(1) the total amount deposited into and expended from the Fund;

(2) the costs associated with carrying out this title;

(3) a summary of the projects for which the Secretary has provided assistance under section 304 and an evaluation of those projects; and

(4) an evaluation of the status of threatened and endangered populations of freshwater mussel in the United States.

TITLE IV—SOUTHWEST DESERT FISH CONSERVATION FUND ACT OF 2026

SEC. 401. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Southwest Desert Fish Conservation Fund Act of 2026''.

SEC. 402. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this title are—

(1) to assist in the conservation of threatened and endangered desert fish and the habitats of such desert fish in the Southwest; and

(2) to support and provide financial resources for projects to conserve such desert fish and the habitats of such desert fish and to address other threats to the survival of such desert fish species.

SEC. 403. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) SOUTHWEST DESERT FISH CONSERVATION.—The term ''Southwest desert fish conservation'' means the use of all methods and procedures necessary to protect habitats of desert fish species in the Southwest and of the desert fish species in those habitats, including—

(A) protection, restoration, and management of habitats;

(B) onsite research and monitoring of populations, habitats, annual reproduction, and desert fish species population trends;

(C) assistance in the development, implementation, and improvement of national and regional management plans;

(D) enforcement and implementation of applicable conservation laws; and

(E) community outreach and education.

(2) FUND.—The term ''Fund'' means the Southwest Desert Fish Conservation Fund established by section 405.

(3) DESERT FISH.—The term ''desert fish'' means any member of the class Osteichthyes living in a desert ecosystem.

(4) SOUTHWEST.—The term ''Southwest'' means the States of Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 404. SOUTHWEST DESERT FISH CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE.

(a) ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, in consultation with other Federal officials, use amounts in the Fund to provide competitive financial assistance, including multiyear grants, for Southwest desert fish conservation projects.

(2) USE OF EXISTING AUTHORITIES.—Assistance provided under this section shall be carried out in a manner consistent with authorities available to the Secretary under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

(b) PROJECT PROPOSALS.—

(1) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.—A project proposal for Southwest desert fish conservation may be submitted to the Secretary under this section by a State or Tribal agency, research institution, nonprofit organization, or any other individual or entity, as determined appropriate by the Secretary, with the expertise required to carry out Southwest desert fish conservation.

(2) FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES.—A Federal agency may not be a lead entity or receive funding for a project under this section, but may be included as a partner or collaborator on a project that receives such funding.

(3) REQUIRED ELEMENTS.—A project proposal submitted under this section shall include—

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

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

(C) a description of—

(i) the qualifications of the individual or entity that will conduct the project;

(ii) methods for project implementation and outcome assessment;

(iii) staffing and stakeholder engagement for the project, including mechanisms to ensure adequate local public participation in project development and implementation;

(iv) the logistics of the project, including cost estimates and timelines;

(v) anticipated outcomes of the project; and

(vi) how the project will promote sustainable, effective, long-term programs to conserve desert fish in the Southwest;

(D) assurances that the project will be implemented in consultation with relevant wildlife management authorities, Tribes, and other appropriate government officials;

(E) demonstrated sensitivity to local historic and cultural resources and compliance with applicable laws;

(F) information that demonstrates the potential of the project to contribute to Southwest desert fish conservation;

(G) information regarding the source and amount of any matching funding available for the project; and

(H) such other information as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(c) PROJECT REVIEW AND APPROVAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

(A) solicit project proposals for assistance under this section;

(B) provide a copy of each project proposal submitted in response to such solicitation to other Federal officials, as appropriate; and

(C) review each such proposal on a timeline that recognizes the urgency of the declining number of desert fish in the Southwest to determine whether the proposal meets the criteria specified in subsection (d).

(2) CONSULTATION; APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL.—The Secretary shall, after consulting with other Federal officials, as appropriate, with respect to each project proposal submitted under this section—

(A) consult with respect to the proposal with the government of each State in which the project is to be conducted;

(B) after taking into consideration any comments resulting from such consultation, approve or disapprove the project proposal; and

(C) provide written notification of the approval or disapproval to the individual or entity that submitted the proposal, such other Federal officials, and each State described in subparagraph (A).

(d) CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may approve a project proposal under this section if the project shows promise for contributing to recovering and sustaining desert fish populations in the wild in the Southwest.

(2) PRIORITY.—In selecting projects for approval, the Secretary shall give priority to projects that conserve threatened and endangered species of desert fish listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

(3) PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY.—To the maximum extent practicable, in determining whether to approve a project proposal under this section, the Secretary shall give preference to projects that are designed to ensure effective and long-term Southwest desert fish conservation.

(4) MATCHING FUNDS.—In determining whether to approve a project proposal under this section,

the Secretary shall give preference to projects for which matching funds are available.

(5) WAIVER.—The Secretary may waive the application of paragraph (2), (3), or (4) with respect to a project if the Secretary—

(A) has identified the project as of high priority; and

(B) finds that such waiver is necessary to support the project.

(e) PROJECT REPORTING.—

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

(2) AVAILABILITY TO THE PUBLIC.—The Secretary shall make available to the public each report submitted under paragraph (1) and any other document relating to a project for which financial assistance is provided under this title.

SEC. 405. SOUTHWEST DESERT FISH CONSERVATION FUND.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury a separate account, to be known as the ''Southwest Desert Fish Conservation Fund'', consisting of—

(1) amounts transferred to the Secretary for deposit into the Fund under subsection (e);

(2) amounts appropriated to the Fund under section 406; and

(3) any interest earned on investment of amounts in the Fund under subsection (c).

(b) EXPENDITURES FROM FUND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), at the request of the Secretary, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer from the Fund to the Secretary, without further appropriation, such amounts as the Secretary determines are necessary to carry out section 404.

(2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Of the amounts in the Fund available for each fiscal year, the Secretary may expend the greater of 3 percent of such amounts or $80,000 to pay the administrative expenses necessary to carry out this title.

(c) INVESTMENT OF AMOUNTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall invest such portion of the Fund as is not, in the judgment of the Secretary of the Treasury,

required to meet current withdrawals. Such investments may be made only in interest-bearing obligations of the United States.

(2) ACQUISITION OF OBLIGATIONS.—For the purpose of investments under paragraph (1), obligations may be acquired—

(A) on original issue at the issue price; or

(B) by purchase of outstanding obligations at market price.

(3) SALE OF OBLIGATIONS.—Any obligation acquired by the Fund may be sold by the Secretary of the Treasury at market price.

(4) CREDITS TO FUND.—The interest on, and the proceeds from the sale or redemption of, any obligations held in the Fund shall be credited to and form a part of the Fund.

(d) TRANSFERS OF AMOUNTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer at least monthly the amounts required to be transferred to the Fund under this section from the general fund of the Treasury to the Fund on the basis of estimates made by the Secretary of the Treasury.

(2) ADJUSTMENTS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall make proper adjustment in amounts

subsequently transferred to the extent prior estimates were in excess of or less than the amounts required to be transferred.

(e) ACCEPTANCE AND USE OF DONATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may accept for the Government a gift of any of the following to provide assistance under section 404:

(A) Money.

(B) An obligation of the Government included in the public debt made only on the condition that the obligation be canceled and retired and not reissued.

(C) Other intangible personal property made only on the condition that the property is sold on the best terms available and the proceeds are deposited in the Fund.

(2) DISCRETION TO REJECT A GIFT.—The Secretary may reject a gift under this section when the rejection is in the interest of the Government.

(3) TAXES.—If a gift received under this subsection is subject to a gift or inheritance tax, the Secretary may pay the tax out of the proceeds of the gift or the proceeds of the redemption or sale of the gift.

SEC. 406. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary $5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2032 to carry out this title.

SEC. 407. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 31 of each calendar year after the date of the enactment of this title, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report regarding the Fund and the status of desert fish in the Southwest during the preceding calendar year.

(b) CONTENTS OF REPORTS.—Each such report shall include with respect to the calendar year for which the report is submitted—

(1) the total amount deposited into and expended from the Fund;

(2) the costs associated with carrying out this title;

(3) a summary of the projects for which the Secretary has provided assistance under section 404 and an evaluation of those projects; and

(4) an evaluation of the status of threatened and endangered populations of desert fish in the Southwest.

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