

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9776

To provide for the conservation of wildlife corridors and habitat connectivity,
and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 24, 2024

Mr. BEYER (for himself, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Ms. LOFGREN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To provide for the conservation of wildlife corridors and
habitat connectivity, and for other purposes.

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; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Wildlife Corridors and Habitat Connectivity Conserva-
6 tion Act of 2024”.

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

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Findings and purposes.
- Sec. 3. Definitions.

TITLE I—SCIENCE AND MAPPING OF WILDLIFE CORRIDORS AND
HABITAT CONNECTIVITY

- Sec. 101. Program establishment.

TITLE II—COLLABORATION, PARTNERSHIP, AND CONSERVATION
OF AMERICAN WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

- Sec. 201. Designation of American wildlife corridors.
- Sec. 202. Management of American wildlife corridors.
- Sec. 203. Resource sharing and coordination.
- Sec. 204. Coordinating Committee.
- Sec. 205. Effect.

TITLE III—TRIBAL WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

- Sec. 301. Tribal Wildlife Corridors.

TITLE IV—WILDLIFE CORRIDOR GRANT PROGRAM ON NON-
FEDERAL LAND AND WATER

- Sec. 401. Wildlife corridor grant program.

TITLE V— FUNDING

- Sec. 501. Authorization of appropriations.

1 SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

2 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

3 (1) the native fish, wildlife, and plant species in
4 the United States are part of a rich natural heritage
5 and an important legacy to pass on to future genera-
6 tions;

7 (2) the populations of many native fish, wildlife,
8 and plant species in the United States are in decline;

9 (3) scientists estimate that, in the United
10 States, 34 percent of plants and 40 percent of ani-
11 mals are at risk of extinction and 41 percent of eco-
12 systems are at risk of range-wide collapse;

1 (4) threats to the survival and diversity of
2 many native fish, wildlife, and plant species in the
3 United States include the loss, degradation, frag-
4 mentation, and obstruction of natural habitats;

5 (5) habitat fragmentation reduces native bio-
6 diversity by up to 75 percent and impairs key eco-
7 system functions;

8 (6) climate change threatens native fish, wild-
9 life, and plant species;

10 (7) the document published by the Intergovern-
11 mental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and
12 Ecosystem Services titled “Global assessment report
13 on biodiversity and ecosystem services” (2019)
14 found that—

15 (A) 1,000,000 wildlife and plant species
16 worldwide are now threatened with extinction;
17 and

18 (B) 75 percent of the land-based environ-
19 ment, and approximately 66 percent of the ma-
20 rine environment, have been significantly al-
21 tered by human actions;

22 (8) the conservation of new and existing land-
23 scape and seascape corridors, through which native
24 species can transition from 1 habitat to another,
25 plays an important role in helping—

1 (A) to conserve native biodiversity; and

2 (B) to ensure resiliency against impacts
3 from a range of biotic and abiotic stressors;

4 (9) the conservation, restoration, and establish-
5 ment of new ecological connections to facilitate the
6 movement of species into more suitable habitats is a
7 key climate change adaptation strategy;

8 (10) the protection of new and existing cor-
9 ridors is often 1 of the first steps in restoration and
10 recovery planning;

11 (11) States have recognized the importance of
12 habitat connectivity, including through—

13 (A) at least 83 pieces of State legislation
14 passed in 20 States since 2019, which have
15 supported actions including identification of
16 wildlife corridors and coordination of State
17 agencies, Tribes, non-governmental organiza-
18 tions, and other partners to address habitat
19 connectivity issues;

20 (B) a New England Governors and East-
21 ern Canadian Premiers' Conference on the im-
22 portance of connectivity for ecosystem adapt-
23 ability and resilience, biodiversity, and human
24 communities; and

1 (C) a Western Governors’ Association pol-
2 icy resolution;

3 (12) the document published by the Council on
4 Environmental Quality titled “Guidance for Federal
5 Departments and Agencies on Ecological
6 Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors” (March 21,
7 2023) acknowledges that “connectivity is vital to
8 ecosystem health and functions” and “it is signifi-
9 cant to humans as well and supports the strong cul-
10 tural and spiritual connections that communities
11 have to nature”;

12 (13) Federal and State agencies continue to de-
13 velop policies to address—

14 (A) the importance of conserving fish,
15 wildlife, and plant corridors;

16 (B) the gap between science and manage-
17 ment for at-risk species; and

18 (C) ecological connectivity; and

19 (14) Federal policies consistently recognize the
20 importance of voluntary improvement projects by
21 private landowners to habitat conservation and res-
22 toration for native species.

23 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

24 (1) to support a diverse array of fish and wild-
25 life, including species conserved under Federal,

1 State, and Tribal law, that have experienced or may
2 experience habitat loss, degradation, fragmentation,
3 or obstruction to habitat connectivity;

4 (2) to provide long-term habitat connectivity for
5 fish and wildlife migration, dispersal, genetic ex-
6 change, and adaptation to climate and other envi-
7 ronmental change;

8 (3) to restore fish and wildlife movements that
9 have been disrupted by habitat loss, degradation,
10 fragmentation, or obstruction;

11 (4) to facilitate coordinated landscape- and
12 seascape-scale connectivity planning and manage-
13 ment across jurisdictions; and

14 (5) to support in prioritizing, establishing, and
15 managing wildlife corridors and habitat connectivity
16 areas.

17 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

18 In this Act:

19 (1) **COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP.**—The term
20 “collaborative partnership” means a collaborative
21 partnership established under section 203(a).

22 (2) **COORDINATING COMMITTEE.**—The term
23 “Coordinating Committee” means Coordinating
24 Committee established under section 204(a).

1 (3) AMERICAN WILDLIFE CORRIDOR.—The term
2 “American wildlife corridor” means a corridor des-
3 ignated by the Secretary concerned under section
4 201(b).

5 (4) HABITAT.—The term “habitat” means
6 land, water, and substrate necessary at any time
7 during the life cycle of fish and wildlife for spawn-
8 ing, breeding, feeding, growth to maturity, or migra-
9 tion.

10 (5) HABITAT CONNECTIVITY.—The term “habi-
11 tat connectivity” means the degree to which the
12 landscape (including terrestrial, riparian, and aquat-
13 ic habitats) or seascape facilitates fish and wildlife
14 movement.

15 (6) HABITAT CONNECTIVITY AREA.—The term
16 “habitat connectivity area” means an identified, dis-
17 tinct component of the natural world in the United
18 States that provides habitat connectivity, a migra-
19 tion route, seasonal habitat, or a dispersal area to
20 a native species.

21 (7) INDIAN LAND.—The term “Indian land”
22 means land of an Indian Tribe, or an Indian indi-
23 vidual, that is—

24 (A) held in trust by the United States; or

1 (B) subject to a restriction against alien-
2 ation imposed by the United States.

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

7 (9) MILITARY INSTALLATION.—The term “mili-
8 tary installation” has the meaning given the term in
9 section 100 of the Sikes Act (16 U.S.C. 670), and
10 includes military off-shore range complexes and off-
11 shore operating areas.

12 (10) REGIONAL OCEAN PARTNERSHIP.—The
13 term “regional ocean partnership” means a regional
14 organization of coastal or Great Lakes States, terri-
15 tories, or possessions voluntarily convened by Gov-
16 ernors to address cross-jurisdictional ocean matters,
17 or the functional equivalent of such a regional ocean
18 organization designated by the Governor or Gov-
19 ernors of a State or States.

20 (11) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—

21 (A) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—The term
22 “Secretary concerned” means the Secretary
23 with applicable jurisdiction from among the fol-
24 lowing:

25 (i) The Secretary of the Interior.

1 (ii) The Secretary of Transportation.

2 (iii) The Secretary of Agriculture, act-
3 ing through the Chief of the Forest Serv-
4 ice.

5 (iv) The Secretary of Commerce, act-
6 ing through the Administrator of the Na-
7 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Adminis-
8 tration.

9 (v) The Secretary of Defense.

10 (B) SECRETARIES.—The term “Secre-
11 taries” means each of the Secretaries described
12 in subparagraph (A).

13 (12) TRIBAL WILDLIFE CORRIDOR.—The term
14 “Tribal wildlife corridor” means a corridor estab-
15 lished by the Secretary under section 301.

16 (13) UNITED STATES.—The term “United
17 States”, when used in a geographical sense,
18 means—

19 (A) a State;

20 (B) the District of Columbia;

21 (C) the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico;

22 (D) Guam;

23 (E) American Samoa;

24 (F) the Commonwealth of the Northern
25 Mariana Islands;

- 1 (G) the Federated States of Micronesia;
2 (H) the Republic of the Marshall Islands;
3 (I) the Republic of Palau;
4 (J) the United States Virgin Islands; and
5 (K) all marine waters within the jurisdic-
6 tion of the United States.

7 (14) WILDLIFE MOVEMENT.—The term “wild-
8 life movement” means the passage of individual
9 members or populations of a native fish, wildlife, or
10 plant species across a landscape or seascape.

11 **TITLE I—SCIENCE AND MAPPING**
12 **OF WILDLIFE CORRIDORS**
13 **AND HABITAT CONNECTIVITY**

14 **SEC. 101. PROGRAM ESTABLISHMENT.**

15 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Director shall establish
16 and maintain a habitat connectivity area mapping and
17 science program to carry out this section.

18 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the program is to de-
19 velop mapping and science to support Federal, State,
20 local, and Tribal governments and the public in efforts to
21 protect habitat connectivity areas.

22 (c) WILDLIFE MOVEMENT, MIGRATION, AND HABI-
23 TAT CONNECTIVITY MAPPING.—

24 (1) MAPPING EFFORTS.—The Director shall ex-
25 pand and build upon existing agency efforts to map

1 fish and wildlife habitat connectivity areas. Such ef-
2 forts shall include working with, incorporating data
3 from, and sharing data between—

4 (A) Federal agencies;

5 (B) State, Tribal, and local governments;

6 (C) nongovernmental organizations; and

7 (D) academic institutions.

8 (2) USE OF TECHNOLOGY.—The Director
9 shall—

10 (A) use new data management, visualiza-
11 tion, and analysis capabilities to analyze fish
12 and wildlife movements and delineate habitat
13 connectivity areas; and

14 (B) share these capabilities with Federal,
15 State, local, and Tribal wildlife managers.

16 (3) DISTRIBUTION OF MAPS.—The Director
17 shall develop and make available to the public—

18 (A) a database of fish and wildlife habitat
19 connectivity areas; and

20 (B) maps of habitat connectivity areas and
21 American wildlife corridors to guide land-use
22 planning and on-the-ground management of
23 fish and wildlife resources.

24 (4) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the
25 date of the enactment of this section, the Director

1 shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources
2 of the House of Representatives and the Committee
3 on Environment and Public Works of the Senate a
4 report that—

5 (A) provides an assessment of existing
6 maps, data, models, surveys, and descriptions of
7 habitat connectivity areas that have been devel-
8 oped by—

9 (i) Federal, State, Tribal, and local
10 fish and wildlife agencies and natural her-
11 itage programs;

12 (ii) nongovernmental organizations;

13 and

14 (iii) industry; and

15 (B) identifies gaps in information about
16 native species wildlife corridors or habitat
17 connectivity areas.

18 (5) PROPRIETARY INTERESTS AND PROTECTED
19 INFORMATION.—In carrying out this section, the Di-
20 rector shall—

21 (A) protect proprietary interests with re-
22 spect to confidential information and licensed
23 data; and

24 (B) protect such information relating to
25 the habitats and ranges of specific native fish

1 and wildlife as the Director determines appro-
2 priate to protect such fish and wildlife.

3 (d) WILDLIFE MOVEMENT, MIGRATION, AND HABI-
4 TAT CONNECTIVITY RESEARCH.—The Director shall con-
5 duct research to help guide management of habitat
6 connectivity areas, including—

7 (1) a study to evaluate the impacts of climate
8 change on habitat connectivity areas and forecast
9 how habitat connectivity areas and American wildlife
10 corridors may need to shift to allow fish and wildlife
11 to adapt;

12 (2) a study to quantify the effect of ongoing
13 and planned development on habitat connectivity
14 areas and American wildlife corridors;

15 (3) a study to develop new mapping methods to
16 prioritize critical wildlife corridors or habitat
17 connectivity areas; and

18 (4) a study to evaluate the effectiveness of ef-
19 forts to address habitat fragmentation and mitiga-
20 tion barriers to fish and wildlife movement and mi-
21 gration through habitat connectivity areas.

22 (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

23 (1) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means
24 the Director of the United States Geological Survey.

1 (2) PROGRAM.—The term “program” means
2 the habitat connectivity area mapping and science
3 program established by the Director under sub-
4 section (a).

5 **TITLE II—COLLABORATION,**
6 **PARTNERSHIP, AND CON-**
7 **SERVATION OF AMERICAN**
8 **WILDLIFE CORRIDORS**

9 **SEC. 201. DESIGNATION OF AMERICAN WILDLIFE COR-**
10 **RIDORS.**

11 (a) NOMINATIONS.—

12 (1) PARTNER AGENCIES NOMINATIONS.—State,
13 Tribal, and local governments and collaborative part-
14 nerships may nominate Federal lands and waters as
15 American wildlife corridors.

16 (2) COORDINATING COMMITTEE NOMINA-
17 TIONS.—The Coordinating Committee shall, not
18 later than 2 years after the date on which the Co-
19 ordinating Committee is established and not less fre-
20 quently than every 5 years thereafter, nominate
21 habitat connectivity areas to be designated as Amer-
22 ican wildlife corridors.

23 (b) DESIGNATION OF AMERICAN WILDLIFE COR-
24 RIDORS.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries shall review
2 each habitat connectivity area within the jurisdiction
3 of the Secretaries, giving priority to areas nominated
4 under subsection (a), and designate habitat
5 connectivity areas as a American wildlife corridors
6 according to the criteria established under sub-
7 section (d).

8 (2) NOMINATED AREAS.—With respect to any
9 area for which the Secretary concerned receives a
10 nomination under subsection (a), the Secretary con-
11 cerned shall make a determination under paragraph
12 (1) not later than 1 year after the date on which the
13 Secretary concerned receives such nomination.

14 (c) MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE CORRIDORS AND
15 HABITAT CONNECTIVITY AREAS.—Not later than 6
16 months after a designation under subsection (b), the Sec-
17 retaries shall make such land use and management plans
18 (or revisions of existing such plans) as the Secretaries de-
19 termine appropriate to carry out the purposes of this Act.

20 (d) PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA.—The Secretaries
21 shall establish criteria to determine which habitat
22 connectivity areas to designate as American wildlife cor-
23 ridors. Such criteria shall include—

24 (1) whether such designation is in concert with
25 existing—

1 (A) Federal land and resource manage-
2 ment plans and the ongoing management activi-
3 ties for wildlife corridors or habitat connectivity
4 areas on Federal lands and waters;

5 (B) State, Tribal, and collaborative part-
6 nership management plans; and

7 (C) Tribal wildlife corridors;

8 (2) the use of the best available science relating
9 to—

10 (A) existing fish and wildlife habitat
11 connectivity areas; and

12 (B) potential future native species habitats
13 connectivity areas; and

14 (3) whether the unit of land or water is a pri-
15 ority for conservation and restoration because the
16 area—

17 (A) provides habitat connectivity and sup-
18 ports the persistence, resilience, adaptability,
19 and movement of fish and wildlife;

20 (B) has the potential to benefit more than
21 1 species of fish and wildlife; or

22 (C) has the potential to benefit a fish or
23 wildlife species that is listed as a threatened
24 species or an endangered species under the En-

1 (5) providing education and outreach regarding
2 the benefits of American wildlife corridors and habi-
3 tat connectivity areas.

4 (b) COORDINATED MANAGEMENT.—Not later than 2
5 years after the date of the enactment of this section, each
6 of the Secretaries shall update all relevant regulations, or-
7 ders, guidance documents, policies, instructions, manuals,
8 directives, notices, implementing actions, and other rel-
9 evant documents and procedures to support the manage-
10 ment and long-term conservation of habitat connectivity
11 areas.

12 (c) LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN REVI-
13 SION.—The Secretaries shall, during each land use or re-
14 source plan review, amend or revise each such plan to—

15 (1) conserve, restore, and manage habitat
16 connectivity areas;

17 (2) consider designating the land or water as a
18 American wildlife corridor under section 201(b).

19 (d) MULTIPLE JURISDICTIONS.—The Secretaries
20 shall carry out conservation and restoration activities in
21 American wildlife corridors that are subject to the jurisdic-
22 tion of more than 1 of the Secretaries in consultation with
23 each of the Secretaries concerned.

24 (e) ROAD MITIGATION.—In the case of American
25 wildlife corridors that intersect, adjoin, or cross a new or

1 existing State, Tribal, or local road or highway, the Secre-
2 taries shall consult with State, Tribal, and local transpor-
3 tation agencies, as appropriate, to identify and implement
4 voluntary environmental mitigation measures—

5 (1) to improve public safety and reduce vehicle-
6 caused fish and wildlife mortality while conserving or
7 restoring habitat connectivity; and

8 (2) to mitigate damage to the natural move-
9 ments of fish and wildlife through strategies includ-
10 ing—

11 (A) the construction, maintenance, or re-
12 placement of fish and wildlife underpasses,
13 overpasses, culverts, fences, and other mitiga-
14 tion measures; and

15 (B) the maintenance, replacement, or re-
16 moval of dams, bridges, culverts, and other
17 hydrological obstructions.

18 (f) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 2 years
19 after the date of the enactment of this section, and not
20 less frequently than every 5 years thereafter, the Coordi-
21 nating Committee shall submit to Congress a report re-
22 garding the efforts of the Secretaries to carry out this Act
23 and the effect of such efforts on the conservation and
24 management of habitat connectivity, seasonal habitat,
25 wildlife movement, and migration routes on Federal land

1 and water, including the following with respect to Federal
2 land and waters:

3 (1) A description of existing management prac-
4 tices relating to the purposes of this Act.

5 (2) An inventory of known wildlife movement
6 structures and fish passage projects.

7 (3) A description of short- and long-term
8 threats to wildlife corridors or habitat connectivity
9 areas.

10 (4) A description of opportunities to conserve
11 and improve the quality and condition of habitat
12 connectivity, seasonal habitat, dispersal areas, wild-
13 life movement, and migration routes.

14 (5) A description of opportunities to coordinate
15 State, Tribal, and local governments and collabo-
16 rative partnership efforts to carry out this Act with
17 other landscape-scale conservation plans.

18 (6) Strategies for climate adaptation and resil-
19 ience with respect to habitat connectivity, seasonal
20 habitat, wildlife movement, and migration routes.

21 (7) A description of opportunities to expand
22 partnerships with State, Tribal, and local govern-
23 ments, collaborative partnerships, and the public to
24 carry out the purposes of this Act.

1 (8) A description of current transportation pro-
2 grams, funding mechanisms and other authorities
3 that could be used to conserve and improve habitat
4 connectivity, seasonal habitat, dispersal areas, wild-
5 life movement, and migration routes.

6 **SEC. 203. RESOURCE SHARING AND COORDINATION.**

7 (a) **COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS.**—

8 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretaries may estab-
9 lish collaborative partnerships with entities described
10 in paragraph (3) that are balanced, multistakeholder
11 groups that are transparent, nonexclusive, and rea-
12 sonably representative of affected interests to fur-
13 ther the purposes of this Act that—

14 (A) establish agreement on—

15 (i) the role of Federal, State, Tribal,
16 and local governments agencies;

17 (ii) how the Secretary concerned will
18 coordinate efforts to conserve, restore, and
19 manage habitat connectivity areas; and

20 (B) identify regional liaisons to represent
21 the collective Federal agencies in working with
22 State, Tribal, and local governments, collabo-
23 rative partnerships, and the public to carry out
24 such conservation, restoration, and manage-
25 ment; and

1 (2) COORDINATORS.—The Secretaries shall
2 each appoint a national-level coordinator to work
3 with the regional liaisons identified under paragraph
4 (1)(B) and monitor implementation of the efforts of
5 collaborative partnerships.

6 (3) ENTITIES DESCRIBED.—The entities de-
7 scribed in this paragraph are the following:

8 (A) Voluntary private landowners.

9 (B) Nonprofit organizations.

10 (C) Federal, State, Tribal, and local agen-
11 cies.

12 (D) Elected officials.

13 (E) Stakeholder groups.

14 (b) RESOURCE SHARING.—The Secretaries shall
15 partner with, and provide technical assistance and other
16 resources to, State, Tribal, and local governments, collabo-
17 rative partnerships, and voluntary private landowners to
18 support the purposes of this Act.

19 (c) CONSULTATION.—The Secretaries shall imple-
20 ment this title in consultation with—

21 (1) other relevant Federal agencies through the
22 Coordinating Committee;

23 (2) State, Tribal, and local governments, in-
24 cluding fish and wildlife, natural resource manage-
25 ment, and transportation agencies;

1 (3) with respect to any action that directly af-
2 fects a private landowner, such private landowner;

3 (4) such other stakeholders as the Secretaries
4 determine appropriate; and

5 (5) landscape- and seascape-scale partnerships,
6 including—

7 (A) National Fish Habitat Partnerships;

8 (B) the Regional Fishery Management
9 Councils established under section 302(a) of the
10 Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and
11 Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1852(a));

12 (C) relevant regional ocean partnerships;

13 (D) the Climate Science Centers of the De-
14 partment of the Interior;

15 (E) Migratory Bird Joint Ventures; and

16 (F) the Landscape Conservation Coopera-
17 tive Network.

18 **SEC. 204. COORDINATING COMMITTEE.**

19 (a) COORDINATING COMMITTEE.—Not later than
20 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section,
21 the Secretaries shall establish a coordinating committee
22 composed of representatives of the Secretaries.

23 (b) STRATEGY FOR PRIORITIZATION.—Not later than
24 1 year after the date on which the Coordinating Com-

1 mittee is established, the Coordinating Committee shall
2 develop a strategy—

3 (1) for nominating American wildlife corridors
4 for designation under section 203(a);

5 (2) to support the fulfillment of the purposes of
6 this Act;

7 (3) to ensure coordination and consistency with
8 Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments and
9 collaborative partnerships in conserving wildlife cor-
10 ridors or habitat connectivity areas;

11 (4) to provide education or outreach regarding
12 the benefits of wildlife corridors or habitat
13 connectivity areas; and

14 (5) such other measures as the Coordinating
15 Committee determines necessary for implementation
16 of this Act.

17 **SEC. 205. EFFECT.**

18 (a) JURISDICTION OF STATES AND INDIAN
19 TRIBES.—Nothing in this title affects the jurisdiction of
20 a State or an Indian Tribe with respect to fish and wildlife
21 management, including the regulation of hunting, fishing,
22 and trapping, in a American wildlife corridor or a Tribal
23 Wildlife Corridor.

24 (b) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section au-
25 thorizes—

1 (1) any seizure of private property through emi-
2 nent domain; or

3 (2) the imposition of any restriction on the use
4 of private land without the consent of the landowner.

5 (c) DEFENSE WAIVERS.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense
7 may waive any requirement of this title with respect
8 to a military installation if such Secretary deter-
9 mines that such waiver is necessary—

10 (A) to ensure the preparedness of the
11 Armed Forces; or

12 (B) to support the military mission of the
13 military installation.

14 (2) PUBLIC NOTICE.—The Secretary of Defense
15 shall publish each waiver issued under paragraph (1)
16 unless such Secretary determines that such publica-
17 tion will have a negative effect on national security.

18 **TITLE III—TRIBAL WILDLIFE**

19 **CORRIDORS**

20 **SEC. 301. TRIBAL WILDLIFE CORRIDORS.**

21 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—

23 (A) NOMINATIONS.—An Indian Tribe may
24 nominate a corridor within the jurisdiction of
25 such Indian Tribe as a Tribal wildlife corridor

1 by submitting an application to the Secretary of
2 the Interior at such time, in such manner, and
3 containing such information as such Secretary,
4 in consultation with the Director of the Bureau
5 of Indian Affairs, may require.

6 (B) DETERMINATION.—Not later than 90
7 days after the date on which the Secretary of
8 the Interior receives an application under sub-
9 paragraph (A), such Secretary shall determine
10 whether the nominated Tribal Wildlife Corridor
11 described in the application meets the criteria
12 established under paragraph (2).

13 (C) PUBLICATION.—On approval of an ap-
14 plication under subparagraph (B), the Sec-
15 retary of the Interior shall publish in the Fed-
16 eral Register a notice of the establishment of
17 the Tribal Wildlife Corridor, which shall include
18 a map and description of the Tribal Wildlife
19 Corridor.

20 (2) CRITERIA.—

21 (A) ESTABLISHMENT OF CRITERIA.—Not
22 later than 18 months after the date of the en-
23 actment of this section, the Secretary of the In-
24 terior shall establish criteria for determining
25 whether to designate a corridor nominated by

1 an Indian Tribe under paragraph (1)(A) as a
2 Tribal Wildlife Corridor.

3 (B) REQUIRED CRITERIA.—The criteria es-
4 tablished under subparagraph (A) shall include
5 consideration of the historical, present, and po-
6 tential future role of the areas as a habitat
7 connectivity area.

8 (3) TERMINATION.—An Indian Tribe may elect
9 to terminate the designation of a Tribal Wildlife
10 Corridor within the jurisdiction of such Tribe by no-
11 tifying the Secretary of the Interior of such election.

12 (b) COORDINATION OF LAND USE PLANS.—Section
13 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of
14 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1712) is amended—

15 (1) in subsection (b)—

16 (A) by striking “Indian tribes by” and in-
17 serting the following: “Indian Tribes—
18 “(1) by”;

19 (B) in paragraph (1) (as so designated), by
20 striking the period at the end and inserting “;
21 and”; and

22 (C) by adding at the end the following:

23 “(2) for the purposes of determining whether
24 the land use plans for land in the National Forest
25 System would provide additional habitat connectivity

1 to benefit the purposes of a Tribal wildlife corridor
2 established under section 301 of the Wildlife Cor-
3 ridors and Habitat Connectivity Conservation Act of
4 2024.”; and

5 (2) by adding at the end the following:

6 “(g) TRIBAL WILDLIFE CORRIDORS.—On the estab-
7 lishment of a Tribal Wildlife Corridor under section 301
8 of the Wildlife Corridors and Habitat Connectivity Con-
9 servation Act of 2024, the Secretary shall conduct a mean-
10 ingful consultation with the Indian Tribe that administers
11 the Tribal Wildlife Corridor to determine whether, through
12 the revision of 1 or more existing land use plans, the Trib-
13 al Wildlife Corridor can—

14 “(1) be expanded into public lands; or

15 “(2) otherwise benefit habitat connectivity (as
16 defined in section 2 of that Act) between public
17 lands and the Tribal Wildlife Corridor.”.

18 (c) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall
19 provide technical assistance to Indian Tribes relating to
20 the establishment, management, and expansion of a Tribal
21 Wildlife Corridor, including assistance with accessing wild-
22 life data and working with voluntary private landowners
23 to access Federal and State programs to improve habitat
24 connectivity on non-Federal land.

1 (d) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section may
2 be construed to—

3 (1) authorize the Federal Government to con-
4 duct any activity on Indian land without the consent
5 of each affected Indian Tribe; or

6 (2) alter or waive the Federal trust responsi-
7 bility to Indian Tribes.

8 (e) EXEMPTION FROM FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
9 ACT.—

10 (1) EXEMPTION.—Information described in
11 paragraph (2) is not subject to disclosure under sec-
12 tion 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly
13 known as the “Freedom of Information Act”), if the
14 head of the agency that receives the information, in
15 consultation with the Secretary and the affected In-
16 dian Tribe, determines that disclosure may—

17 (A) cause a significant invasion of privacy;

18 (B) risk harm to human remains or re-
19 sources, cultural items, uses, or activities; or

20 (C) impede the use of a traditional reli-
21 gious site by practitioners.

22 (2) INFORMATION DESCRIBED.—Information
23 referred to in paragraph (1) is information received
24 by a Federal agency—

25 (A) pursuant to this section relating to—

1 (i) the location, character, or owner-
2 ship of human remains of a person of In-
3 dian ancestry; or

4 (ii) resources, cultural items, uses, or
5 activities identified by an Indian Tribe as
6 traditional or cultural because of the long-
7 established significance or ceremonial na-
8 ture to the Indian Tribe; or

9 (B) pursuant to the Native American
10 Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25
11 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.).

12 **TITLE IV—WILDLIFE CORRIDOR**
13 **GRANT PROGRAM ON NON-**
14 **FEDERAL LAND AND WATER**

15 **SEC. 401. WILDLIFE CORRIDOR GRANT PROGRAM.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
17 date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall
18 enter into a cooperative agreement with the National Fish
19 and Wildlife Foundation to establish and administer a
20 wildlife corridor grant program (referred to in this section
21 as the “grant program”).

22 (b) GRANTS.—Not later than 180 days after funds
23 are made available to carry out this section, the Founda-
24 tion, in consultation with the Secretary and Coordinating

1 Committee, shall make grants to eligible entities to carry
2 out projects that—

3 (1) are consistent with criteria established by a
4 technical advisory committee convened by the Foun-
5 dation and consisting of balanced representation
6 from relevant Federal, State, and Tribal government
7 agencies, affected private landowners, and non-
8 governmental organizations with relevant expertise;

9 (2) are recommended or approved for funding
10 by a review committee convened by the Foundation,
11 including members of the Coordinating Committee;
12 and

13 (3) increase habitat connectivity and fish and
14 wildlife movement and migration on non-Federal
15 lands and waters.

16 (c) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.—The Foundation
17 may expend not more than 5 percent of amounts appro-
18 priated to carry out this section for administrative ex-
19 penses in each fiscal year.

20 (d) DONATIONS.—The Foundation may solicit and
21 accept donations of amounts to carry out this section.

22 (e) DISCLOSURE OF USE.—Not later than 1 year
23 after the date of the enactment of this section, and not
24 less frequently than annually thereafter, the Secretary and
25 the Foundation shall publish a description of projects

1 funded by grants issued under subsection (b) during the
2 preceding calendar year.

3 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

4 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
5 ty” means—

6 (A) a private landowner;

7 (B) a State, Tribal, or local government or
8 any agency thereof responsible for managing
9 wildlife, natural resources, or transportation;

10 (C) an agricultural cooperative;

11 (D) a water, irrigation, or rural water dis-
12 trict or association, or other organization with
13 water delivery authority, including acequias and
14 land grant communities in the State of New
15 Mexico;

16 (E) an institution of higher education;

17 (F) a nongovernmental organization;

18 (G) a collaborative partnership; or

19 (H) any group of entities described in sub-
20 paragraph (A) through (G).

21 (2) FOUNDATION.—The term “Foundation”
22 means the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

23 (3) GRANT PROGRAM.—The term “grant pro-
24 gram” means the wildlife corridor grant program es-
25 tablished pursuant to subsection (a).

1 (4) to the Secretary of Commerce, \$9,000,000;

2 and

3 (5) to the Secretary of Defense, \$3,000,000.

4 (c) TRIBAL WILDLIFE CORRIDORS.—There is au-
5 thorized to be appropriated to carry out title III
6 \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2026 and each fiscal year
7 thereafter.

8 (d) WILDLIFE CORRIDOR GRANT PROGRAM ON NON-
9 FEDERAL LAND AND WATER.—There is authorized to be
10 appropriated to the Secretary of the Interior to carry out
11 title IV \$75,000,000 for fiscal year 2026 and each fiscal
12 year thereafter. Each fiscal year, not less than 10 percent
13 of the total funds shall be reserved for projects that di-
14 rectly conserve, restore, or enhance big game migration
15 corridors or seasonal habitat.

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