



NATIVE AMERICAN FISH & WILDLIFE SOCIETY
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Native American Fish & Wildlife Society
RESOLUTION

Title: Support for the proposed North American Grasslands Conservation Act

Resolution No. 2021-005

WHEREAS, the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society ("NAFWS") was established in recognition of the importance and respect accorded to fish and wildlife by Native American people; and

WHEREAS, the NAFWS is composed of Indian Tribes, organizations and people as well as federal and state agency representatives forming "a national Native American organization to aid in the development and protection of Native American fish and wildlife resources"; and

WHEREAS, grasslands and sagebrush shrub-steppe continue to be one of the most endangered ecosystems in the world; and

WHEREAS, grassland ecosystems, which are comprised of tallgrass, mixed grass, and shortgrass prairies, sagebrush shrub-steppe and savannah grasslands, are in many cases working lands that are critical for rural economies, carbon sequestration, and wildlife habitat; and

WHEREAS, over the last decade alone, millions of acres of grasslands in North America have been converted to cropland, and lost to residential and commercial development; and

WHEREAS, grasslands are further threatened by fragmentation, invasive species, and degradation; and

WHEREAS, many species of wildlife, particularly grassland and sagebrush birds, are experiencing steep population declines due to the loss of grassland and sagebrush shrub-steppe habitat; and

WHEREAS, current funding for programs to conserve and restore grasslands and sagebrush shrub-steppe is inadequate; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Native American Fish & Wildlife Society hereby supports the proposed North American Grasslands Conservation Act that would create a flexible and innovative grant program for voluntary, incentive-based conservation and restoration of North American grasslands and sagebrush shrub-steppe while supporting farmers, ranchers, Native communities, sportsmen and women, and rural communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society respectfully requests a Tribal Title within the act that provides a separate funding pool for Tribes and tribal organizations, waivers of any matching requirements, and allows for the acquisition of land for grassland and sagebrush shrub-steppe conservation and restoration purposes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society respectfully requests that Tribal representatives from each flyway or other regional designations are included in any Council or Advisory Group created to develop programs or to assist in the delivery of programs; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society supports that such legislation meant to conserve and restore grasslands and sagebrush shrub-steppe must be inclusive of Tribes and that resources must be dedicated to assist Tribes for their work to conserve and restore grasslands and sagebrush shrub-steppe on tribal lands.

Certification

This resolution was enacted by the affirmative vote of the Society membership who attended the National Business Meeting held on October 5, 2021. The vote is 25 voting in favor, 0 voting against and 0 members abstaining.

Dated this 5th day of October, 2021.



Elveda Martinez, Southwest Regional Board Member and Society President



Mike LaVoie, Southeast Regional Board Member and Society Vice-President

Attest:



Mitzi Reed, Southeast Regional Board Member and Society Secretary/Treasurer
Native American Fish and Wildlife Society