



Representative Helen Chenoweth/Mike Simpson  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Chenoweth/Simpson:

The Idaho Chapter of the Wildlife Society is a group of over 250 professional wildlife biologists concerned with the sound management and stewardship of all of Idaho's wildlife. On behalf of our Chapter, I urge you to support through co-sponsorship of H.R. 701, the Conservation and Reinvestment Act of 1999 (CARA). This bill was introduced earlier this year with broad bipartisan support. CARA aims to share federal Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) oil and gas revenue with states through three program areas: assisting coastal states in addressing impacts associated with OCS activity and advancing coastal environmental efforts (Title I); providing land-based and urban recreation through the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery program (Title II); and addressing the unmet needs of state-based wildlife conservation, education and recreation programs (Title III).

We are particularly interested in Title III of this legislation, and strongly recommend that it specifically place greater emphasis on nongame wildlife, the wildlife most in need of conservation attention. As wildlife professionals, we confront greater conservation challenges than ever before as increasing demands on lands and resources threaten to edge out America's wildlife and wild places. Today, we are encountering new losses of songbirds, amphibians, fish, and other "nongame" species that gathered little notice until recently. While state wildlife agencies have demonstrated their ability to bring back once critically low populations of both game and nongame species, they have lacked the funding to repeat the success stories and reverse these alarming trends to protect our nation's rich wildlife heritage for future generations.

The Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society is asking for your support and co-sponsorship of CARA for the following reasons:

1. Conservation simply can't wait - proactive steps must be taken now to conserve Idaho's irreplaceable wildlife legacy **before** it becomes necessary to list more species as threatened or endangered. Conservation efforts that preclude the need to list species just make biological and economic sense.
2. Outdoor recreation demands are skyrocketing, yet many wildlife populations are decreasing. We must find the means to accommodate the needs of the many interest groups who wish to enjoy Idaho's great outdoors without compromising the wildlife and habitats they depend upon.
3. Our children are the nation's future stewards and they must be provided the educational tools to decide what their natural world will be like.
4. A wildlife-rich outdoor experience is one of Idaho's great economic assets; one that is becoming increasingly vital to local communities and our states' nature-based tourism and related outdoor industry.
5. State fish and wildlife agencies can point to a strong track record of on-the-ground successes for game and sport fish with longstanding programs under Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson/Wallop-Breaux Acts. With the addition of CARA, Idaho can further expand this effort by focusing on the 80% of wildlife species in Idaho that are classified as nongame.

CARA represents a good, solid starting point upon which to forge a new model for funding more inclusive state wildlife conservation, recreation and education efforts. Additionally, CARA solves a significant funding dilemma because it addresses the issue of providing some public funding for wildlife conservation efforts, rather than placing the bulk of the responsibility on hunters and anglers as has historically been the case.

We applaud the efforts of those members of Congress who crafted the proposal and hope that you will recognize the value your support will have to the economy and natural resources of Idaho should CARA successfully pass. Once again, your support and co-sponsorship of this legislation would be very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

November 3, 1999

Hon. Gary J. Schroeder;

We strongly encourage you to support the proposed Idaho Department of Fish and Game's Hunting and Fishing fee increase.

Our Chapter is a professional society of some PUT NUMBER OF MEMBERS HERE members of wildlife administrators, educators, managers, biologists, and researchers throughout Idaho who represent a diverse workforce in federal and state agencies, private industry, and educational institutions. We are dedicated to PUT OUR CHAPTER GOALS HERE.

We are also hunters, fishermen, trappers, bird and animal watchers, and outdoor recreationalists. *We support the outdoor recreation industry and recognize the value of a hunting + fishing license as a small cost of outdoor recreation.*

It is clear to us, after a number of years of public issue review, discussion, and actions taken by the Department, that current funding of Idaho's fish and wildlife management program remains inadequate. These proposed fee increases, though modest, are needed to carry out the broad biological and social mandate we, the people of Idaho, gave our state's fish and wildlife agency.

Pc: J. Mallet, Interim Director  
C. Groen, Clearwater Region Supervisor

March 6, 1999

State of Idaho Legislature  
State Capitol Building  
P.O. Box 83702  
Boise, ID 83702-0034

Dear Honorable Legislators;

The Wildlife Society, [insert mission statement] The Idaho Chapter is a group of over 250 professional wildlife biologists concerned with the sound management and stewardship of all of Idaho's wildlife resources.

As a professional society we wish to comment on HB 317, legislation that would create an Office of Threatened and Endangered Species within the Office of the Governor. We are very concerned that this bill, if enacted, will fail to resolve the issue of restoring threatened and endangered species in Idaho, will further politicize wildlife management, and will only create another costly bureaucracy. The creation of a separate office under direct control of the Governor will, in our view, only serve to complicate an already complex situation. Further, it is likely to create additional turmoil and distrust and reluctance by other agencies under less political influence, both within and outside Idaho, to cooperate on common issues. Simply put, we do not feel that the governor's office is a place for such a program. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game, with its existing infrastructure, remains the best place to administer any threatened, endangered, and rare wildlife program.

We do agree that legislation is needed to address rare fish, wildlife and plant species issues. We recognize, as you do, that these issues are complicated, nor are they going to go away. Idaho needs to be actively involved if we are to find solutions that best serve our citizens. As such, rather than create a new office, we encourage the development and passage of a state endangered species act that outlines a process for dealing with federally listed species and declining species that may be destined for listing if actions are not taken to reverse trends. This legislation should be carefully crafted so that policies and plans are developed in the context of working closely with all entities - interested citizens, private landowners, other appropriate state agencies, federal land and wildlife management agencies, the legislature and the governor. Other states such as Montana, Oregon, and Washington have enacted state endangered species acts and programs. We should take the time to examine these and other model state programs thoroughly before enacting our own.

Lastly, we feel it is very important that we address the funding issue for rare species. Rare species issues affect all Idahoans in some manner. As such, we need to provide a funding base that achieves the program goals but does not place an undue burden on any one segment of our

society. Because all Idahoans have a vested interest in rare plant and animal issues, all Idahoans must be willing to financially support such programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important and timely issue. If you have any questions, I or other appropriate members of our Chapter, will be happy to answer them.

Copy to:

Honorable Governor Dirk Kempthorne  
Nancy Hadley, IDFG Commission Chairman  
Jerry Mallet, Acting Director, IDFG

March 8, 1999

State of Idaho Legislature  
State Capitol Building  
P.O. Box 83702  
Boise, ID 83702-0034

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Sincerely,

Kerry Paul Reese, Ph.D.  
President, Idaho Chapter of TWS  
2168 Henry Court  
Moscow, ID 83843

Copy to:

Honorable Governor Dirk Kempthorne  
Nancy Hadley, IDFG Commission Chairman  
Jerry Mallet, Acting Director, IDFG