



2011-2012 FEDERAL CONSERVATION LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

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Mass Audubon works to protect the nature of Massachusetts for people and wildlife. Together with more than 100,000 members, we care for 34,000 acres of conservation land, provide educational programs for 225,000 children and adults annually, and advocate for sound environmental policies at local, state, and federal levels. Mass Audubon's mission and actions have expanded since our beginning in 1896 when our founders set out to stop the slaughter of birds for use on women's fashions. Today we are the largest conservation organization in New England. Our statewide network of wildlife sanctuaries, in 90 Massachusetts communities, welcomes visitors of all ages and serves as the base for our work.

Stewardship through Public Investments in the National Inheritance

Increase annual appropriations for:

- *State Wildlife Grants Program- United States Fish & Wildlife Service*: Provides grants to state wildlife agencies to support cost effective conservation aimed at keeping wildlife from becoming endangered. Funding may dramatically increase under new climate legislation, providing much needed resources for adaptation programs and research into open ocean wind siting research.
- *North American Wetlands Conservation Grants Program- United States Fish & Wildlife Service*: Provides matching grants to public or private organizations to protect and restore wetland ecosystems throughout North America.
- *Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program- Natural Resources Conservation Service*: Provides funding for management and restoration of wetlands, riparian areas, and upland wildlife habitats.
- *National Wildlife Refuge System- United States Fish & Wildlife Service*: Established in 1903, the National Refuge System is the only system of federal lands dedicated specifically to wildlife conservation, including Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge, Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, and Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge.
- *National Parks System- United States National Park Service*: Established in 1872, the National Park system protects natural, cultural, historic, and recreation areas of national significance, including Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area, Cape Cod National Seashore, Essex National Heritage Area, and Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor.
- *Wild & Scenic Rivers*: Designation of the Taunton River under the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act would bring additional protection to the free-flowing waters of this river and should be adequately funded.
- *Wildlife Crossing*: Seek federal funding for culvert replacements that better allow movement of water and wildlife.

Environmental Education

- *No Child Left Behind Act*: The 2001 *No Child Left Behind Act* does not mention environmental education. Thanks to the growing momentum created by people around the country, the draft reauthorization of *No Child Left Behind* now dedicates 14 pages to environmental education, including two new grant programs to support teaching and learning about the environment. However, in his FY2011 budget, President Obama proposed the first-ever allocation of funds for environmental literacy through *No Child Left Behind*.

Stewardship Through Reauthorization, Recovery, and Reaffirmation

- *Conservation and Reinvestment Act*: Reaffirms the promise of the Land & Water Conservation Fund by dedicating over \$3 billion annually in royalties from Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas production for coastal impact assistance, state wildlife programs, endangered species recovery, and state and local land protection programs.
- *Endangered Species Recovery Act*: Strengthens the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 by encouraging earlier conservation planning by federal agencies, targeting recovery of species, streamlining the permitting process for small landowners, and improving the scientific basis of species listing decisions.
- *Offshore Oil and Gas Drilling*: Continue to oppose the exploration, development and production of oil and gas on the federally controlled Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) off Massachusetts as it could threaten critical ocean habitat and would present an unacceptable risk to a renewable fishery resource associated with one of the world's premier fishing grounds at Georges Bank.

January 2011