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## Donalds Leads Bipartisan Conservation Initiative To Expedite Government Efficiency At The Department Of Interior

WASHINGTON – This morning, Congressman Byron Donalds (R-FL) announced the introduction of bipartisan [legislation](#) to ensure government efficiency in conservation.

State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAPs) are developed and submitted by states to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to identify non-game species of greatest conservation need, so they don't become threatened or endangered. Currently, there is no deadline for FWS to approve a complete SWAP once submitted by a state, and in most cases, approval can take over 18 months. 45 states have SWAPs due this year alone.

[H.R. 1676 – "The Make SWAPs Efficient Act"](#) is co-led by Rep. Jared Moskowitz (D-FL) and directs the Secretary of the Interior to approve a state's SWAP within 180 days. If the Department of Interior does not approve the SWAP within 180 days, the SWAP is "deemed approved." This common-sense legislation has also received the endorsement of Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission; All Florida; Ducks Unlimited; and Florida Commercial Watermen's Conservation.

"As we continue to peel back the labyrinth of federal bureaucracy that has paralyzed the basic functions of our federal government, we must turn to the Department of Interior," *said Congressman Byron Donalds (R-FL)*. "Currently, its taking over a year and a half to approve basic state wildlife protection plans to ensure non-game species do not become threatened or endangered. This is unacceptable and this is why I introduced H.R. 1676 to expedite this timeline to just 180 days. We are making our government efficient again whether bureaucrats in Washington like it or not."

"Florida depends on the State and Tribal Wildlife Grant Program to help protect the diverse ecosystems that call our state home, but it takes far too long for the federal government to approve wildlife conservation action plans under it," *said Congressman Jared Moskowitz (D-FL)*. "So I'm teaming up with Congressman Donalds on commonsense legislation that will institute a timeline for officials to sign off on these strategies and get these targeted funds out more quickly. By streamlining this conservation tool, our bill will cut red tape and help ensure our public lands and Florida wildlife stay protected from coast to coast."

"State Wildlife Action Plans are instrumental for state fish and wildlife agencies working to manage species of fish and wildlife that face the greatest need for conservation in their states," *said Nick Wiley, Ducks Unlimited Chief Operating Officer*. "This legislation will improve the efficiency for state-led conservation of these priority wildlife resources by expediting the plan approval process. We appreciate Reps. Donalds and Moskowitz for leading this effort."

"The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) thanks Congressman Donalds for introducing the Making SWAPs Efficient Act," *said Melissa Tucker, FWC Director of the Division of Habitat and Species Conservation*. "Currently, there is no required timeframe for the review of State Wildlife Action Plans, and it can take a year to a year and a half for the review. The Making SWAPs Efficient Act would give the federal government six months to approve the plans, and this timeframe would allow the states to quickly deploy resources for wildlife species that are in need of conservation."

### Background:

- In 2000, Congress authorized funding for the State Wildlife Grant Program. Additionally, in 2001, Congress authorized funding for the Tribal Wildlife Grant Program. Today, both programs are commonly referred to "the State and Tribal Wildlife Grant Program" (the Program).
- The Program, in part, provides funding for the "development, revision, and implementation of wildlife conservation and restoration plans and programs."
- In order to receiving funding under the Program, States must develop & submit to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) a wildlife conservation strategy—otherwise known as a State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP).
- In 2005, all 50 States, D.C., and 5 U.S. territories developed/submitted SWAPs to FWS and generally, States must submit SWAPs every 10 years to receive funding under the Program.

### More:

- Read Text of H.R. 1676 – "The Make SWAPs Efficient Act" [HERE](#).
- See Bill Profile of H.R. 1676 – "The Make SWAPs Efficient Act" [HERE](#).
- See H.R. 1676 Social Media Summary Graphics [HERE](#).

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