



Topic: North American Wetlands Conservation Act

Request: Support the North American Wetlands Conservation Extension Act

What is the North American Wetlands Conservation Act? NAWCA was enacted in 1989 to provide funding and a means of implementing both the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and the Tripartite Agreement on wetlands in the United States, Canada and Mexico. NAWCA provides matching funds for the protection and restoration of wetland habitat for migratory birds and related upland habitat. These funds have protected significant amounts of wetland habitat and played a large role in increasing bird populations in all 50 states.

Why support NAWCA? Over the last 20 years, NAWCA has allocated more than \$1.6 billion in grants to support 2,800 projects that have conserved, restored and enhanced 30 million acres of habitat. The funds are leveraged by \$3.3 billion in matching funds from more than 6,000 partner organizations.

What makes NAWCA so important? Wetlands habitat conservation is vital for migratory birds and other wildlife. Also, it truly strengthens our economy. Each year, NAWCA-funded conservation and restoration efforts support 7,500 jobs – employing construction contractors, landscapers, biologists, conservation experts, engineers and retail suppliers, among others. And these protected habitats are destinations for Americans interested in recreational activities such as hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing and photography, who spend billions of dollars per year. In addition, wetlands provide natural services that we collectively rely on for clean, plentiful water and protection from floods and storm surges.

How is NAWCA funded? NAWCA is funded from appropriations as well as fines and forfeitures collected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Congress appropriated \$42 million for NAWCA in fiscal year 2019. These funds were allocated through two separate competitive grant programs: Standard Grants, which provide grants of up to \$1 million per project annually, and Small Grants, which distribute grants of up to \$100,000 per project annually. Both programs require partners to provide matching contributions at a 1:1 ratio or greater.

How does Congress influence the future of NAWCA? Congress plays a crucial role in reauthorizing and funding this important program. The bipartisan North American Wetlands Conservation Extension Act (S. 261 / H.R. 925), would reauthorize NAWCA through 2024 and increase the authorized annual funding level to \$60 million.

**We urge you to reauthorize and increase funding
for NAWCA by supporting S. 261 / H.R. 925.**