

**Legislative Update - August 3, 2001**  
(Broadcast #374)

**URGENT - ACTION REQUIRED - URGENT**

The House included \$5 million for a new tribal wildlife grants program in its version of the FY 2002 Interior bill. This tribal program is part of a large conservation spending category established in the FY 2001 Interior bill (known as CARA "Lite"), which is intended to continue for at least 5 years and probably beyond. Tribes were made technically eligible to receive funds under this program in FY 2001, but received no allocation. It is absolutely critical that tribes obtain access to this program beginning in FY 2002.

As previously mentioned, the House included \$5 million for the tribal wildlife grants program in its version of the FY 2002 Interior bill. Unfortunately, the Senate provided nothing. The lack of tribal funding in the new conservation spending category of the Interior bill (which is currently \$1.32 billion, but expected to be \$3 billion by FY 2005) is a great injustice to tribes.

Tribes need to take action immediately to ensure the new \$5 million tribal wildlife grants program is included in the final version of the FY 2002 Interior bill. The ramifications of this program go far beyond just \$5 million in FY 2002. The action requested is to fax a letter to all Interior conference committee members as soon as possible. A sample letter and address/fax list is presented below, along with a one page "fact sheet" concerning the tribal wildlife grants program. This information can be provided as a Wordperfect or Word file by emailing a request to: [abailey@ncai.org](mailto:abailey@ncai.org)

## Fact Sheet for Background Information:

### TRIBAL WILDLIFE GRANTS PROGRAM IN FY 2002 INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS BILL

In the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA), tribes were included for about \$40 million, in recognition of tribal conservation responsibilities.

When CARA died late last year, and the new Title VIII conservation spending category was added to the Interior Appropriations bill, the tribal CARA provisions were not included, while those provisions for state and local governments were.

President Bush included a \$10 million tribal set aside in his Flexible Land and Water Conservation Fund program, which was not adopted by the House or the Senate.

The House of Representatives included a new \$5 million tribal wildlife grants program in the FY 2002 Interior Appropriations bill. The Senate did not include this new program.

The \$5 million tribal wildlife grants program adopted by the House represents only .38% of the \$1.32 billion FY 2002 Title VIII conservation spending category. However, tribes are directly responsible for protecting at least 2.35% of the land area of the United States (2.35% = 56,015,221 million Indian trust acres divided by the 2,379,390,458 acres that comprise the entire United States).

Except for \$3 million in historic preservation grants (a decrease of 46% from FY 2001), and the requested \$5 million for tribal wildlife grants, none of the \$1.32 billion authorized under Title VIII would go towards tribal conservation.

Tribes desperately need funds for their conservation responsibilities. Tribes have been excluded from popular programs such as the Federal Aid in Fish and Wildlife Restoration Acts, even though tribal members pay the same excise taxes that support these programs as the rest of America. Recent federal budget cuts in BIA natural resource funding have diminished tribal resource management capacity by 20% in just the last five years.

It is extremely important, and justified, that the final FY 2002 Interior Appropriations bill include the tribal wildlife grants program for at least \$5 million, along with language directing tribal consultation in the development of this competitive program.

Dear Congressman:

I am writing to request your support of the new \$5 million Tribal wildlife grants program within the FY 2002 Interior Appropriations bill. This funding is currently included in both the Administration request and the House of Representatives version of the bill, but not in the Senate version.

This amount is only .38% of the \$1.32 billion Title VIII conservation spending category authorized by the House and Senate for conservation across America. Tribes are directly responsible for protecting a sizeable amount of the land area of the United States. Except for \$3 million in historic preservation grants (a decrease of 46% from FY 2001), and the requested \$5 million for tribal wildlife grants, none of the \$1.32 billion authorized under this title would go to towards Tribal conservation. When considering tribal conservation needs and responsibilities relative to what other agencies with similar responsibilities would receive under this title, the amount Tribes would receive is exceedingly small even with this new program.

President Bush requested funds for a Flexible Land and Water Conservation (LWCF) Grant Program in his FY 2002 budget. Out of the \$450 million targeted for the states from this program, the President had proposed a set-aside of \$10 million for Tribes, to be distributed as competitive grants.

The Tribal wildlife grants program is extremely important because of the critical shortage Tribes have experienced in conservation funding. Generally, Tribes manage Indian trust land with fewer staff and fewer dollars than their state and federal counterparts. Funding for resource management comes primarily from BIA programs. Unfortunately, recent federal budget cuts in BIA natural resource funding have diminished Tribal resource management capacity by 20% in just the last five years.

In conclusion, Tribes have not received an equitable share of conservation funding, yet have great need for this funding. I ask for your consideration to include, at a minimum, the \$5 million tribal wildlife grants program adopted by the House, along with language directing appropriate Tribal consultation in the development of this competitive program to reflect the government-to-government relationship. I thank you in advance for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

Below is the list of Senate conferees & the mailing/fax address:

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior

	Member's Office Fax	Committee Fax
Robert C. Byrd, Chairman	228-0002	228-4532
Patrick J. Leahy	224-3479	228-4532
Ernest F. Hollings	224-4293	228-4532
Harry Reid	224-7327	228-4532
Byron Dorgan	224-1193	228-4532
Patty Murray	224-0238	228-4532
Dianne Feinstein	228-3954	228-4532
Conrad Burns, Ranking Member	224-8594	228-4532
Ted Stevens	224-2354	228-4532
Thad Cochran	224-9450	228-4532
Pete V. Domenici	228-0900	228-4532
Robert F. Bennett	228-1168	228-4532
Judd Gregg	224-4952	228-4532
Ben Nighthorse Campbell	224-1933	228-4532

Address for the above members:

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Interior

United States Senate

SD-131

Washington, D.C. 20510

(202) 224-7233

(202) 228-4532 (fax)

Note: it would also be good to fax a letter to Senator Daniel Inouye at 202/224-5429

Below is the list of House conferees & the mailing/fax address:

House Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies

	Member's Office Fax	Committee Fax
Joe Skeen, Chairman	225-9599	225-9069
Ralph Regula	225-3059	225-9069
Jim Kolbe	225-0378	225-9069
Charles H. Taylor	No office fax	225-9069
George R. Nethercutt, Jr.	225-3392	225-9069
Zach Wamp	225-3494	225-9069
Jack Kingston	226-2269	225-9069
John E. Peterson	225-5796	225-9069
Norman D. Dicks, Ranking Member	226-1176	225-9069
John P. Murtha	225-5709	225-9069
James P. Moran	225-0017	225-9069
Maurice D. Hinchey	226-0774	225-9069
Martin Olav Sabo	225-4755	225-9069

Address for the above members:

Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies

B-308 Rayburn House Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20515-6023

202/225-3081 (phone)

202/225-9069 (fax)

The House conferees also include the chair and ranking member of the full Appropriations Committee as follows:

Bill Young, Chairman	225-9764	225-2112
David Obey, Ranking Member	No office fax	225-2112

Their address:

H-218 Capitol

Washington, D.C. 20510

202/225-2771 (phone)

202/225-2112 (fax)