

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1913

To assist in the conservation of great cats by supporting and providing financial resources for the conservation programs of nations within the range of great cats and projects of persons with demonstrated expertise in the conservation of great cats.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 18, 2007

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, and Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To assist in the conservation of great cats by supporting and providing financial resources for the conservation programs of nations within the range of great cats and projects of persons with demonstrated expertise in the conservation of great cats.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Great Cats Conserva-
5 tion Act of 2007”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Many wild populations of felids, once con-
2 sidered common are in decline, and many have de-
3 clined to the point that their long-term survival in
4 the wild is in serious jeopardy.

5 (2) Of the 37 wild felid species worldwide, all
6 are currently recognized as species in need of protec-
7 tion under the IUCN Red List, the lists of species
8 in CITES appendices, or the Endangered Species
9 Act of 1973.

10 (3) In addition to their intrinsic value, felids
11 are important aesthetic, economic, and ecological
12 global resources that need to be conserved.

13 (4) Large felids are considered indicator spe-
14 cies. Healthy populations of these species act as an
15 important indicator of the integrity of entire eco-
16 systems. Measures taken to benefit these keystone
17 species will ultimately benefit a great number of
18 other species.

19 (5) Endangered felids face an array of threats,
20 including loss of habitat, intentional and uninten-
21 tional takings by humans, disease transmission, and
22 a vast number of other threats. These threats need
23 to be addressed in a coordinated fashion.

24 (6) Conservation of endangered felid popu-
25 lations requires global commitment. Adequate fund-

1 ing for conservation is sorely lacking, and many
2 range countries do not have adequate infrastructure
3 to protect these species.

4 (7) Although some protections exist to conserve
5 endangered felid populations and their habitat, those
6 efforts can be significantly enhanced by the infusion
7 of targeted funding.

8 **SEC. 3. PURPOSES.**

9 The purposes of this Act are to provide financial re-
10 sources and to foster international cooperation—

11 (1) to restore and perpetuate healthy popu-
12 lations of great cats in the wild; and

13 (2) to assist in the conservation of great cat
14 populations worldwide.

15 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

16 In this Act:

17 (1) CITES.—The term “CITES” means the
18 Convention on International Trade in Endangered
19 Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, done at Wash-
20 ington March 3, 1973 (27 UST 1087; TIAS 8249),
21 including its appendices.

22 (2) CONSERVATION.—The term “conserva-
23 tion”—

24 (A) means the methods and procedures
25 necessary to bring a species of great cats to the

1 point at which there are sufficient populations
2 in the wild to ensure the long-term viability of
3 the species; and

4 (B) includes all activities associated with
5 protection and management of a great cat pop-
6 ulation, including—

7 (i) maintenance, management, protec-
8 tion, and restoration of great cat habitat;

9 (ii) research and monitoring;

10 (iii) law enforcement;

11 (iv) community outreach and edu-
12 cation;

13 (v) conflict resolution initiatives; and

14 (vi) strengthening the capacity of local
15 communities, governmental agencies, non-
16 governmental organizations and other in-
17 stitutions to implement conservation pro-
18 grams.

19 (3) FUND.—The term “Fund” means the Great
20 Cats Conservation Fund established by section 6.

21 (4) GREAT CAT.—The term “great cat” means
22 any lion, leopard, jaguar, snow leopard, clouded
23 leopard, cheetah, or Spanish lynx.

24 (5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
25 the Secretary of the Interior.

1 **SEC. 5. GREAT CATS CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of
3 funds and in consultation with other appropriate Federal
4 officials, the Secretary shall use amounts in the Fund to
5 provide financial assistance for projects for the conserva-
6 tion of great cats for which project proposals are approved
7 by the Secretary in accordance with this section.

8 (b) PROJECT PROPOSALS.—

9 (1) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.—A proposal for a
10 project for the conservation of great cats may be
11 submitted to the Secretary by—

12 (A) any wildlife management authority of
13 a country that has within its boundaries any
14 part of the range of a great cat species; and

15 (B) any person or group with the dem-
16 onstrated expertise required for the conserva-
17 tion in the wild of great cats.

18 (2) PROJECT PROPOSALS.—To be considered
19 for financial assistance for a project under this Act,
20 an applicant shall submit a project proposal that in-
21 cludes—

22 (A) a concise statement of the purposes of
23 the project;

24 (B) the name of the individual responsible
25 for conducting the project;

1 (C) a description of the qualifications of
2 the individuals who will conduct the project;

3 (D) a concise description of—

4 (i) methods for project implementa-
5 tion and outcome assessment;

6 (ii) staffing for the project;

7 (iii) the logistics of the project; and

8 (iv) community involvement in the
9 project;

10 (E) an estimate of funds and time required
11 to complete the project;

12 (F) evidence of support for the project by
13 appropriate governmental entities of the coun-
14 tries in which the project will be conducted, if
15 the Secretary determines that such support is
16 required for the success of the project;

17 (G) information regarding the source and
18 amount of matching funding available for the
19 project; and

20 (H) any other information that the Sec-
21 retary considers to be necessary for evaluating
22 the eligibility of the project for funding under
23 this Act.

24 (c) PROJECT REVIEW AND APPROVAL.—

25 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

1 (A) not later than 30 days after receiving
2 a project proposal, provide a copy of the pro-
3 posal to the appropriate Federal officials; and

4 (B) review each project proposal in a time-
5 ly manner to determine if the proposal meets
6 the criteria specified in subsection (d).

7 (2) CONSULTATION; APPROVAL OR DIS-
8 APPROVAL.—Not later than 180 days after receiving
9 a project proposal, and subject to the availability of
10 funds, the Secretary, after consulting with other ap-
11 propriate Federal officials, shall—

12 (A) ensure the proposal contains assur-
13 ances that the project will be implemented in
14 consultation with relevant wildlife management
15 authorities and other appropriate government
16 officials with jurisdiction over the resources ad-
17 dressed by the project;

18 (B) approve or disapprove the proposal;
19 and

20 (C) provide written notification of the ap-
21 proval or disapproval to the person who sub-
22 mitted the proposal, other appropriate Federal
23 officials, and each country within whose borders
24 the project will take place.

1 (d) CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL.—The Secretary may
2 approve a project proposal under this section if the project
3 will contribute to conservation of great cats in the wild
4 by assisting efforts to—

5 (1) implement conservation programs;

6 (2) address the conflicts between humans and
7 great cats that arise from competition for the same
8 habitat;

9 (3) enhance compliance with CITES and other
10 applicable laws that prohibit or regulate the taking
11 or trade of great cats or regulate the use and man-
12 agement of great cat habitat;

13 (4) develop sound scientific information on, or
14 methods for monitoring—

15 (A) the condition and health of great cat
16 habitat; and

17 (B) great cat population numbers and
18 trends; or

19 (5) promote cooperative projects among govern-
20 ment entities, affected local communities, nongovern-
21 mental organizations, and other persons in the pri-
22 vate sector.

23 (e) PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY.—In approving project
24 proposals under this section, the Secretary shall give pref-
25 erence to conservation projects that are designed to ensure

1 effective, long-term conservation of great cats and their
2 habitats.

3 (f) MATCHING FUNDS.—In determining whether to
4 approve project proposals under this section, the Secretary
5 shall give preference to projects for which matching funds
6 are available.

7 (g) PROJECT REPORTING.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—Each person that receives
9 assistance under this section for a project shall sub-
10 mit to the Secretary periodic reports (at such inter-
11 vals as the Secretary considers necessary) that in-
12 clude all information that the Secretary, after con-
13 sultation with other appropriate government offi-
14 cials, determines is necessary to evaluate the
15 progress and success of the project for the purposes
16 of ensuring positive results, assessing problems, and
17 fostering improvements.

18 (2) AVAILABILITY TO THE PUBLIC.—Reports
19 under paragraph (1), and any other documents re-
20 lating to projects for which financial assistance is
21 provided under this Act, shall be made available to
22 the public.

23 (h) ADVISORY GROUP.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—To assist in carrying out
25 this Act, the Secretary may convene an advisory

1 group consisting of individuals representing public
2 and private organizations actively involved in the
3 conservation of great cats.

4 (2) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—

5 (A) MEETINGS.—The advisory group
6 shall—

7 (i) ensure that each meeting of the
8 advisory group is open to the public; and

9 (ii) provide, at each meeting, an op-
10 portunity for interested persons to present
11 oral or written statements concerning
12 items on the agenda.

13 (B) NOTICE.—The Secretary shall provide
14 to the public timely notice of each meeting of
15 the advisory group, including the meeting agen-
16 da.

17 (C) MINUTES.—Minutes of each meeting
18 of the advisory group shall be kept by the Sec-
19 retary and shall be made available to the public.

20 (3) EXEMPTION FROM FEDERAL ADVISORY
21 COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee
22 Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the advisory
23 group.

1 **SEC. 6. GREAT CATS CONSERVATION FUND.**

2 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established, in the
3 Multinational Species Conservation Fund established in
4 title I of the Department of the Interior and Related
5 Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 under the heading
6 “MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION
7 FUND”, a separate account to be known as the “Great
8 Cats Conservation Fund”, consisting of—

9 (1) amounts transferred to the Secretary of the
10 Treasury for deposit into such account under sub-
11 section (e);

12 (2) amounts appropriated to such account
13 under section 7; and

14 (3) any interest earned on investment of
15 amounts in the account under subsection (c).

16 (b) EXPENDITURES FROM FUND.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2),
18 upon request by the Secretary, the Secretary of the
19 Treasury shall transfer from the Fund to the Sec-
20 retary, without further appropriation, such amounts
21 as the Secretary determines are necessary to provide
22 assistance under section 5.

23 (2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Of the
24 amounts in the Fund available for each fiscal year,
25 the Secretary may expend not more than three per-
26 cent, or up to \$80,000, whichever is greater, to pay

1 the administrative expenses necessary to carry out
2 this Act.

3 (c) INVESTMENT OF AMOUNTS.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treas-
5 ury shall invest such portion of the Fund as is not,
6 in the judgment of the Secretary of the Treasury,
7 required to meet current withdrawals. Investments
8 may be made only in interest-bearing obligations of
9 the United States.

10 (2) ACQUISITION OF OBLIGATIONS.—For the
11 purpose of investments under paragraph (1), obliga-
12 tions may be acquired—

13 (A) on original issue at the issue price; or

14 (B) by purchase of outstanding obligations
15 at the market price.

16 (3) SALE OF OBLIGATIONS.—Any obligation ac-
17 quired by the Fund may be sold by the Secretary of
18 the Treasury at the market price.

19 (4) CREDITS TO FUND.—The interest on, and
20 the proceeds from the sale or redemption of any obli-
21 gations held in the Fund shall be credited to and
22 form a part of the Fund.

23 (d) TRANSFERS OF AMOUNTS.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—The amounts required to be
25 transferred to the Fund under this section shall be

1 transferred at least monthly from the general fund
2 of the Treasury to the Fund on the basis of esti-
3 mates made by the Secretary of the Treasury.

4 (2) ADJUSTMENTS.—Proper adjustment shall
5 be made in amounts subsequently transferred to the
6 extent prior estimates were in excess of or less than
7 the amounts required to be transferred.

8 (e) ACCEPTANCE AND USE OF DONATIONS.—The
9 Secretary may accept and use donations to provide assist-
10 ance under section 5. Amounts received by the Secretary
11 in the form of donations shall be transferred to the Sec-
12 retary of the Treasury for deposit into the Fund.

13 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

14 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Fund
15 \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012.

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