

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2697

To assist in the conservation of rare felids and rare canids by supporting and providing financial resources for the conservation programs of nations within the range of rare felid and rare canid populations and projects of persons with demonstrated expertise in the conservation of rare felid and rare canid populations.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 9, 2015

Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. FARR, Ms. MOORE, Mr. NADLER, and Ms. NORTON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To assist in the conservation of rare felids and rare canids by supporting and providing financial resources for the conservation programs of nations within the range of rare felid and rare canid populations and projects of persons with demonstrated expertise in the conservation of rare felid and rare canid populations.

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 “Rare Cats and Canids
5 Act of 2015”.

1 **SEC. 2. PURPOSES.**

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

4 (1) to restore and perpetuate healthy popu-
5 lations of rare felids and rare canids in the wild; and

6 (2) to assist in the conservation of rare felid
7 and rare canid populations worldwide.

8 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

9 In this Act:

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

15 (2) CONSERVATION.—The term “conserva-
16 tion”—

17 (A) means the methods and procedures
18 necessary to bring a population, subspecies,
19 species, or taxon of rare felid or rare canid to
20 the point at which there are sufficient popu-
21 lations in the wild to ensure its long-term via-
22 bility; and

23 (B) includes all activities associated with
24 protection and management of a population,
25 subspecies, species, or taxon of rare felid or
26 rare canid, including—

- 1 (i) maintenance, management, protec-
2 tion, and restoration of rare felid or rare
3 canid habitat;
- 4 (ii) research and monitoring;
- 5 (iii) law enforcement;
- 6 (iv) community outreach and edu-
7 cation;
- 8 (v) conflict resolution initiatives; and
- 9 (vi) strengthening the capacity of local
10 communities, governmental agencies, non-
11 governmental organizations and other in-
12 stitutions to implement conservation pro-
13 grams.

14 (3) FUND.—The term “Fund” means the Rare
15 Cats and Canids Conservation Fund established by
16 section 5.

17 (4) IUCN RED LIST.—The term “IUCN Red
18 List” means the Red List of Threatened Species
19 Maintained by the World Conservation Union.

20 (5) RARE CANID.—

21 (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
22 subparagraph (B), the term “rare canid”
23 means any population, subspecies, species, or
24 taxon in the family Canidae that is listed in the

1 IUCN Red List as near threatened, vulnerable,
2 endangered, or critically endangered.

3 (B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term “rare canid”
4 does not include any subspecies or population
5 that is native to the area comprised of the
6 United States and Canada.

7 (6) RARE FELID.—

8 (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
9 subparagraph (B), the term “rare felid” means
10 any population, subspecies, species, or taxon in
11 the family Felidae that is listed in the IUCN
12 Red List as near threatened, vulnerable, endan-
13 gered, or critically endangered.

14 (B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term “rare felid”
15 does not include—

16 (i) any subspecies or population that
17 is native to the area comprised of the
18 United States and Canada; and

19 (ii) any tiger (*Panthera tigris*).

20 (7) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
21 the Secretary of the Interior.

22 **SEC. 4. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of
24 funds and in consultation with other appropriate Federal
25 officials, the Secretary shall use amounts in the Fund to

1 provide financial assistance for projects for the conserva-
2 tion of rare felid and rare canids for which project pro-
3 posals are approved by the Secretary in accordance with
4 this section.

5 (b) PROJECT PROPOSALS.—

6 (1) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.—A proposal for a
7 project for the conservation of rare felid and canids
8 may be submitted to the Secretary by—

9 (A) any wildlife management authority of
10 a country that has within its boundaries any
11 part of the range of a rare felid or rare canid,
12 respectively; and

13 (B) any person or group with the dem-
14 onstrated expertise required for the conserva-
15 tion in the wild of rare felids or rare canids, re-
16 spectively.

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

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

23 (B) the name of the individual responsible
24 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 rare felids or rare canids
4 in the wild by assisting efforts to—

5 (1) implement conservation programs;

6 (2) address the conflicts between humans and
7 rare felids or rare canids, respectively, that arise
8 from competition for the same habitat or resources;

9 (3) enhance compliance with CITES, the En-
10 dangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et
11 seq.), and other applicable laws that prohibit or reg-
12 ulate the taking or trade of rare felids and rare
13 canids or regulate the use and management of rare
14 felid and rare canid habitat;

15 (4) develop sound scientific information on, or
16 methods for monitoring—

17 (A) the condition and health of rare felid
18 or rare canid habitat;

19 (B) rare felid or rare canid population
20 numbers and trends; and

21 (C) the ecological characteristics and re-
22 quirements of populations of rare felids or rare
23 canids for which there are little or no data;

24 (5) promote cooperative projects among govern-
25 ment entities, affected local communities, nongovern-

1 mental organizations, and other persons in the pri-
2 vate sector; or

3 (6) funds will not be appropriated for the pur-
4 chase or lease of lands to be used as suitable habitat
5 for felids or canids.

6 (e) PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY.—In approving project
7 proposals under this section, the Secretary shall give pref-
8 erence to conservation projects that are designed to ensure
9 effective, long-term conservation of rare felids and rare
10 canids and their habitats.

11 (f) MATCHING FUNDS.—In determining whether to
12 approve project proposals under this section, the Secretary
13 shall give preference to projects for which there exists
14 some measure of matching funds.

15 (g) PROJECT REPORTING.—

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

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

6 (h) LIMITATIONS ON USE FOR CAPTIVE BREEDING
7 OR DISPLAY.—Amounts provided as a grant under this
8 Act may not be used for captive breeding unless as part
9 of an accredited reintroduction or restoration program.

10 (i) ADVISORY GROUP.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—To assist in carrying out
12 this Act, the Secretary may convene an advisory
13 group consisting of individuals representing public
14 and private organizations actively involved in the
15 conservation of felids and canids.

16 (2) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—

17 (A) MEETINGS.—The advisory group
18 shall—

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

21 (ii) provide, at each meeting, an op-
22 portunity for interested persons to present
23 oral or written statements concerning
24 items on the agenda.

1 (B) NOTICE.—The Secretary shall provide
2 to the public timely notice of each meeting of
3 the advisory group, including the meeting agen-
4 da.

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

8 (3) EXEMPTION FROM FEDERAL ADVISORY
9 COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee
10 Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the advisory
11 group.

12 **SEC. 5. RARE CATS AND CANIDS CONSERVATION FUND.**

13 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established, in the
14 Multinational Species Conservation Fund established in
15 title I of the Department of the Interior and Related
16 Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 under the heading
17 “MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION
18 FUND”, a separate account to be known as the “Rare
19 Cats and Canids Conservation Fund”, consisting of—

20 (1) amounts transferred to the Secretary of the
21 Treasury for deposit into such account under sub-
22 section (c); and

23 (2) amounts appropriated to such account
24 under section 6.

25 (b) EXPENDITURES FROM FUND.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2),
2 upon request by the Secretary, the Secretary of the
3 Treasury shall transfer from the Fund to the Sec-
4 retary, without further appropriation, such amounts
5 as the Secretary determines are necessary to provide
6 assistance under section 4.

7 (2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Of the
8 amounts in the Fund available for each fiscal year,
9 the Secretary may expend not more than three per-
10 cent, or up to \$100,000, whichever is greater, to pay
11 the administrative expenses necessary to carry out
12 this Act.

13 (c) ACCEPTANCE AND USE OF DONATIONS.—The
14 Secretary may accept and use donations to provide assist-
15 ance under section 4, and may make public on the Internet
16 Web site and in publications of the Department of the In-
17 terior that the Secretary is authorized to accept and use
18 such donations. Amounts received by the Secretary in the
19 form of such donations shall be transferred to the Sec-
20 retary of the Treasury for deposit into the Fund.

21 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

22 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Fund,
23 \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020
24 to carry out this Act.

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