

Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper

Endangered Species Act talking points for Letters to the Editor

- I am writing in support of the Endangered Species Act, and in opposition to efforts by Congress and Secretary Zinke to weaken it.
- The Endangered Species Act is a safety net for fish, plants and wildlife on the brink of extinction.
- Since President Nixon signed the law in 1973, hundreds of species have been saved from disappearing forever, including [list one of more of your favorites, eg: grizzly bears, the bald eagle, peregrine falcon, gray wolf, American alligator], and many more are on their way to recovery.
- **But now, some members of Congress and the Administration are trying to weaken the Endangered Species Act, to benefit developers and the oil and gas and mining industries.**
- Proposed policies would undermine science and make it harder to protect important habitat for imperiled fish and wildlife.
- Protecting endangered species is important to me because _____.
- We have a responsibility to future generations to be good stewards and protect endangered species and the special places they call home.
- Please contact Senators _____ and _____ urge them to oppose efforts to weaken the Endangered Species Act and the species it protects.

General Letter-to-the-Editor Tips

- *Be timely*--Responding to a current hot issue or a recent article or editorial is one of the best ways to increase your chances of getting published. Be sure to mention the name of the article and the date it was written in the beginning of your letter.
- *Get a new signer*--Most newspapers won't print multiple letters from one person over a short period of time. If you've already published a letter, get someone else to sign future ones.
- *Keep it simple*--Keep your points short and clear, and stick to one subject.
- *Keep it short*--Make your first sentence short, compelling and catchy. Keep it well under the word limit.
- *Get local*--Newspapers, at their core, are community entities. Editors will be much more likely to publish a letter, and the letter will have much more impact, if it demonstrates local relevance.
- *Use personal stories*--Try to personalize the issue you are writing about. Say why you care and what it means to you. *For example, if you've taken your kids out to see wolves in the wild, or were lucky enough to hear wolves howling or see tracks, reference these experiences in your letter.*

Sending your Letter

- Paste your final letter into the body of an email (don't send as an attachment).
- Put the editor's email address in the "To" field.
- Put "letter to the editor" in the "Subject" line.
- The salutation should read, "Dear editor," and then be followed by your letter.
- Make sure to include your name, address and phone number with the letter. They won't print your info, but papers must call to confirm authorship before running a letter.
- If you don't hear from the paper within 2 days, call the editor to ask whether it will run.