

The Stop Extinction Challenge!

Congratulations and a big “Thank You!” for taking the Stop Extinction Challenge, and committing to visit your Senator’s office on *August 16th!* People like you and the hundreds of others around the country doing this with you, are the true power that keeps endangered wildlife and plants protected despite the many attempts by Congress and the Administration to weaken those protections.

I know that it is hard to do something that might be new, like taking time out of your busy week to speak with your elected representative, but we’ve included some materials and guidance in this packet to make it easy as pie. Also, if you have not already, **please sign up for a training webinar**, where we will walk you through what you need to know, and how your meeting may go. To sign up for a webinar, visit <http://www.endangered.org/getready/>

If you can’t make the webinar, or want to chat one on one, just email us at aperson@endangered.org with questions.

In this packet you will find materials to help you prepare for the meeting. There are also materials for you to take to your Senator’s office and leave behind after your meeting. No worries, there’s no need for you to memorize all of the information you are leaving with your Senator, but do try to read through some of that information, as it could be helpful in your meetings. that’s why we are leaving it behind!

You’ll also find a T-shirt enclosed, I hope it fits! You are now part of a team of species guardians! Wear it with pride along with hundreds of others during your meeting August 16th.



Materials for you

- *A “How to lobby” Tipsheet*
- *Talking points and Asks* - To help guide your conversation.
- *Social Media Sharing* - Please share photos of your visit online!

Materials for your Senator

- *ESA Factsheet*
- *Wildlife Corridors and Conservation Act*
- *Senate sign on letter for a strong appropriations bill*
- *Fact sheet on the ESA proposed regulations*
- *Fact sheet on the IPBES report*

Lobby Day Preparation

Why You? Who Else!

You're a constituent! They are taking the pulse of their district. They do not care who you voted for, what political party you're a member of, or whether you gave money to their opponent. (Of course if you're a campaign supporter, you can mention it!) If you have 1-2 friends, colleagues, or relatives who are equally concerned, feel free to share these materials with them and bring them to the meeting (just let the office know who will attend the meeting). Either way, a one-on-one meeting is very powerful!

How to Prepare

Read through this document, the talking points, and the handout materials. Visit your Member's and your Senators' websites to read their biographies, news releases, and which committees they serve on. (Go to: www.house.gov and www.senate.gov and plug in your zip code in the top right corner.) If you want to go the extra mile, you can view how they vote on environmental issues by visiting the League of Conservation Voters scorecard at <http://scorecard.lcv.org/>.

Anatomy of a Successful Meeting

A Ten-Step Meeting

- Step 1:** Arrive early. Greet and thank them for the meeting. If you know of a positive action that they have taken recently, mention it and thank them for that.
- Step 2:** Make a connection. Ask staffers where they're from in your state. Get to know them and their interests—do they bird-watch, hunt, fish, canoe, hike, camp, etc.?
- Step 3:** Briefly explain who you are. List your identity/roles (up to 4). For instance, "I'm a mom, a veteran of the U.S. Army, and a rancher." It is helpful for them to know which constituencies you identify with or represent.
- Step 4:** Make your "ask" early. Your meeting could be interrupted. "I'm here to talk to you about the proposed regulation changes which will weaken the Endangered Species Act. I'd like to ask your help in stopping them."
- Step 5:** Tell your story: How does this issue relate to you? Why does it matter to you? Describe your connection to natural places and species in your state (e.g., if you had a rare sighting of an endangered bird, mention that!). After the meeting, your story is what will stick with them.
- Step 6:** Ask key questions (see below). Get them talking for about half of the meeting.
- Step 7:** Listen, listen, listen. Take notes.
- Step 8:** Elaborate and reiterate your points. See the talking points and messaging for specifics.
- Step 9:** Make the "ask" again: "That's why I hope you'll protect the Endangered Species Act against all of the individual attacks that we are seeing."
- Step 10:** Ask if you may take a photo, particularly if you are meeting with a Representative or Senator. Say a final thank you and leave behind materials.

Key Questions to Ask: Get them Talking (Replace "your boss" with "you" in the questions below if you're meeting with the actual legislator.)

- Can you tell me how your boss feels about this issue?
- Are there issues relating to wildlife that your boss is particularly interested in?
- Has your boss spent time in any of our state's natural areas or with our state's wildlife?
- Are you hearing from anyone else on this issue—other constituents, etc.? If yes, from whom? Who would you LIKE to hear from, but are not hearing from?
- Is there anything we can do to help you? Is there any information we can help get for you?

Sticky Points?

What if they ask a challenging question that I cannot answer?

They will not be quizzing your knowledge of policy. They understand you are here to tell your own personal story, and that you are not a policy expert with all the answers. You can always offer to get back to them on an issue.

What if they disagree?

It is *very, very unlikely* that you will be challenged in a meeting. If that should happen, please say, “We’ll have to agree to disagree on that issue.”

What if they don’t give you an answer on where they stand or their boss stands?

That’s ok. We don’t always expect one. A big part of the goal is relationship building with the office.

What to Wear?

Standard business attire (suits for men and women) is always appropriate. Business casual (slacks, khakis, button-down shirts, etc.) is also appropriate. If you are fortunate enough to have scheduled more than one meeting in the day, you may do a bit of walking and may want comfortable shoes!

After the Meeting

1. Fill out your Stop Extinction Challenge report back form [HERE](#). Be sure to note any information your Senate office may have requested.
2. Write a thank you note and either email or snail mail it to the individuals with whom you met.
3. If you promised to find an answer to a question, be sure to find it and share it. Feel free to reach out to the Endangered Species Coalition (action@endangered.org) for help on questions.
4. Share your experience and photos on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or other social media. Share your photos with us by tweeting them at us (@endangered) or email them to us at: action@endangered.org.
5. Take your activism further by writing an LTE or op-ed on your meeting and on endangered species! [Learn how here](#)



1,2,3... Selfie!

Don't forget to take a photo at the senator's office on August 16th!
#stopextinction



I always feel a bit self conscious about taking selfies, but this is for a good cause, plus, you will look awesome in your new T-Shirt!

There are hundreds of people across the country heading into their Senators' offices on the same day, that you are. Can you imagine if every one of us tweets, posts and shares our experience with the world? Can we get people talking about how much America cares about protecting our Endangered Species?

Leda and John visiting Senator Gardner's (NM)

You are the spark that can start a fire! Share the proof of your passion for plants and wildlife with your network by sharing photos of yourself taking back your government on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Sample Tweets/posts:

- Today I met with @[INSERT SENATOR'S TWITTER HANDLE]'s office and asked them to defend the #EndangeredSpeciesAct from attacks by the Trump administration.
- Today I challenged myself to #stopextinction. I met with @[INSERT SENATOR'S TWITTER HANDLE]'s office and asked them to defend the #EndangeredSpeciesAct from attacks by the Trump administration



Kent, Judy and Corry with Senator Manchin (WV)

Check out <http://www.tweetcongress.org/tweeters> to find your Senators' Twitter handle in advance, or just ask at the office while you're there!

STOP EXTINCTION CHALLENGE 2019

Introductions

Introduce yourself and your team.

Background

The IPBES biodiversity report brought together more than 400 scientists and experts, 15,000 scientific and government sources, as well as indigenous and local knowledge and found that one Million species are at risk of extinction over the next few decades. This extinction crisis will cause economic and public health harm to Americans, and it is our moral obligation to act.

We are here today, along with thousands of other concerned citizens who are meeting with their Senate offices across the country today, because in the face of this extinction crisis, the Trump Administration is gutting the most important law to prevent this extinction crisis and species disappearing forever.

Make it personal

- *Activists tell personal stories of a state based threatened/endangered species, examples include:*
 - Contributes to public health (mosquito eaters like bats and birds etc.)
 - Contributes to food security or the economy (tourism, agriculture, pollinators, etc)
 - Contributes to ecosystem health (keystone species like coral, salmon, alligators, predators)
 - Contribute to quality of life (species the state is proud of like manatees, tortoise, jaguars, etc. or that the activist loves for the sake of love)

Pause

“We would like to pause here and first, we would like to hear about the Senators plans to prevent this crisis and we have some suggestions as well.”

- *Pause to see if staffer has anything to say or good suggestions. Take notes.*

Key Points

1. Defend the Endangered Species Act.

The Endangered Species Act works because it has prevented 99% of listed species from going extinct. It is popular, with 90% of Americans supporting the Act. Unfortunately, the

Trump Administration has proposed rules that will exacerbate the extinction crisis by weakening the ESA. (which may be published any day.)

The sweeping changes include proposals that would:

- wrongly inject economics into what should be purely science-based decisions about listing imperiled species;
- create loopholes through which the agency can let controversial species go extinct by refusing to designate the full and necessary range of critical habitat due to “societal conflict” and other non-scientific considerations;
- deprive threatened species from automatically receiving protections from killing, trapping and other forms of harm and commercial exploitation;
- ignore the impacts of climate change on species’ habitat; and further imperil endangered species by blinding federal agencies to the broad consequences of their actions.

ASK: *Will support or congressional efforts to block or overturn these regulations? Will your boss make a public statement, write an Op Ed or press release opposing the regulations when they are published?*

2. Increase Endangered Species Act funding

The House passed an appropriations bill that is clean of anti-ESA riders and provides funding increases for Department of Interior ESA programs.

ASK: *Will the Senator sign this letter, led by Senator X, that expresses support for the House passed appropriations and fight for full funding and a clean bill as the Senate works on their spending bills for 2020?*

3. Save Wildlife locally

Wildlife Corridors are an easy way to prevent needless wildlife deaths that also put people at risk.

ASK: *Will the Senator cosponsor the S 1499, Wildlife Corridors Conservation Act? Help ensure it is included in any transportation infrastructure bill that moves? **OR** (If a cosponsor already) Thank you for sponsoring the Wildlife Corridors and Conservation Act! will you help to approach other potential co-sponsor and support moving this legislation forward?*

4. State specific ask

Some states may have specific asks that are particularly relevant for their senators. Check-in with your meeting team lead to determine whether your state has a specific ask you should convey in meetings.

Follow up

- Listen carefully and take notes on the Senator or staffer's response
- Thank the Senator or staffer for their time and hand over the leave behind materials including your card/contact information. This is good relationship building.
- Take pictures of your team with your Senator and share on social media #StopExtinction
- Quick tweet example - ATTACH YOUR GROUP PICTURE - "It was great to meet with Senator X staff to discuss the importance of the Endangered Species Act and how to stop the extinction crisis! @endangered @Senator twitter handle #stopextinction
- Send a follow up email after the meeting
- Submit a report back form on how your meeting went, include any pictures.