

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](#)

