**ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT DEFENSE**

**OVERALL TALKING POINTS**

* The Endangered Species Act is incredibly effective. It has prevented the extinction of 99% of the species listed under its care.
* The Endangered Species Act is also enormously popular. According to a 2015 poll, 90% of U.S. voters support upholding the Act.
* Unfortunately, over last couple Congresses, there has been a huge increase in the number of legislative attacks on the Endangered Species Act. Many of these attacks would block or undermine Endangered Species Act protections for a particular species.
  + By one count, in the last five years, there has been a 600 percent increase in the rate of legislative attacks on endangered species, compared to the previous 15 years.
  + Already in this Congress, more than 30 bills and amendments have been filed that would undermine the Act.
* Decisions about which species should be protected under the Endangered Species Act should be made by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists in accordance with the Act, not by members of Congress.
* Please support the Endangered Species Act by opposing all legislation that would undermine this bedrock environmental law.

**SPECIFIC ASKS FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS**

**Ask #1**: Will you commit to voting against any riders and amendments that undermine the ESA? (For example, riders on funding bills)

**Ask #2**: Will you oppose standalone legislation that undermines the Endangered Species Act?

**Ask #3**: Will you reach out to other members of Congress to urge them to oppose attacks on the Endangered Species Act?

**FURTHER QUESTIONS**

* What and who do you hear from the state/district on endangered species issues?
* What is your/your boss’s interest in these issues?
* Who are the most important people in your state/district to hear from on these issues?
* Are there any further materials we can provide your office that would be helpful?