

AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT 119-

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OFFERED BY MR. BEYER OF VIRGINIA

Page 68, after line 2, insert the following:

1 **SEC. 2408. HABITAT CONNECTIVITY AREA DESIGNATION.**

2 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

3 (1) AMERICAN WILDLIFE CORRIDOR.—The term
4 “American wildlife corridor” means a habitat
5 connectivity area, including any adjacent lands to
6 such habitat connectivity area that is designated
7 under subsection (c)(2).

8 (2) DIRECTORS.—The term “Directors” means
9 the Secretary of the Interior acting through—

10 (A) the Director of the United States Geo-
11 logical Survey; and

12 (B) the Director of the United Fish and
13 Wildlife Service.

14 (3) HABITAT CONNECTIVITY.—The term “habi-
15 tat connectivity” means the degree to which land-
16 scapes, waterscapes, and seascapes allow species to
17 move freely, including during seasonal migration and
18 in response to changing environmental conditions,
19 and ecological processes to function unimpeded.

1 (4) HABITAT CONNECTIVITY AREA.—The term
2 “habitat connectivity area” means an area of intact
3 habitat or a distinct component of the landscape,
4 waterscape, or seascape the designation of which,
5 under subsection (c)(2), may provide habitat
6 connectivity.

7 (b) IDENTIFICATION OF HABITAT CONNECTIVITY
8 AREAS.—

9 (1) IDENTIFICATION.—Not later than 1 year
10 after the date of enactment of this Act, and periodi-
11 cally thereafter, the Secretary, in collaboration with
12 the Directors, shall identify habitat connectivity
13 areas, including any lands adjacent to such identi-
14 fied habitat connectivity areas, that may improve
15 habitat connectivity in such areas.

16 (2) MAPS.—Subject to section 1244(b) of the
17 Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3844(b)), as
18 amended by subsection (f), and section 1619 of the
19 Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, upon
20 identifying habitat connectivity areas under para-
21 graph (1), the Secretary, in collaboration with the
22 Directors, shall—

23 (A) develop maps of the identified habitat
24 connectivity areas, including any adjacent lands
25 described in paragraph (1); and

1 (B) expand and build upon any existing ef-
2 forts by the Department of Agriculture in devel-
3 oping such maps.

4 (3) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the
5 date on which the Secretary identifies habitat
6 connectivity areas, including any adjacent lands,
7 under paragraph (1), and periodically thereafter
8 upon any new identifications under such paragraph,
9 the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report
10 that—

11 (A) includes a description of habitat
12 connectivity areas identified under paragraph
13 (1);

14 (B) includes a review of any associated
15 data or surveys relating to activities carried out
16 under paragraph (1);

17 (C) includes the maps developed under
18 paragraph (2) in aggregate form; and

19 (D) identifies gaps in information with re-
20 spect to carrying out paragraphs (1) and (2),
21 including—

22 (i) information relating to whether the
23 identified habitat connectivity areas are
24 being used as a wildlife corridor;

1 (ii) additional information required to
2 identify additional habitat connectivity
3 areas; and

4 (iii) any other information the Sec-
5 retary, in collaboration with the Directors,
6 determines necessary.

7 (c) DESIGNATION OF AMERICAN WILDLIFE COR-
8 RIDORS.—

9 (1) CRITERIA.—Not later than 1 year after the
10 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall
11 issue regulations to establish criteria, for the pur-
12 pose of designating habitat connectivity areas under
13 paragraph (2), that—

14 (A) considers whether a designation is in
15 concert with existing land and resource man-
16 agement plans; and

17 (B) determines, using the best-available
18 science, whether a habitat connectivity area
19 identified under subsection (b)(1), including any
20 adjacent lands as described in that subsection—

21 (i) supports the persistence, resilience,
22 adaptability, and movement of fish and
23 wildlife;

24 (ii) has the potential to benefit more
25 than 1 species of fish and wildlife; or

1 (iii) has the potential to benefit fish
2 or wildlife species that are listed as threat-
3 ened or endangered under the Endangered
4 Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et
5 seq.).

6 (2) DESIGNATION.—Not later than 3 years
7 after the date on which the Secretary establishes cri-
8 teria pursuant to paragraph (1), the Secretary shall
9 designate habitat connectivity areas identified under
10 subsection (b)(1), including any adjacent lands that
11 may provide additional habitat connectivity, using
12 the criteria established pursuant to paragraph (1) of
13 this subsection, as an American wildlife corridor for
14 the purposes of encouraging the long-term mainte-
15 nance and conservation of the American wildlife cor-
16 ridor.

17 (d) CONSERVATION OF AMERICAN WILDLIFE COR-
18 RIDORS.—

19 (1) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

20 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in col-
21 laboration with the Directors, shall develop and
22 establish technical standards and requirements,
23 including best practices for the long-term con-
24 servation of an American wildlife corridor, to
25 provide technical assistance, outreach, and edu-

1 cation with respect to the conservation of the
2 applicable American wildlife corridor.

3 (B) AUTHORIZED ACTIONS OF SEC-
4 RETARY.—In providing technical assistance
5 pursuant to subparagraph (A), the Secretary
6 may encourage producers to—

7 (i) implement strategies and activities
8 that will promote sustainable production
9 and conservation of wildlife habitats con-
10 currently;

11 (ii) maintain or improve habitats and
12 habitat connectivity in American wildlife
13 corridors;

14 (iii) establish wildlife monitoring
15 plans; and

16 (iv) implement strategies and activi-
17 ties that enhance the ability of fish and
18 wildlife to respond to changing environ-
19 mental conditions.

20 (2) CONTRACT MODIFICATION.—In furthering
21 the purposes described in subsection (c)(2) with re-
22 spect to an American wildlife corridor designation,
23 the Secretary may—

1 (A) give priority for enrollment or reenroll-
2 ment in a conservation program administered
3 by the Secretary; and

4 (B) terminate or modify an existing con-
5 tract entered into with the Secretary under
6 such a conservation program if—

7 (i) the producer agrees to the termi-
8 nation or modification of such contract;
9 and

10 (ii) land subject to such contract will
11 be enrolled in—

12 (I) the agricultural conservation
13 easement program established under
14 subtitle H of title XII of the Food Se-
15 curity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3865 et
16 seq.); or

17 (II) the healthy forests reserve
18 program established under title V of
19 the Healthy Forests Restoration Act
20 of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6571 et seq.), as
21 in effect on the day before the date of
22 enactment of this Act.

23 (e) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—To carry out this
24 section, the Secretary may enter into cooperative agree-
25 ments with—

- 1 (1) Federal agencies;
- 2 (2) State, Tribal, and local governments;
- 3 (3) nongovernmental organizations; or
- 4 (4) institutions of higher education.

5 (f) PRIVACY OF PERSONAL INFORMATION RELATING
6 TO NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION PROGRAMS.—
7 Section 1244(b)(1)(B)(i) of the Food Security Act of 1985
8 (16 U.S.C. 3844(b)(1)(B)(i)) is amended by inserting
9 “and section 2408 of the Farm, Food, and National Secu-
10 rity Act of 2026” after “Farm Service Agency”.

11 (g) REGULATORY CERTAINTY.—Section 1244(p) of
12 the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3844(p)) is
13 amended—

14 (1) in paragraph (1)(B), by inserting “, or an
15 American wildlife corridor (as such term is defined
16 in section 2408(a) of the Farm, Food, and National
17 Security Act of 2026),” after “wildlife resource con-
18 cern”; and

19 (2) in paragraph (2)(A), by inserting “, or an
20 American wildlife corridor,” after “wildlife resource
21 concern”.

