

Animal Welfare Groups Applaud Bipartisan Congressional Effort to Nullify Barred Owl Slaughter Plan

WASHINGTON , DC, UNITED STATES, July 23, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Animal Wellness Action](#) and the [Center for a Humane Economy](#) today praised the introduction of a bipartisan Congressional Review Act (CRA) resolution led by Reps. Troy Nehls, R-Texas; Josh Harder, D-Calif.; Scott Perry, R-Pa.; and Adam Gray, D-Calif., to nullify the Biden-era “Barred Owl Management Strategy”—an unprecedented, costly, and unworkable plan to kill nearly 500,000 North American forest owls in the West over a 30-year period.

The CRA resolution, supported by a diverse and bipartisan coalition of 19 House lawmakers, builds on two letters of opposition to the program from 38 lawmakers almost evenly divided by party.

“This is a billion-dollar scheme to assault and kill nearly half a million forest owls native only to North America and long protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act,” said Wayne Pacelle, president of Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy. “The vastness of the geography makes the kill plan thoroughly impractical, and the billion-dollar cost of contracting with paid shooters who will invade our national parks and wilderness areas is unbearable. We are grateful for the moral instincts and fiscal prudence exhibited by the lawmakers pushing ahead this resolution.”

The FWS plan—approved in September 2024—seeks to dramatically reduce populations of barred owls in Washington, Oregon, and California to alleviate competitive pressure on northern and California spotted owls. But barred owls are a native North American species, protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and their expansion into western forests reflects a natural and ongoing range expansion—a phenomenon common to many bird species.

“The Biden Administration’s Fish and Wildlife Service agency plan to directly kill more than 450,000 barred owls, costing tax dollars over \$1.3 billion over the next 30 years, is a waste of Americans’ hard-earned tax dollars,” said Congressman Nehls. “Under the leadership of President Trump, we are protecting Americans’ tax dollars and restoring fiscal sanity in



Barred Owl photo by USFWS



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*Wayne Pacelle, president of
Animal Wellness Action*

Washington, D.C. My CRA would prevent \$1.35 billion from being wasted on the pointless killing of barred owls in the Pacific Northwest.”

In a statement that has drawn attention across the conservation community, Dr. Eric Forsman, the preeminent forest owl biologist and longtime U.S. Forest Service researcher who helped pioneer protections for spotted owls, warned: “Control across a large region would be incredibly expensive, and you’d have to keep doing it forever. In the long run, we’re just going to have to let the two species work it out.”

A recent front-page Los Angeles Times investigation revealed that the Trump Administration has terminated three critical bridge grants that would have jumpstarted the program, adding even more doubt to the practical features of this plan. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) confirmed the plan is subject to the Congressional Review Act.

Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy estimate the program could cost up to \$1.35 billion, based on real-world owl-killing contracts like the \$4.5 million grant awarded to the Hoopa Valley Tribe to kill just 1,500 owls over four years—a staggering \$3,000 per bird.

“Protecting spotted owls is an imperative, but assaulting other native wildlife occupying the same forests is not ethical or a practical means of achieving that goal,” added Pacelle. “Once the government shoots barred owls, other birds will fly back in and the government will be on a never-ending killing treadmill, burning monies better used for conservation projects to help spotted owls and other threatened and endangered species.” There are more than 360 organizations, including 30 local Audubon societies, opposing the “Barred Owl Management Strategy.”

Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy have also filed federal litigation against the FWS in Washington state, asserting the plan violates the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the National Environmental Policy Act.

Original cosponsors of the CRA resolution include: Troy Nehls, R-Texas; Scott Perry, R-Pa.; Josh Harder, D-Calif.; Adam Gray, D-Calif.; Andy Ogles, R-Tenn.; Buddy Carter, R-Ga.; Nancy Mace, R-S.C.; Lance Gooden, R-Texas; Sydney Kamlager-Dove, D-Calif.; Tim Burchett, R-Tenn.; Vern Buchanan, R-Fla.; Gus Bilirakis, R-Fla.; Jeff Van Drew, R-N.J.; Diana Harshbarger, R-Tenn.; Josh Gottheimer, D-N.J.; Brian Fitzpatrick, R-Pa.; Don Davis D-N.C.; Shri Thanedar, D-Mich.; and Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick, D-Fla.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s final “Barred Owl Management Strategy,” the

following National Park Service units would be opened to barred owl shooting: Olympic, Mount Rainier, North Cascades, Redwood, Lassen Volcanic, and Pinnacles national parks; Point Reyes National Seashore; Golden Gate and Whiskeytown national recreation areas; Sequoia, Kings Canyon, Yosemite, and Crater Lake national parks; and Oregon Caves National Monument and Preserve.

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