

# Animal Welfare Groups Applaud Introduction of U.S. Senate Resolution to Spare Half a Million Barred Owls

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, July 28, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Calling the federal government's barred owl kill plan "unworkable, costly, and inhumane," [Animal Wellness Action](#) and [the Center for a Humane Economy](#) today praised the introduction of a Congressional Review Act (CRA) resolution by Senators John Kennedy, R-La., and Rand Paul, R-Ky.

SJR 69 is a companion to HJR 111, introduced last week 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 FWS plan—approved in September 2024—targets 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 barred owl kill plan is the largest assault on birds of prey that any government anywhere in the world has ever planned.

"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."

In a statement that has drawn attention across the conservation and animal-welfare communities, Dr. Eric Forsman, a 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."

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. In March and May, letters to Interior Secretary Burgum, 19 Republicans and 18 Democrats in the

House urged Interior Secretary Doug Burgum to abandon the kill plan. Among their reasons for concern, the lawmakers cited cost, ethics, and impracticability.

A recent front-page Los Angeles Times investigation revealed that the Trump Administration has terminated three “bridge” grants that would have jumpstarted the program, adding even more doubt to the ability of the proponents of the owl-killing plan to sustain the funding needed to conduct the program.

“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,” added Mr. Pacelle.

There are more than 375 organizations, including 30 local Audubon and Bird Alliance 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.

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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