

**Testimony of Jim Kurth, Acting Director,
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior
Before the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works on Examining Innovative
Solutions to Control Invasive Species and Promote Wildlife Conservation**

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Good morning Chairman Barrasso, Ranking Member Carper, and Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to testify on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) work to develop innovative solutions to control invasive species and promote wildlife conservation. My name is Jim Kurth and I am the Acting Director for the Service within the Department of the Interior.

The Service's mission is "Working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance, fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people." To maximize our effectiveness the Service continually seeks to partner with others and to innovate. The Service has developed innovative solutions to conserve wildlife and control invasive species by: collaborating with others and leveraging resources through partnerships; using the best available science to inform and adapt our management approaches; and employing innovative technologies to achieve our mission. Our testimony will describe innovative work the Service does in a number of areas ranging from engaging with private landowners through the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program and other wildlife conservation partnerships, to preventing and controlling the spread of invasive species, to combating the illegal wildlife trade.

Collaborating for Conservation

"Working with others" is at the forefront of the Service's mission. In all of the Service's work, we recognize that the conservation of our nation's fish and wildlife is not something that the Service can achieve on its own. Strong partnerships with state and federal agencies, Tribes, private landowners, and other stakeholders are integral to achieving conservation successes. These diverse partnerships are a force multiplier, bring new resources and viewpoints to the Service's work, allowing us to leverage conservation dollars and expand our knowledge.

Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program

It is critical that the Service engage with private landowners to collaboratively develop and achieve wildlife conservation goals. A primary tool for collaboration with private landowners is the Partners for Fish and Wildlife (Partners) program. The Partners program, founded in 1987 and celebrating its 30th anniversary, offers voluntary habitat restoration and enhancement options that are tailored to mutually benefit both wildlife and landowner needs. The program requires a cost share – an investment of private landowner funds, land, or other services to complement federal funds. It has had no shortage of participants, and in fact there is a large backlog of hundreds of landowners who want to participate in the program. In South Dakota, for example, there are nearly 150 landowners would like to participate.

Since the Partners program's inception, these voluntary incentive-based efforts have resulted in over 4.5 million acres of uplands, 1.2 million acres of wetlands, and more than 13,000 miles of

stream habitat restored and enhanced across the nation. This work was completed in partnership with nearly 50,000 private landowners.

The Partners program contributes to the economies of many rural communities in order to harmoniously balance landowner objectives with wildlife habitat and ensure that the needs of people and wildlife are met for future generations. According to a published 2014 economic analysis report, the Partners program leverages more than \$8 in non-federal funds for every Federal dollar invested in the program, which multiplies to \$15.70 in economic returns and supports over 3,500 jobs nationwide.

This emphasis on partnership-driven conservation and working together to preserve working landscapes has built and strengthened community trust and support for our work across the nation. The Partners Program takes that model of trust and credibility and uses it to foster relationships that work to downlist, delist, and prevent listing of species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

The Partners program has facilitated the restoration of healthy waterways across the nation, benefiting populations of federally-listed fish species and valuable game fish such as salmon, native trout, smallmouth bass and muskellunge. Conservation on private lands complements and leverages the benefits of national wildlife refuges and other protected areas by providing and connecting important fish and wildlife habitats. Preserving working landscapes benefits both species and traditional land uses, such as farming and ranching.

Coastal Program

The Coastal Program is another example of a voluntary, cost-share, partnership-based program, and it is the Service's primary tool for community-based fish and wildlife habitat conservation on public and privately-owned land. The program delivers both technical and financial assistance, conservation planning and on-the-ground coastal habitat restoration. Through partnerships, the Service leverages its technical and financial resources with partner resources to maximize habitat conservation and benefits to federal trust and other priority species. In 2016, working with 462 partners and landowners on 280 projects, the Coastal Program assessed and improved more than 16,000 acres of wetlands, 50,000 acres of upland and 100 miles of stream habitats, leveraging \$25 for every Coastal Program project dollar.

Partnerships with States and Tribes

The Service has developed additional innovative mechanisms to cooperate with states, private landowners, and others, both to preclude the need to add species to the threatened and endangered list where possible, and to speed the recovery of those species that are listed under the ESA. State fish and wildlife agencies are essential partners in implementing the ESA, with which the Service works closely on proactive conservation to prevent the need for the regulatory mechanisms of the ESA. If listing is needed, state agencies are critical to monitoring species, fostering public awareness in their communities, and carrying out on-the-ground recovery actions. Some of the most recent successes include the Sonoran desert tortoise, New England cottontail rabbit, and the Montana arctic grayling, each of which was precluded from listing due to successful, proactive conservation efforts with our partners.

When species do warrant the protections of the ESA, the Service will commit to collaborating with state and tribal agencies to most effectively recover those species. In our efforts to recover the endangered black-footed ferret, the Service has partnered with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD), Lower Brulé Sioux Tribe in South Dakota, and private landowners to reintroduce ferrets on the landscape. Through sustained recovery efforts, Service partnerships with state and Tribal governments, other Federal agencies and private landowners have largely contributed in recovering at-risk populations. These conservation efforts have culminated in the delisting of several recovered species, including several recent examples such as the Louisiana black bear, Oregon chub, and Delmarva fox squirrel, and to this day, their numbers remain at stable levels.

Another important area in which the Service partners with the states is our work to support vibrant waterfowl hunting opportunities, utilizing modeling and adaptive management. Migratory birds are cooperatively managed by the Service and the State and Canadian Provincial wildlife agencies through four administrative migratory bird “flyways”. Each Flyway has a Council consisting of representatives from state and provincial agencies, which works in partnership with Service to develop hunting seasons and bag limit frameworks. The States then choose their individual hunting seasons based upon these annual hunting frameworks. In addition, in 1987 the Service started the Migratory Bird Joint Ventures, which are cooperative, regional partnerships that work to conserve habitat for the benefit of birds, other wildlife, and people. The 22 Joint Ventures, which cover most of the country, work to provide scientific tools and greater scientific understanding of birds in the landscape and how to protect and conserve them.

Working Lands for Wildlife

We also partner with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to implement the program Working Lands for Wildlife, which focuses on voluntary conservation on working landscapes. Through this voluntary, incentive-based Working Lands for Wildlife effort, NRCS and Service programs provide landowners with technical and financial assistance to achieve specific conservation goals for candidate and listed species. Since 2012, the NRCS has restored and protected 6.7 million acres of important habitat for a variety of wildlife. These efforts have led to the rebound of many species, demonstrating the Working Lands for Wildlife conservation model works.

Partnerships with the Military

Another example of a Service partnership enabling innovative wildlife and habitat management is our work with the Department of Defense and states under the Sikes Act. Military lands comprise approximately 25 million acres and are largely undeveloped. These lands represent diverse habitat types that in many cases support among the highest levels of biodiversity of any other federal land types. Defense installations work with Service and state counterparts to develop integrated natural resources management plans (INRMPs) for their installations. INRMPs support the military mission of each installation while also improving access to hunting, fishing, trapping, and other outdoor recreational opportunities for military communities and the public, and maximizing the conservation benefits of these lands for wildlife species. A partnership between the Service, Air Force, and Marine Corps to manage the endangered Sonoran pronghorn population recently brought back this endemic species from 21 to 202

animals. In 2013, the Service and Air Force established a national interagency agreement to support the management of natural resources on Air Force lands. The Service now provides technical assistance and expertise to over 45 Air Force installations. This partnership has improved management decisions for approximately 125 listed species and their habitat, meeting the core missions of both agencies while reducing regulatory burdens.

Sentinel Landscapes

Another example of our work with the Military is the Sentinel Landscapes program which is a partnership between the Department of Defense, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of the Interior. Sentinel Landscapes are working or natural lands important to the Nation's defense mission – places where preserving the working and rural character of key landscapes strengthens the economies of farms, ranches, and forests, conserves habitat and natural resources, and protects vital test and training missions conducted on those military installations that anchor such landscapes. First established in 2013, the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership is a nationwide federal, local and private collaboration dedicated to promoting natural resource sustainability and the preservation of agricultural and conservation land uses in areas surrounding military installations. Agencies from the three Departments coordinate the Partnership at the national level through the Sentinel Landscapes Federal Coordination Committee. The Sentinel Landscapes Partnership seeks to recognize and create incentives for landowners to continue maintaining these landscapes in ways that contribute to the nation's defense. Where shared interests can be identified within a Landscape, the Partnership coordinates mutually beneficial programs and strategies to preserve, enhance or protect habitat and working lands near military installations in order to reduce, prevent or eliminate restrictions due to incompatible development that inhibit military testing and training.

Controlling Invasive Species

Invasive species can be introduced in a myriad of ways, from the illegal release of non-native species to the discharge of ballast water from ships. The adverse consequences from invasive species range well into the tens of billions of dollars each year in natural and economic damages in the U.S. alone. Additionally, invasive species have interfered with the recovery or contributed to the decline of 42 percent of federally listed threatened and endangered species. This can lead to increased regulatory burdens to the public. To keep pace, the Service has sought to innovate in the areas of partnerships, management, and technology in the areas where we have influence, including in aquatic systems, on national wildlife refuges, conservation of federally protected species, and the inspection of wildlife trade.

Prevention

With the increasingly global nature of our economy and transportation systems, the importation of potentially invasive species into the U.S. will continue, as will the risks—and costly impacts—they impose on our economy, environment, and public health. Preventing the introduction and spread of harmful species is the most cost-effective approach to eliminating or reducing these threats. Title 18 of the Lacey Act is an important authority the Service uses to prevent the introduction of invasive species through the trade of live organisms and through other pathways. The Service may list a species as injurious through the regulatory process, thus prohibiting its importation or its transportation between States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or any territory or possession of the U.S. without a permit issued

by the Service. In 2016, the Service designated 11 nonnative aquatic species proactively to avoid them from potentially becoming invasive species in the U.S. With tens of thousands of species in trade in the U.S. alone, the Service has worked to streamline its injurious species listing process and develop decision-support tools, such as risk screening. This allows the agency to quickly evaluate the relative risks associated with particular species and prioritize them for further evaluation.

The Service uses international databases and scientific papers that are readily available online to produce rapid screening reports called Ecological Risk Screening Summaries. The information is used in a peer-reviewed model that matches the basic climate requirements in the species' native and introduced ranges with similar climates in the U.S. Along with the climate match, the reports provide information on the species' history of invasiveness. Combined, the two factors provide a good prediction of the risk of invasiveness in the U.S. These reports are posted online to provide the live-animal trade industries with the necessary technical information to help them voluntarily decide which species to refrain from importing. In addition, State natural resource and conservation agencies can use the rapid risk screening reports to aid with their own management of potentially invasive species as well as management in coordination with industry.

Detection

While preventing introduction and establishment is the Service's highest priority for invasive species management, we recognize that too many introduction pathways exist to completely and cost-effectively prevent invasion. One thing is clear—the earlier an invasion is detected, the more cost-effective and successful management actions will be. Molecular-based surveillance technologies, such as environmental DNA, or eDNA, and next-generation sequencing, have shown significant promise in detecting invasive species early in the invasion process. eDNA can be left in the environment in the form of scales, cells, feces, or mucus. The Service maintains and annually updates the Quality Assurance Project Plan that serves as the standard protocol for the collection and processing of eDNA samples. The Service has also been the lead federal agency for eDNA monitoring for invasive Asian carp in the Chicago Area Waterway System and Great Lakes tributaries since 2013. eDNA samples are processed at the new state-of-the-art Whitney Genetics Lab in Onalaska, Wisconsin, part of the Service's Midwest Fisheries Center. To target specific species of carp, the Service worked with states and Canada on a regional eDNA surveillance program to determine the presence or absence of genetic material from silver and bighead carps.

The Service has also supported non-traditional detection methods, such as detection dogs. The Service has supported the training and use of dogs to detect the presence of microscopic zebra and quagga mussel larvae that cannot be seen with the naked human eye, which hitchhike to new habitats in or on boats. This ancient, natural canine sentry-technology can be more effective than any technology humans have devised.

Eradication

The Service has also developed Invasive Species Strike Teams, which are used to attack new outbreaks of invasive species before they obtain a foothold and cause major damage. These rapid responders are highly trained individuals deployed to national wildlife refuges across the country as soon as an invasive species infestation is detected. This accomplishes invasive species

eradication for a fraction of the cost of what would be involved if the invasive species were allowed time to become fully established in an area; we are saving taxpayers money and native species through early detection and rapid response. These Service Strike Teams have partnered with Tribes, private landowners, the National Park Service, and youth conservation groups to coordinate their strategy of “early detection and rapid response.” For example, in 2015, the Montana/Wyoming Strike Team surveyed 2,500 acres for new invasive plants at the National Elk Refuge and treated 87 new invaders on 87 acres.

While invasive species are a continuing and urgent threat to native plant communities and wildlife habitat across the country, the Service has collaborated on many success stories in the control and eradication of invasive species.

Within the Great Lakes region, the Service has been working with the Great Lakes Commission on the binational Great Lakes Sea Lamprey Control Program for more than 50 years. Lampreys have been enormously destructive since they invaded the Great Lakes from the Atlantic Ocean in the 1930s. During its life, a parasitic sea lamprey can kill 40 or more pounds of fish; they parasitize lake trout, whitefish, and other species, which was a major factor leading to the collapse of Great Lakes fisheries in the 1950s. The Service is the primary agent implementing control activities, using integrated pest management techniques to suppress sea lamprey populations to less than 10 percent of numbers experienced during the 1950s collapse. Control of this harmful species has allowed for the reestablishment of sport and commercial fisheries that have recently been estimated as having an annual value of \$7 billion. The Service co-chairs the Asian Carp Coordinating Committee (ACRCC) to prevent the introduction and establishment of Asian carp in the Great Lakes. The work of the ACRCC is outlined in its 2017 Action Plan, which contains a portfolio of over 60 high-priority strategic activities planned for implementation in the coming year, including continued support for contingency response plans. The Action Plan serves as a foundation for the work of the ACRCC partnership — a collaboration of 27 U.S. and Canadian federal, state, provincial, and local agencies and organizations — working collaboratively to achieve its mission.

In the northeastern U.S., the Service has partnered with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to eradicate to near-zero the invasive nutria from the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge and adjacent lands in Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. These large rodents have destroyed thousands of acres of marshland on the Delmarva Peninsula through their destructive feeding habits. One of our most effective tools has been working with USDA to deploy specially trained detection dogs that are able to track down nutria. This eradication progress would not have been possible without cooperative partnerships with USDA and public and private landowners including Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, and Tudor Farms.

In Oklahoma, the Service helps with trapping and controlling invasive feral swine in partnership with other federal agencies. The Service also applies integrated pest management practices in Oklahoma on salt cedar and other invasive plants in partnership with multiple organizations and private landowners.

Across the American West, the invasion of non-native plants like cheatgrass and medusahead, and the cycle of extreme wildfires they promote, is one of today's most important land management issues. The invasion of these exotic annual grasses into sagebrush habitats in Wyoming and elsewhere has resulted in more frequent and extreme wildfires, accelerating habitat loss and threatening the health of the greater sage-grouse and other sagebrush-dependent species. With the limited success of traditional mechanical and chemical efforts to treat annual grass invasion over the past 50 years, the Service is working with USDA's Agricultural Research Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and other partners on a new tool to manage these invasive grasses: a naturally occurring weed-suppressing bacteria, *Pseudomonas fluorescens* (*P. fluorescens*), to be utilized as a host-specific biopesticide. Field trials were initiated in 2015 at the Mid-Columbia National Wildlife Refuge Complex in Washington State to test the bacteria's efficacy.

In Wyoming, the Service has worked with local landowners and conservation partners to investigate the effectiveness of chemical and biological treatments, including *P. fluorescens*, to combat cheatgrass infestations. Three separate trials are underway in the state to better understand the usefulness of biological controls as a stand-alone treatment or in conjunction with more traditional chemical controls. In addition, the Seedskaadee and Cokeville National Wildlife Refuges in Wyoming, working together with long-standing private and public partners, have also been treating invasive plants, including cheatgrass, salt cedar and Russian olive, with use of prescribed grazing as well as chemicals.

USGS recently released a restoration handbook that provides practical guidance for landowners and land managers on how to restore sagebrush ecosystems and control invasive plants, such as cheatgrass. This handbook describes specific restoration treatment options for controlling cheatgrass through use of targeted grazing that takes into consideration when, where, and how long grazing needs to occur to help eliminate cheatgrass.

In Colorado and Nebraska, we have leveraged voluntary agreements to partner with state and local governments, as well as private landowners, to treat the invasive salt cedar and Russian Olive plants. This work improves habitat for the endangered southwestern willow flycatcher, the threatened yellow billed cuckoo, and other migratory birds and wildlife.

Partnerships to Address Invasive Species

The Service also relies on partners to control, manage, and prevent invasive species introductions. As a co-chair of the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (Task Force) the Service guides the work of its members through a strategic plan. Collaborating with 13 federal partners and 14 nonfederal organizations, the Service works to combat the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species through species specific control plans for quagga and zebra mussels, Asian carp, and other species. Through the Task Force, the Service also created regional panels that provide a host of services and products that foster communication and collaboration. Overall, the Task Force provides a national infrastructure and forum for collaborative discussion and decision making on important issues that can impact prevention, control, and management of invasive species at federal, state, and local levels.

Also, the Service continues to work with boat and equipment manufacturers to develop guidelines and best practices to reduce the likelihood of spreading aquatic invasive species through boating activities. For example, work is underway to assess water temperatures and pressures that will eliminate invasive mussels while avoiding impacts to marine motors and pumps. Results of this work could lead to voluntary industry standards that assist with the decontamination of boats.

Another effective vehicle for partnerships to control the spread of invasive species is the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program, through which the Service provides funding to state partners to address invasive species at the local level. Waterbody inspection stations, funded through the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act, are eligible projects that help to eliminate the transfer of aquatic nuisance species transfers from one waterbody to another.

Combating Wildlife Trafficking

Wildlife trafficking is a multi-billion-dollar illegal trade driven by criminal syndicates that are highly organized, violent, and capable of moving large, commercial volumes of wildlife and wildlife products through global trade routes. This illegal trade threatens the survival of thousands of wildlife species, including some of the world's most iconic animals such as elephants and rhinos, as well as less well-known species such as pangolins, tortoises, and parrots.

We are working alongside 16 other Federal departments, including our co-chairs, the Departments of State and Justice, and agencies to bring a whole-of-government approach to combating wildlife trafficking, leveraging resources and expertise to more efficiently and effectively curb poaching and illegal trade.

International Conservation

The Service manages several grant programs focused on international conservation, and we are using these programs to address critical conservation needs in innovative ways.

Cooperation within the U.S. government and among nations is essential to combat wildlife trafficking and we are finding new ways to work effectively together. With assistance from the State Department, we created the first program for stationing Service regional wildlife law enforcement special agents at U.S. embassies as attachés. They are now stationed in Thailand, Botswana, Peru, Tanzania, China, and Gabon, and provide investigative support to partner countries, facilitate information sharing, and provide much needed training in areas such as crime scene processing and evidence collection, wildlife identification, technical investigative techniques, and handling and processing of digital evidence.

Investigative Tools

Given the sophisticated nature of the criminal syndicates and smuggling networks involved in wildlife trafficking today, the Service's Office of Law Enforcement is responding with equally sophisticated investigations to catch these criminals and disrupt their operations. Our inspectors and agents utilize intelligence to intercept wildlife contraband, conduct proactive enforcement operations to catch smugglers, and investigate businesses and individuals engaged in illegal activities. For example, an ongoing nationwide criminal investigation known as "Operation Crash" has led to 41 arrests, 30 convictions and the seizure of smuggled elephant tusks and rhino

horns with a street value in excess of \$75 million, and we expect more results as this investigation continues. In addition to wildlife crimes, the defendants also have been charged with money laundering, tax evasion, falsifying documents, mail fraud and bribery.

Domestic Poaching and Illegal Trade

Unfortunately, the United States is increasingly becoming a source country for illegally traded wildlife and wildlife products, threatening our domestic wildlife populations with increased poaching. Some of the domestic wildlife we are seeing targeted for illegal global trade include freshwater turtles, reptiles, eels, coral, and the caviar from paddlefish and sturgeon. The Service is using our same innovative investigative techniques and working closely with the states to combat these crimes. For example, working closely with a dozen states and several other Federal agencies, the Service led an investigation known as “Operation Broken Glass”, which focused on the illegal trafficking of juvenile American eels on the East Coast, which are highly prized in Asian seafood markets. To date, the investigation has resulted in guilty pleas for 10 individuals, involving more than \$2.6 million worth of juvenile eels.

The Service also works closely with our state and tribal partners to enforce wildlife laws and address domestic poaching unrelated to wildlife trafficking. For example, in collaboration with the National Park Service and the State of Alaska, we led an investigation that focused on an illegal commercial hunting and guiding syndicate. The investigation uncovered that a cable television show, “Syndicate Hunting”, and nine other individuals illegally guided and hunted in the Noatak National Preserve where they unlawfully killed grizzly bear, moose, caribou, and Dall sheep. The investigation resulted in nine federal convictions, prison terms, and hundreds of thousands of dollars in fines, restitution penalties, seized trophies and equipment. The Service also provides trainings and workshops for state and tribal game wardens to enhance collaboration, share information, discuss best practices, and strategize on new and innovative approaches to wildlife law enforcement.

Public-Private Partnerships

Efforts to combat wildlife trafficking must attack the entire trade chain, including reducing consumer demand for illegal wildlife. The Service has established innovative public-private partnerships to reach new audiences and empower consumers, including with JetBlue and Discovery Communications. These partnerships help us reach millions more consumers from a variety of audiences with educational messages that can help raise awareness of the wildlife trafficking crisis and drive down demand for illegal wildlife products in the U.S. and abroad.

Using Innovative Technologies for Efficient and Effective Conservation

The Service aims to use innovative approaches to management that move the needle on conservation, enhance ecosystem resilience, and efficiently use taxpayer dollars. For example, the Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge marsh restoration project in Delaware is a collaborative effort to improve habitat for wildlife and help ensure the safety of people living in nearby coastal communities. Supported by \$38 million in federal funding from the Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief Act, the project is one of the most complex restoration efforts ever attempted on the U.S. East Coast. It employed state-of-the-art science and computer modeling to restore habitat, reestablish natural tidal water circulation, and enable salt marsh vegetation to return and flourish. The project will improve the resiliency of the coastline to the impacts of sea-

level rise and intense storms, while providing valuable wildlife habitat and protecting the local community.

The National Fish Passage Program (NFPP) works through partnerships to remove aquatic barriers with inventive infrastructure, creating more resilient and efficient systems for aquatic species and local communities. NFPP is a completely voluntary program that brings together a broad diversity of stakeholders; on average, the fish passage program leverages from outside sources more than three times the amount of funding it receives from the Service. Using innovative hydrological and construction designs, the NFPP rebuilt two water diversions on the South St. Vrain Creek in Boulder, CO, due to a 2013 flood. These advanced diversions leave more water in the system for aquatic species and other water users.

The Service works to incorporate state-of-the-art technology into its management practices in other ways to achieve cost-effective conservation. For example, as part of a pilot project, the Service used unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) in lieu of planes to survey waterbird populations at three national wildlife refuges in California and Nevada. The cost-effective UAS technology improved safety conditions for biologists and minimized disturbance of birds. This is just one of many examples that illustrate the Service's commitment to innovation and ingenuity.

Conclusion

The conservation challenges our nation faces demand that the Service remain focused, effective, and innovative. We must be nimble and strategic in identifying and embracing opportunities that enhance our ability to carry out our mission and conserve our wildlife heritage for the enjoyment of current and future generations of Americans. The examples discussed in our testimony demonstrate how the Service focuses on leveraging our capacity, building partnerships, and developing innovations in technology and management approaches.

Thank you for your interest in exploring solutions to promote wildlife conservation and control invasive species. We appreciate the opportunity and look forward to working with the Committee on ways to further the Service's innovative approaches to management and use of technology to further the conservation mission.