**ACTION TWO: ELEVATE THE WILDLIFE CRISIS WORKSHEET & CHECKUP**

Americans from all walks of life value wildlife and in general support its conservation. This is true in rural, urban, and suburban communities. Valuing wildlife crosses many divides in America—geography, politics, race, ethnicity, and more. However, despite hundreds if not thousands of species of wildlife and plants in steep decline, most people have little awareness of the crisis or the need to take action now before they become endangered. They also lack understanding of the role of the state fish and wildlife agency to protect, conserve and restore wildlife and their habitat. Meanwhile, fewer Americans spend time in nature. The challenge is to engage, inform, and inspire groups and individuals to make strengthening state fish and wildlife agencies a high priority. We must communicate the urgent wildlife crisis and reach a diverse constituency with relevant messages.

This worksheet aims to help you identify species to highlight, messengers to use, avenues to get your message out and how to partner with your wildlife agency.

**Identifying Species, Actions and Places to help Elevate the Wildlife Crisis**

* How many Species of Greatest Conservation Need are identified in your State’s Wildlife Action Plan? (see [USGS State Wildlife Action Plan database](https://www1.usgs.gov/csas/swap/index.html))

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* How many state and federal threatened or endangered species does your state have? (see [USFWS listed species database](https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/report/species-listings-by-state-totals?statusCategory=Listed))

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* What are some good examples of compelling species, habitats, threats and actions to highlight from your State Wildlife Action Plan?

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* What is your state bird, mammal, flower, insect, etc.

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* Is there flora or fauna that represents your state identity?

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* Is there a species that represents interest to several target audiences (i.e., both birders and hunters?)

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* What species is highlighted on your state vehicle tag (if you have one)?

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* What specific places (land and/or water bodies) are most well-known or beloved in your state?

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* What is the economic benefit of wildlife recreation in your state? (see [Bureau of Economic Analysis’ 2019 outdoor recreation report](https://www.bea.gov/data/special-topics/outdoor-recreation))

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**Avenues to get the message out**

* What are the top 3 state newspapers/publications to get op-ed or articles published?

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* Who are 2-4 potential influential op-ed authors (e.g., business leaders, celebrities, or unlikely allies)?

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* What are the recreation and environmental education-based newsletters and other print or online publications?

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* Who are the social media influencers in your state? Which might be conservation-oriented?

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* Best messengers and influencers in each category (put in name and contact info)?
  + Business

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* + Scientist

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* + Hunters/Anglers

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* + Birders

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* + List Others

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* What are some key dates you might use to create a news hook for your state (link to calendar)?

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* What conservation groups have regular meetings to present the wildlife crisis to? List groups and their meeting schedule:

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**Working with your wildlife agency:**

* Where and how does your agency highlight the wildlife crisis and State Wildlife Action Plan through its publications and digital channels?

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* Who is a potential agency hero or heroine to highlight the importance of the agency’s work?

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* What kind of awe-inspiring wildlife field trip can you partner with the wildlife agency and provide for media?

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**Other Background**

* Is there any state-specific polling available on wildlife and conservation?

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This worksheet comes from the National Wildlife Federation’s Strengthening State Wildlife Agencies Toolkit, the first-ever toolkit for wildlife conservation leaders to strengthen state fish and wildlife agencies and reverse America’s wildlife crisis: <http://statewildlifetoolkit.nwf.org/>