

NATIONAL
Aquaculture
ASSOCIATION

September 25, 2018

The Honorable Paul Gosar
Chairman, Congressional Western Caucus
United States House of Representatives
2057 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Gosar:

The National Aquaculture Association strongly supports the package of nine bills filed in the House of Representatives to create much needed changes to the Endangered Species Act (ESA or Act).

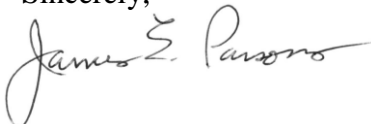
The National Aquaculture Association is a U.S. producer-based non-profit association founded in 1991 that supports the establishment of governmental programs that further the common interest of our membership, both as individual producers and as members of the aquaculture community. For over 27 years the National Aquaculture Association has been the united voice of the domestic aquaculture sector committed to the continued growth of our industry, working with state and federal governments to create a business climate conducive to our success, and fostering cost-effective environmental stewardship and sustainability.

We have supported and suggested modernization of the Endangered Species Act since the inception of our Association. We recognize the laudable intent of the ESA. However, since the Act was signed substantial improvements to the science and technology used to farm aquatic animals has occurred. These developments have resulted in the ability to intensify production of fish, shellfish, reptile and crustacean species using a shrinking environmental footprint. Much of this increased productivity is the result of domesticating aquatic species and technological improvements to the farm environment.

The focus of the Endangered Species Act on new species listings, wherever they may occur in farm environments, severely hampers the opportunity for the aquafarming community to reduce market pressure on at-risk, wild species. We now can satisfy market demand with regulated, competitive farmed products that eliminate the incentive to over-harvest or illegally harvest wild species. Unfortunately, advances in animal husbandry and on-farm production are not currently recognized as species conservation tools that can be shared to assist federal or state agencies in the recovery of declining populations. We ask that you consider how this limitation could be addressed.

For these reasons, and the constructive, common-sense initiatives proposed in the legislation, we support the Western Congressional Western Caucus's ESA modernization package.

Sincerely,



Jim Parsons
President