

Committee on Resources,

Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife & Oceans

[fisheries](#) - - Rep. Wayne Gilchrest, Chairman

U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515-6232 - - (202) 226-0200

Statement

Statement by The Honorable Wayne Gilchrest, Chairman,
Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife And Oceans,
at the Hearing on
H.R. 643, H.R. 645, and H.R. 700:
March 15, 2001.

Good Morning and Welcome to our first legislative hearing of the 107th Congress. I am Congressman Wayne Gilchrest and I represent the 1st District of Maryland.

Today's hearing will focus on three wildlife conservation bills that will extend the authority of the Secretary of the Interior to undertake grants to conserve the flagship species of African Elephants, Asian Elephants, Rhinoceros and Tigers.

I was pleased to introduce legislation to reauthorize the African Elephant and Rhino and Tiger Conservation Funds because this small investment of U.S. money is critical to The long term survival of these species and The ecosystems where they live. In fact, These funds represent the only continuous Source of money in the world and they are to quote the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service "Not a Hand Out, But a Helping Hand."

During the past thirteen years, the service Has approved 251 conservation grants to Assist rhinos, tigers and elephants in a Number of range countries. The total Expenditure of federal funds has been \$16.7 Million which has been matched by \$56.9 Million in private money. While the list of Approved projects is lengthy, it represents Less than 50 percent of the total number Submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The need is great and it is essential That these funds be extended for an Additional five years.

Furthermore, I have co-signed a letter to Secretary Gale Norton supporting a million dollar appropriation for each of the five accounts under the Multinational Species Conservation Fund.

Finally, I look forward to hearing from our distinguished witnesses and I hope that they will address the benefits of these acts and whether any modifications or changes are necessary.

I am now pleased to recognize the ranking Minority

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