

At a Glance

S. 3051, America's Conservation Enhancement Act

As reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works on December 17, 2019

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2020	2020-2024	2020-2029
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	*	*
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	*	*
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	0	665	1,054
Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	Yes	Mandate Effects	
Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2030?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

* = between zero and -\$500,000.

The bill would

- Authorize appropriations totaling \$1.1 billion over the 2020-2025 period for various federal conservation programs and activities
- Establish grant programs to carry out restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay, support fish habitat conservation, assist livestock producers, and prevent chronic wasting disease among deer

Estimated budgetary effects would primarily stem from

- Spending of the authorized appropriations

Detailed estimate begins on the next page.



Bill Summary

S. 3051 would authorize appropriations totaling \$1.1 billion over the 2020-2025 period for conservation programs and activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and National Park Service (NPS). The bill also would establish grant programs to assist livestock producers, prevent chronic wasting disease among deer, fund restoration and protection activities in the Chesapeake Bay, and support fish habitat conservation.

Estimated Federal Cost

The estimated budgetary effect of S. 3051 is shown in Table 1. The costs of the legislation fall primarily within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

Basis of Estimate

For this estimate, CBO assumes that S. 3051 will be enacted in 2020 and that the authorized and necessary amounts will be provided in each year. Estimated outlays are based on historical spending patterns for the affected and similar activities.

CBO estimates that implementing S. 3051 would cost \$665 million over the 2020-2024 period.

Chesapeake Bay Program

Section 109 would authorize appropriations totaling \$455 million over the 2020-2024 period for EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program, which provides technical assistance and grant funding for projects and programs aimed at restoring the Chesapeake Bay. EPA received appropriations totaling \$85 million to carry out the program in 2020; therefore, CBO does not estimate any outlays resulting from the 2020 authorization in the bill. We estimate that implementing the section would cost \$315 million over the 2020-2024 period.

North American Wetlands Conservation

Section 106 would authorize the annual appropriation of \$60 million over the 2021-2025 period for USFWS to fund a competitive grant program for wetlands conservation projects in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. In 2020, the agency received an appropriation of \$46 million for that program. CBO estimates that implementing section 106 would cost \$138 million over the 2020-2024 period.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Section 107 would authorize the annual appropriation of \$25 million over the 2021-2025 period for USFWS, USDA, and NOAA to support activities of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. CBO estimates that implementing section 107 would cost \$63 million over the 2020-2024 period.



**Table 1.
Estimated Increases in Spending Subject to Appropriation Under S. 3051**

	By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars										2020-2024	2020-2029	
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Chesapeake Bay Program													
Authorization ^a	90	90	91	92	92	0	0	0	0	0	455	455	
Estimated Outlays	0	59	77	87	92	32	14	5	0	0	315	365	
North American Wetlands Conservation													
Authorization	0	60	60	60	60	60	0	0	0	0	240	300	
Estimated Outlays	0	15	30	42	51	57	45	30	18	9	138	297	
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation													
Authorization	0	25	25	25	25	25	0	0	0	0	100	125	
Estimated Outlays	0	6	14	20	23	25	19	11	5	2	63	125	
Grants for Livestock Losses													
Authorization	0	15	15	15	15	15	0	0	0	0	60	75	
Estimated Outlays	0	0	12	15	15	15	15	3	0	0	42	75	
Chesapeake Bay Watershed													
Authorization	0	15	15	15	15	15	0	0	0	0	60	75	
Estimated Outlays	0	4	8	12	14	15	11	7	3	2	38	75	
National Fish Habitat Conservation													
Authorization	0	9	9	10	10	10	0	0	0	0	38	48	
Estimated Outlays	0	2	5	8	9	10	7	4	2	1	24	48	
Chronic Wasting Disease													
Estimated Authorization	0	8	6	6	6	1	0	0	0	0	26	27	
Estimated Outlays	0	4	3	6	6	6	3	0	0	0	19	27	
Other Provisions													
Estimated Authorization ^a	3	9	8	8	8	8	0	0	0	0	38	46	
Estimated Outlays	0	6	7	7	8	8	3	1	1	*	28	41	
Total Changes													
Estimated Authorization ^a	93	232	229	231	231	134	0	0	0	0	1,017	1,151	
Estimated Outlays	0	96	156	197	216	167	117	62	29	14	665	1,054	

Components may not sum to totals because of rounding; * = between zero and \$500,000.

CBO estimates that enacting S. 3051 would have an insignificant effect on direct spending.

a. The bill would authorize in 2020 the appropriation of \$90 million for the Chesapeake Bay Program and \$3 million for the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network grant program. CBO does not estimate any outlays for those authorizations because appropriations for 2020 have already been provided.

Grants for Livestock Losses

Section 102 would direct USFWS and USDA to provide assistance and compensation to farmers for livestock losses resulting from depredation by federally protected species. The bill would authorize the appropriation of \$15 million annually over the 2021-2025 period for those purposes. Amounts awarded in a fiscal year would be based on livestock losses from



the previous fiscal year; thus, the agencies would begin awarding grants in 2022 for losses in 2021. CBO estimates that implementing section 102 would cost \$42 million over the 2020-2024 period.

Chesapeake Bay Watershed

Section 111 would direct USFWS to establish a program to coordinate and carry out restoration and protection activities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Under that program, the agency would award grants to state and local governments, nonprofit organizations, and academic institutions for such activities. The bill would authorize the annual appropriation of \$15 million over the 2021-2025 period for those purposes. CBO estimates that implementing section 111 would cost \$38 million over the 2020-2024 period.

National Fish Habitat Conservation

Title III would establish the National Fish Habitat Board with representatives from federal agencies, state and tribal governments, and industry. The board would establish national goals for fish habitat conservation and recommend local and regional projects for funding. S. 3051 would authorize annual appropriations of \$9 million to \$10 million over the 2021-2025 period for projects, program administration, and technical assistance. CBO estimates that implementing title III would cost \$24 million over the 2020-2024 period.

Chronic Wasting Disease

Section 104 would establish a task force with representatives from federal agencies, state and tribal governments, and other experts to develop an interstate action plan to prevent the spread of chronic wasting disease, which affects deer, elk, and moose. The bill would authorize the appropriation of \$5 million over the 2021-2025 period for administrative activities and \$2.4 million in 2021 for USFWS and USDA to sponsor a study by the National Academies. Section 104 also would direct the federal government to provide up to \$5 million annually to states to carry out an interstate action plan. CBO assumes that those amounts would be provided over the 2021-2024 period and, on that basis, we estimate that implementing section 104 would cost \$19 million over the same period.

Other Provisions

CBO estimates that implementing other provisions of S. 3051 would cost \$28 million over the 2020-2024 period.

Section 105 would authorize the annual appropriation of \$5 million over the 2021-2025 period for USFWS and the Army Corps of Engineers to manage invasive species. CBO estimates that implementing the section would cost \$14 million over the 2020-2024 period.

Section 110 would authorize the annual appropriation of \$3 million over the 2020-2025 period for the NPS's Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network grant program for which the NPS has allocated \$2 million annually in recent years. Appropriations for 2020 have already been provided, so CBO does not estimate any outlays for the authorization in



2020. We estimate that implementing the bill would cost \$11 million over the 2020-2024 period.

Section 101 of the bill would direct USFWS to establish a competitive prize to reward people who advance efforts to reduce conflicts between humans and predators. Title IV would require USFWS, NOAA, USDA, and the Government Accountability Office to study conservation activities and spending under the Endangered Species Act. Based on the costs of similar tasks, CBO estimates that those provisions would cost \$3 million over the 2020-2024 period; any spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Pay-As-You-Go Considerations

S. 3051 would authorize federal agencies to accept grants and donations, which are classified in the federal budget as offsetting receipts, or reductions in direct spending. Under the bill, donations would be available to spend without further appropriation. Because donations would probably be spent soon after they were received, CBO estimates that the net reduction in direct spending would be negligible over the 2020-2029 period.

Increase in Long-Term Deficits: None.

Mandates: None.

Previous CBO Estimates

On June 28, 2019, CBO transmitted a [cost estimate for H.R. 2427](#), the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network Reauthorization Act of 2019, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources on June 19, 2019. Although H.R. 2427 is similar to section 110 of S. 3051, CBO's estimate of the provision in S. 3051 differs because appropriations for 2020 have already been provided.

On September 30, 2019, CBO transmitted a [cost estimate for H.R. 925](#), the North American Wetlands Conservation Extension Act, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources on September 25, 2019. H.R. 925 is similar to section 106 of S. 3051, and CBO's estimates for those provisions are similar.

On October 2, 2019, CBO transmitted a [cost estimate for H.R. 1620](#), the Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization Act, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on September 20, 2019. H.R. 1620 is similar to section 109 of S. 3051; however, CBO's estimate of the provision in S. 3051 differs because appropriations for 2020 have already been provided.



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