



January 20, 2020

P.O. Box 1065  
Charlottesville, VA  
22902  
(434) 971-1553  
www.wildvirginia.org

Honorable Ralph Northam  
Governor of Virginia  
Ralph.Northam@governor.virginia.gov

Sent Via Email

Honorable Matt Strickler  
Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources  
Matt.Strickler@governor.virginia.gov

*Board of Directors:*

Honorable Shannon Valentine  
Virginia Secretary of Transportation  
Shannon.Valentine@governor.virginia.gov

*Bette Dzamba*

*Katie Keller*

*David Sellers*

*Jamie Trost*

*Ryan Wagener*

*Elizabeth Williams*

Re: Please Take Urgent Action to Save Virginia Sea Birds

Dear Governor Northam, Secretary Strickler, and Secretary Valentine:

I write on behalf of Wild Virginia's members throughout the state to urge you to act quickly to avert the destruction of the state's largest sea bird colony. We strongly endorse the proposed solutions offered by the American Bird Conservancy: to provide alternate habitat for bird nesting due to the destruction caused during the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel (HRBT) construction and, in the meantime, to direct the Virginia Department of Transportation to allow birds to continue their nesting at the current sites.

We understand that these solutions present challenges, both practical and legal, but believe these challenges can and must be overcome. This resource is too important for the State of Virginia to fail to take all necessary measures to save it. A Trump administration attempt to weaken the Endangered Species Act (ESA) through a new policy is being mentioned as a cause for inaction in protecting Virginia's vital bird habitat. We believe these actions to weaken the ESA are flawed and will likely be invalidated by the courts. In any case, the state of Virginia should not use the Trump administration's reckless and harmful policy as an excuse not to take action to protect our migratory birds.

Thank you for your consideration and we hope and trust that you will act in the interest of all Virginians and our precious natural heritage.

Sincerely,

*/s/ David Sligh*

David Sligh  
Conservation Director

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