

Wonderful news this week as after 10 years of trying, advocates for big cats have finally been able to get [the Big Cat Public Safety Act through Congress](#).

LINK: <https://awionline.org/press-releases/senate-passes-big-cat-public-safety-act-sends-it-presidents-desk>

The new law, once signed by the president, will prohibit private individuals from possessing lions, tigers, leopards, cheetahs, jaguars, cougars, or any hybrid of these species. This prohibition would only apply to big cats kept as pets—sanctuaries, universities, and zoos would be exempt.

The bill would further ban public petting, playing with, feeding, and photo ops with cubs.

This is good news because Joe down the street has no business owning and breeding tigers, setting up a roadside stand where dopey tourists can take pictures holding a cub for \$50. Florida is a hotspot for this activity. It's animal abuse. The operation of these business from the breeding to the enclosures to the handling of the cubs is barbaric and has no place in a humane society.

Long overdue, more background:

<https://twitter.com/natashaldaly/status/1600290202219528192?s=43&t=tK03nzYrD9FuivvLRpCuSg>

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More great news on the federal level as coal baron West Virginia Senator Joe Manchin and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (NY) – both Democrats – had their latest and last attempt to slide a “dirty deal” profiting oil and gas companies into a defense spending bill defeated by progressives in Congress and conservation groups.

This is the second attempt by the duo to force into legislation a “[fossil fuel industry-backed scheme](#) that would undermine environmental protections and diminish the voices of frontline opponents opposed to damaging pipelines and similar projects.”

LINK: <https://www.commondreams.org/news/2022/12/07/monumental-victory-manchins-industry-backed-permitting-reform-defeated-again>

For all the hard work being done on the local level to save the planet around country, nothing has more impact on the climate and biodiversity crises – good and bad – than enormous federal legislation like this.

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Moving on to EXCITING NEWS locally for Groundwork Jacksonville, the organization behind the ambitious and transformative Emerald Trail which will link the city's neighborhoods via walkable, natural trails and green space. The group has received [its biggest grant in history](#), nearly \$6 million in federal resiliency money to apply to the restoration of Hogan's Creek.

LINK: <https://www.actionnewsjax.com/news/local/585-million-awarded-groundwork-jacksonville-hogans-creek-design/WSSKT5SFUZGGNFDHS5VDXVG32U/>

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Here's a listing of [conservation success stories across Florida](#) for 2022 from the Nature Conservancy.

LINK: [https://www.nature.org/content/dam/tnc/nature/en/documents/TNC-2022-Florida-Impact-Report.pdf?en\\_txn1=e.ch\\_fl.eg.x.gpn.1207.n.sas.loc\\_fl&en\\_txn8=NewSch.WJEMSA2212NPNZNZZE03Z00-ZZZZZ-ST00&lu=72cbb21b-3a33-4505-b2f6-1dc548534a04&customer\\_id=19567367](https://www.nature.org/content/dam/tnc/nature/en/documents/TNC-2022-Florida-Impact-Report.pdf?en_txn1=e.ch_fl.eg.x.gpn.1207.n.sas.loc_fl&en_txn8=NewSch.WJEMSA2212NPNZNZZE03Z00-ZZZZZ-ST00&lu=72cbb21b-3a33-4505-b2f6-1dc548534a04&customer_id=19567367)

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Then there's this:

"I'm 40 years into conservation biology and I can tell you we are losing badly, [getting our asses kicked](#)," Dan Ashe, director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under President Barack Obama, said recently. "There are almost no reasons to be optimistic."

LINK: <https://theintercept.com/2022/12/03/climate-biodiversity-green-energy/>

This is heavy, existential, material, but worth the time and consideration if you're passionate about conservation, wild animals and wild spaces, biodiversity collapse, clean energy, the demands on the planet of capitalism, etc.

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