

Good news and bad news on the federal level as legislators have sent a variety of spending bills to the president for signature.

GOOD NEWS: The buying and selling of shark fins will be outlawed in the U.S. [Shark finning](#) – the practice of cutting off shark fins and dumping the rest of the body back into the ocean – is illegal in the U.S., but much of the trade in fins happens in U.S. territory. That will cease.

LINK: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/dec/17/shark-fin-sales-ban-us>

To demonstrate how goofy and convoluted these spending bills are, this particular measure was included in the [\\$858 billion defense spending bill](#).

LINK: <https://www.cnn.com/2022/12/15/politics/defense-bill-ndaa/index.html>

GOOD NEWS: [The \\$1.7 trillion federal omnibus spending bill](#) – something of a catch-all spending bill, the “junk drawer” of federal spending with thousands of completely unrelated projects – will include a record \$447 million for Everglades restoration.

LINK: <https://www.cnn.com/2022/12/20/politics/spending-bill-congress-omnibus/index.html>

GOOD NEWS: The bill also includes a variety of meaningful investments directed towards [decarbonization technologies](#).

LINK: <https://www.carbon-direct.com/insights/congress-is-poised-to-make-10-key-investments-in-decarbonization-tech>

BAD NEWS: Senate Democrats [sided with the lobster industry over North Atlantic right whales](#), further imperiling their survival.

LINK: <https://biologicaldiversity.org/w/news/press-releases/senate-democrats-pass-extinction-omnibus-endangering-right-whale-2022-12-22/?emci=4472da4d-7381-ed11-9d7a-000d3a9eb913&emdi=2f53262c-4882-ed11-9d7a-000d3a9eb913&ceid=2023608>

GOOD NEWS: The bill includes [\\$61.5 million for management of the National Conservation Lands system](#), the largest congressional allocation in more than a decade.

LINK:

https://www.conservationlands.org/national_conservation_lands_get_long_awaited_boost_in_omnibus

TERRIBLE NEWS: Despite bipartisan support, the bill [failed to include the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act](#) critical to halting the biodiversity collapse.

LINK: <https://www.nature.org/en-us/newsroom/omnibus-spending-no-rawa/>

Again, like it or not, these huge federal efforts mean vastly more to conservation wins or losses, big picture, than all the well-meaning work put in by thousands of local, grassroots organizations, which is what makes voting critically important to saving the planet.

Shocking news out of development-crazed Florida where one coastal community, New Smyrna Beach, has seen enough flooding to [put a temporary moratorium on development](#) in flood-prone areas until it

can better assess and strategize how to avoid the monumentally costly and stupid build-flood-rebuild-flood-rebuild cycle.

LINK: <https://floridaphoenix.com/2022/12/22/after-hurricane-florida-beach-town-proposes-a-development-moratorium/>

[An endangered fern in South Florida](#) has received additional habitat protection.

LINK: https://biologicaldiversity.org/w/news/press-releases/nearly-4200-acres-of-habitat-protected-for-endangered-florida-fern-2022-12-21/?utm_source=eeo&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=eeo1172&utm_term=EndangeredSpecies&emci=4472da4d-7381-ed11-9d7a-000d3a9eb913&emdi=2f53262c-4882-ed11-9d7a-000d3a9eb913&ceid=2023608