

The Honorable Nancy Sutley
Council on Environmental Quality
722 Jackson Place, NW
Washington, DC 20503

The Honorable Lisa Jackson
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

The Honorable Ken Salazar
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Administrator Jackson, Secretary Salazar, Chairwoman Sutley, and Secretary Vilsack,

On behalf of the millions of organized sportsmen and women and conservation professionals from across the country, thank you for recognizing the need to conserve America's Great Outdoors for future generations. From time spent hunting, fishing, and trapping, America's sportsmen know the value of America's outdoors. Collectively, hunting, fishing, and wildlife related recreation generate more than \$122 billion annually in economic activity at the state and local level, which equates to about 1% of the gross domestic product. But more than just economic value, the outdoors is part of our heritage as Americans and as hunters and anglers.

As you develop your report for the President on conserving America's Great Outdoors and plan for conservation in the 21st Century, we hope you will keep the following broad principles in mind:

Engaging Hunters and Anglers in Conservation – Over the 20th Century, most conservation dollars came from hunters and anglers, through license fees and taxes on hunting and fishing equipment. Hunters and anglers have been a key part of every significant national conservation victory. We appreciate the efforts the Administration has made to get input from the sporting community, such as the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council, and encourage the Administration to continue to engage sportsmen in conservation decisions.

Fostering Young Americans to Become Hunters and Anglers – The past decade has seen a decline in the number of hunters and anglers in this country. This is attributable to many causes, but is undoubtedly reason for concern. Children today are spending half as much time outdoors as children did 20 years ago, which has immediate health impacts and long term conservation impacts. Young Americans who hunt and fish are more connected to the outdoors, more likely to develop strong conservation values, and will help support conservation efforts throughout their lifetime.

Supporting Private and Public Land Conservation and Partnerships – Wildlife does not know political boundaries or boundaries of public and private land. Wildlife habitat must therefore be conserved on public and private land across the country. Habitats such as grasslands, the prairie pothole region, forests, coastal wetlands and marshes, and sage brush are critical

breeding ground for game species as well as good hunting habitat, as such they should be conserved and managed to support and enhance healthy wildlife populations. The Administration should support efforts to help private landowners enhance, restore and protect these and other natural habitats on their land, while ensuring that public lands are managed in a way that supports healthy fish and wildlife populations.

Providing Recreational Access – As many private landowners continue to restrict hunting and angling opportunities on their lands, and many public lands are developed for resource extraction, opportunities across our nation to hunt and fish are dwindling. The Administration should retain and enhance sportsmen access to public and private lands. Hunting and angling opportunities need to be given stronger weight during consideration of public lands development and resource extraction. Invaluable and irreplaceable wildlife habitat areas need to be conserved and properly managed to retain their values while other public lands must balance development and recreational uses.

Protecting Clean Water – Clean water is important to fish, wildlife and people alike. From rivers and lakes to estuaries and coasts, America’s waters are an integral part of America’s Great Outdoors. The Administration should protect America’s waters from pollution, development and loss of wetlands, and support the restoration of degraded waters.

Funding Conservation – Whether it’s hunter/angler and outdoors education, land conservation or protecting clean water, inadequate funding is a major impediment. To conserve America’s Great Outdoors for the 21st Century, the Administration must prioritize funding for conservation, including \$900 million for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

We look forward to working with the Administration to ensure that our children and our grandchildren have the same or better access and opportunities we have had to hunt and fish in America’s Great Outdoors.

Sincerely,

American Fisheries Society
American Fly Fishing Trade Association
Federation of Fly Fishers
Ducks Unlimited
National Wildlife Federation
Trout Unlimited
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
The Wildlife Society