

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

Monday, November 16, 2015

Dear Chairman Cochran and Ranking Member Mikulski,

On behalf of the undersigned hunting, angling, conservation, business, and scientific organizations, thank you for passing a two-year bipartisan budget agreement that allows a reasonable increase in domestic discretionary spending. Passage of such an agreement, and the subsequent reinvestment in important conservation programs made possible by a bipartisan budget accord, has been a key priority for our organizations, and we appreciate your sustained efforts.

Now that a budget agreement has been reached, we urge Congress to act on a comprehensive omnibus funding bill that includes proportionate funding increases for priority conservation programs, including, but certainly not limited to:

- North American Wetlands Conservation Act
- State Wildlife Grants Program
- Federal Land Management Operations and Maintenance Accounts at the Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the US Forest Service
- NOAA Fisheries Data Collections, Surveys and Assessments
- NOAA Fisheries and Ecosystem Science Programs and Services

We also ask that any omnibus appropriations bill:

- Provide access to disaster funding for the costliest of wildfires and address the increasing ten year average cost of fire suppression
- Not 'CHIMP' Farm Bill Conservation Programs, and avoid reopening the 2014 Farm Bill

Our organizations and millions of Americans think it is time to reinvest in cost-effective conservation and the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 allocates the financial resources to make this a reality. With further Congressional action in the coming weeks to fill in the details of a Fiscal Year 2016 funding plan, we urge House and Senate leaders to adequately fund the conservation provisions that help to power a \$646 billion outdoor recreation economy. Thank you for your time and we look forward to continue working with you to advance these key national priorities.

Sincerely,

American Fisheries Society
American Fly Fishing Trade Association
American Sportfishing Association
Archery Trade Association
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
B.A.S.S.
Berkley Conservation Institute
Dallas Safari Club
Ducks Unlimited
Land Trust Alliance
Mule Deer Foundation
National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative
National Wildlife Refuge Association
National Wild Turkey Federation
New York State Conservation Council
Pheasants Forever
Public Lands Foundation
Quail Forever
Quality Deer Management Association
Snook and Gamefish Foundation
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
The Nature Conservancy
The Wildlife Society
Western Landowners Alliance
Whitetails Unlimited
Wildlife Management Institute
Wildlife Mississippi