

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Speaker of the House John Boehner
1011 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi
235 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow
133 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Chairman Frank Lucas
2311 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Senator Thad Cochran
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Collin Peterson
2109 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

February 3, 2014

Dear Speaker Boehner, Majority Leader Reid, Minority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Pelosi, Chairman Lucas, Chairwoman Stabenow, Ranking Member Peterson, and Ranking Member Cochran:

The undersigned groups, representing millions of landowners, farmers, ranchers, forest managers, agricultural and forest businesses, hunters and anglers, local and state government officials, and non-profit organizations representing a wide range of interests from all across this country, are writing to express our support for the Farm Bill conference report, which contains strong conservation and forestry provisions and will help America's producers meet the growing national and international demands for food and fiber in an increasingly sustainable manner.

Our nation's farmers, ranchers, and landowners deserve to have long-term certainty to effectively and efficiently manage their land, resources and businesses for the years ahead. This important legislation supports our nation's farmers, ranchers, forest owners, food security, natural resources and wildlife habitats, rural communities and the 16 million Americans whose jobs directly depend on the agriculture and forestry industries, as well as our \$145 billion wildlife recreation economy.

The Farm Bill represents the single largest federal investment in private-lands conservation. It funds programs that improve air and water quality, recharge groundwater aquifers, and create fish and wildlife habitat, thereby providing meaningful benefits to all Americans and taxpayers. Not only do Farm Bill conservation programs play a key role in supporting clean air, clean water and productive soils, they also help producers avoid unnecessary regulation and promote our nation's long-term economic and food security.

To highlight several key provisions: We support the sodsaver provision to reduce incentives for grassland conversion, while still allowing landowners to make their own management decisions. While we strongly supported a national Sodsaver program, the six states covered in the bill represents a significant first step. We also strongly support re-linking conservation compliance to crop insurance

premium assistance. For decades, in exchange for a publicly funded safety net, farmers have adopted land management practices that successfully reduced soil erosion and protected wetlands. Recoupling will ensure that decades of conservation gains are not lost. Moreover, we strongly support the permanent extension of stewardship contracting in the forestry title, an innovative tool that encourages collaboration among agencies, contractors, local communities and other stakeholders and is essential to restore healthy ecosystems and provide stability and employment to rural communities.

The result of the Farm Bill's conservation programs is real conservation with multiple benefits for every region of America—not the least of these is helping working landowners to stay on the land as stewards of America's legacy of natural resources.

Thank you very much for sustaining the integrity and effectiveness of the Conservation and Forestry Titles in the conference agreement and maintaining conservation funding that meets our national needs. We urge adoption of the conference report.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

American Farmland Trust
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
American Forests
American Rivers
Association of State Floodplain Managers
Audubon Society
Chesapeake Bay Foundation
The Conservation Fund
Delta Waterfowl
Ducks Unlimited
Forest Guild
Izaak Walton League of America
The Lyme Timber Company
National Association of Conservation Districts
National Association of Forest Service Retirees
National Association of Resource Conservation & Development Councils
National Association of State Conservation Agencies
National Conservation District Employees Association
National Parks Conservation Association
National Wildlife Federation
National Wildlife Refuge Association
National Wild Turkey Federation
North American Grouse Partnership
Pheasants Forever
Quail Forever
Restore America's Estuaries
Ruffed Grouse Society
Rural & Agriculture Council for America

SAVE THE FROGS!

Society for Range Management
Soil and Water Conservation Society
Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation
Trout Unlimited
The Nature Conservancy
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
The Trust for Public Land
Wildlife Management Institute
The Wildlife Society
World Wildlife Fund

State and Local Organizations

AL

Pelican Coast Conservancy

AR

Arkansas Chapter of the Wildlife Society
Arkansas Wildlife Federation

AZ

Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation
Friends of the San Pedro River
Huachuca Audubon Society

CA

Buffalo Billy's Bison Brotherhood
California Association of Resource Conservation Districts
California Native Plant Society
California Waterfowl Association
Ecological Farming Association
Endangered Habitats League
Mendocino Land Trust
Peninsula Open Space Trust
Santa Clara County Open Space Authority
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
Watershed Research & Training Center

CO

Colorado Wildlife Federation
Evergreen Audubon
Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory

CT

Connecticut Land Conservation Council
Farmington River Watershed Association
North Stonington Citizens Land Alliance, Inc.

DE

Delaware Nature Society
Delaware Wild Lands
John L Conner and Associates

FL

Florida Wildlife Federation
Legacy Institute for Nature and Culture
Northern Everglades Alliance
Rafter T Ranch
Reef Relief
Snook & Gamefish Foundation
Tropical Audubon Society
United Waterfowlers-Florida, Inc.

GA

Georgia Council Trout Unlimited
Georgia Wildlife Federation

IL

Alliance for the Great Lakes
Bird Conservation Network
Chicago Botanic Garden
The Conservation Foundation
Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation
Openlands
Prairie Rivers Network
Wetlands Initiative

IA

Chickasaw County Conservation
Iowa Wildlife Federation
Four Mounds Foundation
Prairie Rapids Audubon Society

ID

Heart of the Rockies Initiative
Idaho Coalition of Land Trusts
Idaho Council of Trout Unlimited
Intermountain Aquatics Inc.
North Fork Native Plants

Teton Regional Land Trust

IN

Geist Fall Creek Watershed Alliance
Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Indiana Forestry & Woodland Owners Association
Indiana Wildlife Federation
Quail & Upland Game Alliance
Save the Dunes
Sycamore Land Trust

KS

Audubon of Kansas
Kansas Wildlife Federation

KY

Kentucky Waterways Alliance

LA

America's WETLAND Foundation

MA

Appalachian Mountain Club
Eight Towns and the Great Marsh
Friends of Conte
Land Conservation Associates
Mass Audubon
Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition

MD

Chesapeake Bay Commission
Friends of the Nanticoke River
Potomac Conservancy

ME

Mt. Agamenticus to the Sea Conservation Initiative

MI

Cadillac Area Land Conservancy
Leelanau Conservancy
Michigan United Conservation Clubs
Six Rivers Land Conservancy
Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council

MN

Cannon River Watershed Partnership
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
Minnesota Conservation Federation
Minnesota Division Izaak Walton League of America
Wildlife Forever

MO

Missouri Coalition for the Environment
Conservation Federation of Missouri
Ozark Fly Fishers
Smith Farm, Bryant Creek

MS

Lower Mississippi River Foundation
Mississippi Wildlife Federation

MT

Big Sky Upland Bird Association
Bitter Root Land Trust
Flathead Land Trust
Gallatin Valley Land Trust
Montana Association of Land Trusts
Montana Wildlife Federation

NC

Land Trust for the Little Tennessee
North Carolina Wildlife Federation
North Trout Unlimited State Council
Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy

NE

Audubon Nebraska
Big Muddy Workshop Incorporated
Nebraska Wildlife Federation

NH

Bear-Paw Regional Greenways
Ecosystem Management Consultants
New Hampshire Audubon Society

NJ

The Land Conservancy of New Jersey
New Jersey Audubon

NC

The Land Trust for Central NC
The Tortoise Reserve

ND

North Dakota Natural Resources Trust
North Dakota Wildlife Federation
Save the Hens Foundation

NM

Sangre de Cristo Audubon Society

NY

Buffalo Audubon Society
Conservation Committee, Garden Club of America
Hudson Highlands Land Trust
Indian River Lakes Conservancy
National Affairs and Legislation Committee, Garden Club of America
Somers Land Trust
Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative
Thousand Island Land Trust
The Wetland Trust

OH

Lake Erie Islands Chapter Black Swamp Conservancy
Ohio Environmental Council
Ohio River Foundation

OK

Conservation Coalition of Oklahoma

OR

Berkley Conservation Institution, Pure Fishing
Blue Mountains Conservancy
Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council
Columbia Land Trust
Deschutes County
Deschutes Land Trust
Greenbelt Land Trust
Lake County Resources Initiative
Lomakatsi Restoration Project
McKenzie River Trust
North Coast Land Conservancy

Salem Audubon Society
Siuslaw Institute
Southern Oregon Land Conservancy
Sustainable Northwest
Wild Rivers Land Trust

PA

Ecological Associates
Pine Creek Valley Watershed Association

RI

East Greenwich Municipal Land Trust

SC

Congaree Land Trust
East Cooper Land Trust
Spartanburg Area Conservancy
Upper Savannah Land Trust
Waccamaw RIVERKEEPER

SD

South Dakota Chapter of the Wildlife Society
South Dakota Wildlife Federation

TN

Bream Fisherman Association
The Land Trust for Tennessee
Mississippi River Corridor
Tennessee Ornithological Society
Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation
Tennessee Wildlife Federation

TX

Bayou Land Conservancy
Connemara Conservancy Foundation
Galveston Bay Foundation
Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust
Gulf Coast Bird Observatory
Hill Country Conservancy
Hill Country Land Trust
Katy Prairie Conservancy
Pines and Prairies Land Trust
Scenic Galveston, Inc.
Texas Land Trust Council

The Valley Land Fund

UT

HawkWatch International
Virgin River Land Preservation Association

VA

Fredericksburg-Rappahannock Chapter Izaak Walton League of America
New River Land Trust
Northern Virginia Conservation Trust
Virginia Industrial Hemp Coalition

WA

Blue Mountain Land Trust
Chehalis River Basin Land Trust
Forterra
Great Peninsula Conservancy
Jefferson Land Trust
Kittitas Conservation Trust
North Olympic Land Trust
The San Juan Preservation Trust
Skagit Land Trust
Vashon-Maury Island Land Trust
Whatcom Land Trust
Whidbey Camano Land Trust

WI

Milwaukee Riverkeeper
Natural Heritage Land Trust
Tall Pines Conservancy
Winnebago Audubon Society
Wisconsin Chapter Soil & Water Conservation Society

WV

West Virginia Highlands Conservancy

WY

Sheridan Community Land Trust
Wyoming Outdoor Council