

**American Fisheries Society • American Sportfishing Association
Archery Trade Association • Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies • B.A.S.S.
Berkley Conservation Group • Boone & Crockett Club • Campfire Club of America
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation • Conservation Force • Delta Waterfowl Foundation
Ducks Unlimited • Federation of Fly Fishers • Izaak Walton League of America
Mule Deer Foundation • National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses
National Rifle Association • National Shooting Sports Foundation • National Trappers Association
National Wild Turkey Federation • North American Grouse Partnership • Pheasants Forever
Pope & Young Club • Pure Fishing • Quail Forever • Quality Deer Management Association
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation • Ruffed Grouse Society • Safari Club International
Shikar Safari Club • Shimano American Corp. • Texas Wildlife Association
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership • Trout Unlimited • Whitetails Unlimited
Wildlife Forever • Wildlife Management Institute • The Wildlife Society • Wild Sheep Foundation**

May 20, 2009

Dear Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus Member:

As a member of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, you're well aware of the importance of having places to hunt and fish in your community. You also know our outdoor pursuits depend on maintaining viable fish and wildlife habitat. Unless Congress acts, a 2006 tax incentive for conservation easements that helps us achieve both goals will expire at the end of 2009! The undersigned organizations urge you to co-sponsor the Conservation Easement Incentive Act, H.R. 1831.

More than 70 percent of wildlife gets food and shelter from our working farm, ranch and forest lands, but we're losing these habitats to development at the alarming rate of 5,000 acres each day. This legislation encourages voluntary, incentive-based donations of future development rights to ensure that farm and ranch families can continue to work their land, sell hunting leases and provide wildlife habitat for future generations.

Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, among others, have had great success using this incentive to accelerate the pace of wildlife habitat conservation. In addition to encouraging outright donations, this incentive helps them leverage Farm Bill and North American Wetlands Conservation Act funding. In 2006 and 2007, the incentive helped such organizations work with willing landowners to conserve over 2 million acres with conservation easements, a 535,000 acre increase over the two years prior to its enactment.

The 2008 Farm Bill renewed the incentive through December 2009, but landowners considering a perpetual commitment to conservation should not be pressured by an artificial deadline, and many will never begin the lengthy process without the reassurance of a permanent incentive. Please join Congressmen Mike Thompson (D-CA) and Eric Cantor (R-VA) as a co-sponsor of the Conservation Easement Incentive Act (H.R. 1831), by contacting Travis Robey in Rep. Thompson's Office (5-3311) or Wyatt Stewart in Rep. Cantor's Office (5-2815).

Thank you for your continued commitment to wildlife habitat conservation and the future of hunting and fishing in America.

Sincerely,

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