The non-governmental organizations (NGOs) comprising the American Wildlife Conservation Partners (AWCP) request that an access category be created within the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to be used by the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service to open or improve access to existing Federal lands for hunting, fishing and other recreational activities. No less than 1.5% of the funds appropriated annually from LWCF or a minimum of $10 million, whichever is greater, will be made available for access projects that can open to the public hundreds of thousands of acres of lands in Federal ownership. We request your support of S. 901 and H.R. 1997, which will amend LWCF to achieve this request.

SUMMARY
The Federal Lands Hunting and Shooting Sports Roundtable (Roundtable) was created through a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2006 by the USFS, BLM, USFWS and 40 national hunting, fishing and shooting sports organizations. The Roundtable was created to improve partnership efforts between these Federal agencies and these non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to address issues impacting access to Federal lands for sportsmen and women. One of the Roundtable’s initiatives was to address the problem of landlocked Federal lands that hold the key to expanding recreational opportunities for the public.

THE ISSUE
Federal public lands are an important destination for many Americans, including hunters and anglers. Nearly half of all hunters conduct a portion of their hunting activity on these lands. However, numerous reports verify access to Federal land is problematic in a number of areas. In fact, a 2004 report to the House Appropriations Committee concluded that more than 35 million acres of USFS and BLM land have inadequate access. Lack of access is cited as a primary reason that hunters and anglers stop participating in these traditional activities.

A limited and targeted 2008 Request for Proposals, from the Roundtable, resulted in 51 project submissions from the USFS and the BLM. Combined, the top 5 projects for each agency would improve access to 155,780 acres of Federal land at a cost of only $9.03 per acre. This is a tremendous bargain considering the cost of acquiring new public lands is hundreds to thousands of dollars per acre.
Specifying a portion of LWCF for access related projects through S. 901 and H.R. 1997 will positively impact the American public by allowing them increased access to America’s great outdoors. Priority projects could include easements, rights-of-way, and fee acquisition projects. Such priority projects from willing landowners could include some or all of the following characteristics:

- Significant acreage of improved access
- State fish and wildlife agency priorities
- Access to quality hunting and fishing areas
- Provides additional recreational opportunities
- Good relative value (cost/acre accessed)
- Relatively simple transaction

**THE GROUP**

- Archery Trade Association
- Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
- Bear Trust International
- Boone and Crockett Club
- Bowhunting Preservation Alliance
- Camp Fire Club of America
- Catch a Dream Foundation
- Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation
- Conservation Force
- Dallas Safari Club
- Delta Waterfowl Foundation
- Ducks Unlimited
- Houston Safari Club
- International Hunter Education Association
- Izaak Walton League of America
- Masters of Foxhounds Association of America
- Mule Deer Foundation
- National Rifle Association
- National Shooting Sports Foundation
- National Trappers Association
- National Wild Turkey Federation
- North American Bear Foundation
- North American Grouse Partnership
- Orion, The Hunters Institute
- Pheasants Forever
- Pope and Young Club
- Public Lands Foundation
- Quail Forever
- Quail Unlimited
- Quality Deer Management Association
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- Ruffed Grouse Society
- Safari Club International
- Shikar Safari Club
- Texas Wildlife Association
- Tread Lightly!
- The Wildlife Society
- Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
- U.S. Sportsmen’s Alliance
- Whitetails Unlimited
- Wild Sheep Foundation
- Wildlife Forever
- Wildlife Management Institute

**THE SOLUTION**

Blocked access to Federal lands as illustrated by the Coronado National Forest, Arizona.