



March 22, 2021

Wyoming Senate –Travel, Recreation, Wildlife & Cultural Resources Committee  
Wyoming State Capitol  
200 W 24th St, Cheyenne, WY 82001

RE: HB 122 – 2021

Chairwoman Ellis and Senate Travel, Recreation, Wildlife & Cultural Resources Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of House Bill 122 - Hunting and Fishing Access Reliable Funding. The Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation strongly supports HB 122, which would build on the rich conservation legacy of the sportsmen’s community by providing increased funding to improve wildlife conservation efforts while also expanding public land access and opportunities.

Since 1989, CSF has maintained a singleness of purpose that has guided the organization to become the most respected and trusted sportsmen's organization in the political arena. CSF's mission is to work with Congress, governors, and state legislatures to protect and advance hunting, angling, recreational shooting, and trapping. The unique and collective force of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, the Governors Sportsmen's Caucus, and the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses, working closely with CSF, and with the support of major hunting, recreational fishing and shooting, and trapping organizations, serves as an unprecedented network of pro-sportsmen elected officials that advance the interests of America's hunters and anglers.

More than a century ago, sportsmen and women were among the first conservationists who realized America’s natural resources were in peril and could not sustain unregulated harvest and habitat destruction. Sportsmen and women took it upon themselves to support laws that stopped excessive harvest of fish and wildlife, established game and fish agencies to conserve fish, wildlife and their habitat, and supported fishing and hunting license fees to help fund the new agencies’ efforts to provide for healthy natural resources for future generations. Upon realizing that license fees alone were insufficient to restore and sustain healthy fish and wildlife populations, sportsmen and women supported self-imposed excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, archery equipment, and fishing and boating equipment to raise additional funds to support the restoration and enhancement efforts of the state agencies.

To this day sportsmen and women continue to play an integral and unique role in providing the vast majority of state-level conservation funding in the United States through a “user-pays public-benefits” structure known as the American System of Conservation Funding – though which, those who consumptively use the resource pay for the privilege, and in some cases the right, to do so. Since the inception of this System, state fish and wildlife agencies have received over \$71 billion from sportsmen and women nationwide.

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HB 122 builds on this proud history and provides yet another opportunity for sportsmen and women to fund wildlife conservation and improved public land access and opportunities. With the recently increased interest in our shared outdoor sporting heritage and public lands evidenced during the COVID-19 pandemic, HB 122's Conservation Stamp fee increase would allow the Game and Fish Commission to rectify access issues presently found throughout the state by purchasing properties or entering into easements and other agreements with willing property owners. Not only will this assist with local programs like Access Yes, but the funds generated by the fee increase could also be leveraged as a state-side match to secure federal funding through the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas, thus significantly expanding the overall breadth, reach, and impact of the \$9.00 fee increase.

As the nation's original conservationists, sportsmen and women take great pride in our role of providing the vast-majority of state-level conservation funding through self-imposed taxes and fees, and the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation encourages the passage of HB 122 to continue that proud conservation legacy in the Cowboy State. For these reasons, we encourage a favorable Committee report on HB 122 – Hunting and Fishing Access Reliable Funding.

Sincerely,

Ellary TuckerWilliams  
Rocky Mountain States Senior Coordinator

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