

February 3, 2014

Dear U.S. Senators:

After three long years of debate, the four primary Agriculture Committee negotiators announced a final farm bill agreement, which enhances and strengthens vital policies for wildlife, private landowners, sportsmen and women. The 2014 Farm Bill passed the U.S. House of Representatives (251-166) and is set to come to the Senate floor today for cloture and tomorrow for final passage. The compromise legislation includes a number of provisions that will expand and enhance habitat conservation as well as benefit sportsmen and women all across America. Below is a list of some of the wildlife benefits of the 2014 Farm Bill:

- Streamlines and consolidates programs to create an easement program with mandatory funding to protect wetlands as well as farmland or grassland that is threatened by suburban sprawl. In addition, the bill protects access to wetland easements for hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities.
- Continues to encourage private landowners to allow public access to their land for recreational uses such as hunting, fishing and bird watching. The Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentives Program receives \$40 million in mandatory funding in the bill.
- Includes a provision that would require farmers and ranchers to abide by basic conservation measures in exchange for federal subsidies for crop insurance on highly erodible land and wetlands.
- Includes "Sodsaver," a provision that limits crop insurance subsidies for the first few years in areas where land is newly converted to cropland. The measure discourages farmers from tilling native grasslands, critical for ducks, pheasants and other grassland nesting birds.
- Provides big wins for forest health advocates by permanently extending stewardship contracting and expanding good-neighbor authority on roughly 193 million acres of national forests. The bill also allows the Forest Service to designate "landscape-scale" treatment areas and use expedited permitting authority to protect the areas from insects or disease.
- Allows agencies to expand their use of streamlined permitting under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act to projects that reduce a landscape's susceptibility to insect infestations or disease. Old-growth trees must be retained under this authority, "as appropriate to the forest type."

On behalf of the *more than 40 million American hunters and anglers*, we urge you to **VOTE YES** on the 2014 Farm Bill!!!

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies * Boone and Crockett Club * Campfire Club of America
Catch-A-Dream Foundation * Congressional Sportsmen Foundation * Dallas Safari Club * Delta Waterfowl
Ducks Unlimited * Mule Deer Foundation * National Rifle Association * National Shooting Sports Foundation
National Trappers Association * National Wild Turkey Federation * North American Grouse Partnership
Pheasants Forever * Public Lands Foundation * Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation * Ruffed Grouse Society
Texas Wildlife Association * The Conservation Fund * Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Quality Deer Management Association * Quail Forever * Whitetails Inc. * Wildlife Forever
Wildlife Management Institute * Wild Sheep Foundation