The New York Legislative Sportsmen’s Caucus was formed in preparation for the launch of the National Assembly of Sportsmen’s Caucuses (NASC) in December, 2004 and was one of the original 21 NASC member caucuses. Brad Rowse, a native New Yorker himself, was instrumental in organizing the New York Caucus and establishing the initial leadership team. The original Co-Chairs of the New York Legislative Sportsmen’s Caucus were Senators Betty Little and Dale Volker, and Assembly Members Darrel Aubertine and Ginny Fields. Currently the 60-member Caucus is Co-Chaired by Senator Joseph Griffo and Assembly Members Aileen Gunther and Colin Schmitt. In 2012, the New York Sportsmen’s Advisory Council was formed to work alongside the Caucus and to provide on-the-ground support, and is currently comprised of a wide-array of both in-state and national conservation partners. Caucus members in New York have secured many victories for New York sportsmen and women over the last sixteen years, including: protecting the American System of Conservation Funding; lowering the minimum age for deer and bear hunting; establishing a junior archery license; expanding crossbow usage; and, defeating microstamping, ammo registration, and bullet serialization measures.

Policy Highlights

- A breakthrough in knife legislation was seen recently as gravity knives were removed from certain Penal Law provisions as being dangerous weapons.
- The Caucus also recently worked to pass legislation to increase penalties for poaching and has strongly advocated for lowering the hunting age and expanding crossbow usage.
- Many additional efforts in New York were directed towards the defense of sportsmen’s rights, primarily fighting restrictive firearm bills and bills that sought to limit predator and other forms of hunting.

Economic Impact and Conservation Funding

- Sportsmen and women spent $4.95 billion on hunting and fishing in New York in 2011, more than revenues for dairy products, the state’s top agricultural commodity ($4.95 billion vs. $2.74 billion).
- Through the “user pays - public benefits” American System of Conservation Funding, New York sportsmen and women generated more than $69 million for conservation last year alone.