



February 18, 2025

Representative Cally R. Forrest
Chairman, House Wildlife Subcommittee
323C Blatt Building
Columbia, SC 29201

Re: House Bill 3872; Hunting Heritage Protection Act

Position: Support

Dear Chairman Forrest and Members of the House Wildlife Subcommittee,

On behalf of the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, I write to express our strong support for House Bill 3872 which would establish a minimum acreage of South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (DNR) managed lands open to hunting.

Founded in 1989, the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF) is the informed authority across outdoor issues and serves as the primary conduit for influencing public policy. Working with the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus (CSC), the Governors Sportsmen's Caucus (GSC), and the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses (NASC), CSF gives a voice to hunters, anglers, recreational shooters, and trappers on Capitol Hill and throughout state capitols advocating on vital outdoor issues that are the backbone of our nation's conservation legacy.

As efforts to recruit the next generation of sportsmen and women continue across the state, promoting access to publicly available lands to pursue and enjoy the time-honored tradition of hunting should be top of mind. House Bill 3872 would maintain access to public lands that South Carolinians enjoy each and every hunting season for generations to come.

If enacted, South Carolina would join other Southern states like Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee as states that have passed similar legislation to protect public hunting access for sportsmen and women in their state. Access is at the forefront of the minds of sportsmen and women and is often cited as a leading barrier to hunter recruitment, retention, and reactivation efforts. South Carolina has unparalleled outdoor opportunities thanks in part to the diverse and widespread Wildlife Management Area program managed by the South

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Carolina Department of Natural Resources. This measure seeks to establish long-term protections for South Carolina's public hunting lands that thousands of sportsmen and women rely on.

Additionally, sportsmen and women support a strong outdoor based economy in South Carolina. In 2023 alone, South Carolina's sportsmen and women generated over \$39.9 million for state-based conservation through hunting and fishing license sales and matching Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program funds.¹ Moreover, hunters in South Carolina support 10,100 jobs, \$315,000,000 in salaries and wages, and \$59,000,000 in state and local taxes, with a total economic effect of \$1,126,000,000.² By permanently maintaining DNR managed lands open to hunting, House Bill 3872 would conserve access for today and tomorrow's sportsmen and women that support South Carolina's booming sporting-conservation based economy.

In closing, CSF strongly supports House Bill 3872, and we respectfully encourage you to support the legislation to help conserve public hunting access in South Carolina for generations to come. Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,



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¹ <https://s3.amazonaws.com/cdn.congressionalsportsmen.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/09204845/South-Carolina-ASCF-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

² <https://sportsmensalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/2020-Economic-Impact-of-Hunting-and-Shooting-Technical-Report-V2.pdf>