American Fisheries Society \* American Sportfishing Association \*Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies \* Berkley Conservation Institute, Pure Fishing \* Boone and Crockett Club Conservation Force \* Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation \* Dallas Safari Club \* Delta Waterfowl Foundation \* Ducks Unlimited \* Izaak Walton League of America \* North American Bear Foundation \* North American Grouse Partnership \* Orion the Hunter‘s Institute

 Pheasants Forever \* Pope and Young Club \* Quail Forever \* Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Ruffed Grouse Society \* Texas Wildlife Association \* The Conservation Fund \* The Nature Conservancy \* The Wildlife Society \* Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

 Tread Lightly \* Trout Unlimited \* Whitetails Unlimited \* Wildlife Forever

 Wildlife Management Institute

March 17, 2011

The President

The White House

Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

Our organizations, representing the hunting, fishing and conservation community, are writing to encourage your strong support for several long-standing conservation programs in the Fiscal Year 2011 budget negotiations.

The Continuing Resolution approved by the House of Representatives (H.R. 1) strikes directly at America’s highly successful tradition of federal support for conservation and management of fish, wildlife and their habitat. HR 1 includes the elimination of funding for State and Tribal Wildlife Grants, the elimination of funding for the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, significant cuts to Farm Bill Conservation Programs, the drastic reduction or elimination of funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, Forest Legacy, the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund and the National Fish Habitat Action Plan. The Senate substitute has programmatic reductions in some of these programs, but we believe that any cuts beyond this level will have lasting impact on our ability to ensure the successful conservation agenda for the 21st Century called for in your America’s Great Outdoors report.

While we fully acknowledge that conservation programs should shoulder a fair and proportional burden of reductions to the Federal budget as required to address the budget deficit, these provisions of HR 1, in our view, represent a deliberate move away from America’s long conservation tradition and, specifically with respect to the interests of the hunting, fishing and outdoor community. We are very disappointed that the House considered these actions without consultation with the hunting, fishing and conservation community, and appeal to you to please give significant and favorable consideration to our perspectives. These vital conservation programs with clear track records of measurable success are foundational to fish, wildlife and habitat conservation, good for the economy in creating jobs particularly in rural communities, and critical to providing opportunities for access to and enjoyment of fish and wildlife resources by America’s sportsmen and sportswomen.

Given the importance of these programs in your conservation, recreation and environmental agenda, we urge you to protect them in ongoing budget discussions. We fully expect that the final funding levels included in a final FY 2011 Continuing Resolution will greatly influence the FY 2012 process. We strongly urge you to hold the line on any cuts that go further than those in the Senate substitute. Thank you for your sincere consideration of our views.