

March 11, 2013

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

The undersigned organizations represent millions of hunters, anglers, outdoor related businesses, and other conservationists who are passionate about America's sporting heritage. We were pleased to hear your commitment to addressing the effects of a changing climate during your inaugural address and State of the Union speech, and we urge you to deliver on this promise by directing federal agencies to develop and implement climate change adaptation strategies that support the resiliency of fish and wildlife populations.

The hunting and angling community has many experiences with climate change. Because of the time we spend in the woods, fields, lakes and rivers, changes in weather patterns are not an abstraction to us. This past year alone, we saw iconic rivers such as the Yampa in Colorado and Madison in Montana closed to fishing due to high water temperatures. Likewise, we saw droughts in the Midwest dry up duck marshes, and wildfires of uncommon intensity burn more than 9 million acres of game habitat.

While much attention is paid to the need to reduce carbon pollution, there are concrete steps your administration can take expeditiously in preparation for the predicted increases in floods, drought, and fire. Some call this focus "climate change adaptation". America's sportsmen and women call it common sense. Every hunter and angler in the country supports the need to protect the highest quality habitats where we hunt and fish. While this should be a priority of any adaptation strategy, protecting relatively small areas of habitat is not sufficient when fires, floods, and drought can wreak havoc on a landscape scale. In the future, fish and wildlife will need a network of interconnected habitats and migration corridors to survive and thrive. Finally, many of the areas that were historically the most biologically productive have been settled and developed, and are in need of restoration. Hunters and anglers all support restoring these habitats where we will see significant recovery of fish and wildlife while also preparing communities for the impacts of a changing climate.

In 2009, conservation and sportsmen's organizations published a report titled [\*Beyond Seasons' End\*](#), which offered recommendations on how to respond to climate change. We urge you to implement and fund climate change adaptation strategies in a manner consistent with the recommendations included in the report, and ensure that these strategies support robust hunting and fishing opportunities, do not undercut funding for existing programs which currently help build fish and wildlife resiliency, and fully engage state agencies in executing the strategies.

Your administration has implemented some of those recommendations through improved science coordination, individual agency adaptation strategies, and development of a federal-state-tribal coordinated interagency strategy focused on natural resources adaptation, which needs to be

released as soon as possible. As you know, more needs to be done to meet our vision of maintaining our economic vitality and our national treasures for the future. The remaining recommendations from *Beyond Seasons' End*, including reductions in carbon pollution and a robust adaptation program, provide a pathway to achieving our shared goals for confronting climate change.

In addition, we support reaching outside of traditional natural resource agencies to include those whose infrastructure investments could be made in ways more beneficial to fish and wildlife and more resilient to climate change impacts. Agencies should find ways to prioritize lower cost natural system restoration and protection over built-infrastructure where feasible. For example, the restoration of mountain meadows can improve habitat and contribute to groundwater recharge to provide more reliable water supplies for downstream communities. Restoration of floodplains likewise creates valuable fish and game habitat while reducing the impacts of flooding on human communities. Common sense approaches such as these can help communities better prepare for drought and floods while also benefiting fish and wildlife.

Our organizations are ready to help with this work. Our members and staff dedicate millions of hours to conservation projects that help enhance resiliency so that future generations can enjoy the same sporting opportunities we have today, and the \$120 billion hunting and angling economy can be sustained. We urge you to take the actions within your power to protect, reconnect and restore fish and wildlife habitats in service of a climate adaptation strategy, and to maintain current conservation programs as budget priorities. The existing federal conservation funding programs will be critical to adaptation strategies when done in concert on a landscape scale.

As you direct the federal agencies' responses to the immense challenge of climate change, we respectfully urge you to take a comprehensive approach with an immediate and robust effort to conserve, reconnect, and restore the lands and waters that Americans rely on for fishing, hunting, and outdoor recreation. With our organizations' dedication to enhancing the resiliency of fish and wildlife populations, we can work together to secure a better future for the next generation of hunters, anglers, and all of our citizens.

Thank you for your consideration of our perspectives.

Sincerely,  
American Fisheries Society  
American Fly Fishing Trade Association  
Bass Anglers Sportsmen Society  
Ducks Unlimited  
Izaak Walton League of America  
Quail Forever  
Pheasants Forever  
Trout Unlimited  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership  
Wildlife Management Institute