American Fisheries Society • American Fly Fishing Trade Association • American Rivers •
American Sportfishing Association • Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies •
BASS/ESPN Outdoors • Berkley Conservation Institute • Center for Coastal
Conservation • Coastal Conservation Association • Congressional Sportsmen’s
Foundation • Federation of Fly Fishers • Izaak Walton League of America • National
Marine Manufacturers Association • National Wildlife Federation • Northwest
Sportfishing Industry Association • Shimano Sport Fisheries Initiative • The
Conservation Fund • The Nature Conservancy • Theodore Roosevelt Conservation
Partnership • Trout Unlimited

May 20, 2010

United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator:

The undersigned organizations, representing millions of America’s conservationists and
anglers, respectfully request your support for the National Fish Habitat Conservation Act
(NFHCA) and ask you to support its passage into law during the 111th Congress. The
NFHCA is a national, bipartisan effort to protect, restore, and enhance the nation’s fish
and aquatic communities through partnerships that foster fish habitat conservation and
improve the quality of life for the American people.

In December 2009, after a successful hearing in the Senate Committee on Environment
and Public Works’ Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife, the bill was reported favorably
by unanimous consent by the full Committee and currently awaits floor action. Your
support will be vital for passage of this legislation, which is one of the top priorities of
the sportfishing community this Congress.

Healthy waterways and robust fish populations are vital to the well-being of our society
and economy. They provide clean water and sustainable fisheries, providing
recreational enjoyment for millions and supporting many local communities. They also
are vital for less tangible reasons, as anyone who has fished wild waters or canoed a
tranquil stream can attest. Unfortunately, in many waters around the country, aquatic
habitats and the fish they support have been degraded. This is of huge concern to the
44 million anglers who pursue fish recreationally and countless others who depend on
them for subsistence and commerce. The economic contribution of recreational
fisheries alone surpassed $125 billion in 2006.

Research has determined that many fish populations are in decline and half of our
waters are impaired. As fish habitats come under increasing pressure, the current
efforts to address habitat and population declines are not reversing these trends. The
goal of the NFHCA is to foster landscape-scale, regional fish habitat conservation efforts.
The NFHCA will authorize a grant program to support locally driven fishery and habitat improvement projects, maximizing the return-on-investment by targeting much needed funding to priority on-the-ground projects. Based upon the highly successful North American Wetlands Conservation Act, the NFHCA will leverage state, local and privately raised funds to build regional partnerships aimed at fixing the nation’s biggest fisheries problems. Funding will be awarded based on habitat need, strength of local and regional partnerships, and the likelihood of success. The NFHCA will put into statute the most comprehensive effort ever attempted to treat the causes of fish habitat decline, not just the symptoms.

We encourage your support for the National Fish Habitat Conservation Act and request your cosponsorship of this landmark legislation. Given the current and impending threats to many of our nation’s fisheries, it is critically important that this legislation is enacted this Congress. To become a cosponsor of the National Fish Habitat Conservation Act, please contact Danielle Rosengarten (Sen. Lieberman) at Danielle_Rosengarten@lieberman.senate.gov, John Stooey (Sen. Bond) at John_Stoody@bond.senate.gov or Kasey Gillett (Sen. Casey) at Kasey_Gillette@casey.senate.gov.

Thank you for your consideration of this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

American Fisheries Society
American Fly Fishing Trade Association
American Rivers
American Sportfishing Association
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Bass Anglers Sportsman Society
Berkley Conservation Institute
Center for Coastal Conservation
Coastal Conservation Association
Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation
Federation of Fly Fishers
Izaak Walton League of America
National Marine Manufacturers Association
National Wildlife Federation
Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association
Shimano Sport Fisheries Initiative
The Conservation Fund
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Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Trout Unlimited