

American Fisheries Society * American Sportfishing Association
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies * Boone and Crockett Club
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation * Ducks Unlimited * Houston Safari Club
Land Trust Alliance * Mule Deer Foundation * National Shooting Sports Foundation * National
Trappers Association * National Wild Turkey Federation North American Grouse Partnership *
Pheasants Forever * Quail Forever * Safari Club International *Theodore Roosevelt
Conservation Partnership * Whitetails Unlimited
Wildlife Management Institute

June 11, 2009

The Honorable Collin Peterson
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Lucas
Ranking Member, Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Peterson and Ranking Member Lucas:

Our organizations represent millions of hunter and angler conservationists and outdoor enthusiasts, and we write you today to support your efforts to help shape the American Clean Energy and Security Act (H.R. 2454) to be responsive to the needs of foresters, farmers and ranchers whose private lands serve as vital habitat for fish and wildlife.

Our goals are twofold: to seek legislation that provides incentives to landowners to keep their land intact while maintaining quality habitat conditions, and to achieve carbon emissions reductions in a manner that is cost-effective so that energy input costs to farmers, ranchers and forest producers remain stable. America's agricultural lands and private forests sequester much of our country's annual carbon emissions, and federal entities estimate that landowners could double this capacity with appropriate incentives. In conjunction with dedicated funding for fish and wildlife habitat programs, sportsmen organizations see real opportunity to make significant gains.

We believe that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has the appropriate expertise and relationships with farmers, ranchers and forest producers to help develop guidelines and implement offset markets in these areas. We recognize that the Environmental Protection Agency will have authority to assure performance, quality control, and certification of federal offsets, but this should be in support of—not in place of—USDA's leadership role in working on the ground with private landowners in developing and implementing offsets for agriculture and forestry.

Improving forest and rangeland health, protecting grasslands and native prairie, and creating a positive dynamic among landowners, USDA and State Fish and Wildlife Agencies will lead to rapid progress in protecting fish, wildlife and its habitat. Thank you for considering our views.