Inspired by the legacy of Theodore Roosevelt, the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership is a coalition of organizations and grassroots partners working together to guarantee you a place to hunt and fish.

The TRCP’s 2013 Sportsmen’s Conservation Priorities provides an overview of the priority policy issues for hunters and anglers. Please use this document as a resource as Congress and the Obama administration craft policies that affect sportsmen.

Our staff is comprised of policy experts, biologists and field representatives; we’re headquartered in Washington, D.C., and maintain offices across the country. Call us any time.

Contact: Brandon Helm
Government Affairs Associate
bhelm@trcp.org
202-639-8727 ext. 17

THE TRCP MISSION

The TRCP strives to guarantee you a place to hunt and fish by:

◊ strengthening laws, policies and practices affecting fish and wildlife conservation;

◊ leading partnerships that provide a strong sportsmen’s voice in the decision-making process;

◊ building consensus in the conservation community to advance policy solutions.

Visit TRCP.org to learn more.
Federal funding for conservation programs is an integral part of our economy and allows resource managers to sustain fish and wildlife habitat and sporting opportunities.

Activities related to hunting and fishing have significant economic impact; in fact the sporting community is part of an outdoor recreation, natural resource conservation and historic preservation sector that generates more than **$1 trillion** for the U.S. economy every year. The TRCP’s top priorities related to conservation funding are as follow:

- legislation that provides adequate and stable funding levels for conservation programs;
- congressional recognition of the economic value of conservation funding to elevate it as a priority in the federal budget.

**ENERGY**

With the push to harness renewable energy in addition to conventional fossil fuels, it is critical to balance energy production with the needs of fish and wildlife.

Sportsmen believe that the utilization of our nation’s abundant energy resources can and should minimize impacts to fish and wildlife, and that areas with high-quality fish and wildlife habitat should be conserved. The TRCP’s top priorities related to energy are as follow:

- energy legislation that balances development with sustainable, abundant and diverse fish and wildlife populations and recreational opportunities;
- federal policy that recognizes wildlife values as an integral element of multiple use and sustained yield mandates and balances wildlife needs with energy development in resource management and forest plans;
- full implementation of the 2010 Department of the Interior oil and gas leasing reforms as well as an inclusive, landscape-level federal strategy to mitigate the detrimental effects of energy development on fish and wildlife.

**PUBLIC LANDS**

Ensuring that the management of public lands promotes diverse and abundant fish and wildlife habitat and fish and game populations is a high priority for hunters and anglers.

Promoted through local land-use planning efforts across the West, sportsmen are proposing “Backcountry Conservation Areas” that would protect existing access to public lands, enable managers to improve and restore habitat, safeguard traditional uses of the land and conserve special places with high-quality fish and wildlife habitat. The TRCP also is involved in ensuring that Forest Service planning activities reflect the priorities of sportsmen. The TRCP’s top priorities related to public lands are as follow:

- conservation of intact fish and wildlife habitat through cooperative efforts of sportsmen to administratively conserve high value lands as Backcountry Conservation Areas;
- new national forest plans that provide high-quality hunting and fishing opportunities by maintaining public access, sustainable fish and wildlife populations and key fish and wildlife habitat.
Conservation must remain economically viable for agricultural producers if we are to maintain diverse and abundant fish and wildlife populations and preserve our sporting heritage.

High commodity prices coupled with damaging changes to federal agricultural and clean water policy have created unprecedented economic incentives for landowners to farm ecologically sensitive lands with high habitat value. In order to conserve fish and wildlife habitat, the TRCP’s top agriculture priority is to ensure timely passage of a full, five-year Farm Bill that includes the following:

- a strong conservation title with ample funding for conservation programs;
- relinking conservation compliance and crop insurance to target payments to the most traditionally productive acres;
- a national “sodsaver” provision to avoid incentivizing conversion of our nation’s native prairie.

A balanced approach to overseeing our ocean and coastal resources is needed to manage competing uses while sustaining vital habitat and recreational opportunities.

Our ocean and coastal resources are impacted by a growing number of proposed activities and pressures, from energy development to commercial and recreational fishing. The TRCP educates policy makers on the perspectives of the recreational fishing community and promotes science-based management decisions. The TRCP’s top priorities related to marine fisheries are as follow:

- science-based conservation, diverse and abundant fish populations, accurate management of our marine fisheries and recreational access to these resources as key tenets of the upcoming Magnuson-Stevens Act reauthorization;
- projects supported by Gulf restoration funds that address the most critical elements of the conservation and restoration of the Gulf’s fisheries;
- federal management by NOAA that improves the accuracy and timeliness of marine fisheries data collection.

One of the most pressing challenges facing sportsmen today is the ability to access quality places to hunt and fish.

Barriers to access take many forms, ranging from public lands in the western U.S. that are “landlocked” by private property to inadequate boat launch facilities that impede access to fisheries. The TRCP’s top priorities related to access are as follow:

- expand the VPA-HIP “Open Fields” program in the Farm Bill, which encourages landowners to allow public access for hunting and fishing;
- a “Making Public Lands Public” provision of the Sportsmen’s Act or similar legislation, which will increase access to otherwise inaccessible public lands;
- full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund to expand access to public lands and waters.
As the country is impacted by a changing climate and our ever-expanding demand for water, scarcity is putting pressure on wildlife populations and their habitat.

Unless the conservation community can engage in the water allocation and water conservation processes, fish and wildlife will be among the first casualties of such scarcity. While much of water management in the U.S., especially in the West, is state-based, a major federal role in water management and conservation will be critical in the years to come. The TRCP’s top priorities related to water are as follow:

◊ strong federal funding and new policies that promote sustainable management of our water resources;
◊ emphasis on structural flood control alternatives and improved post-flood responses, especially in headwater streams.

Recent Supreme Court decisions (SWANCC, 2001, and Rapanos, 2006) have weakened Clean Water Act protections for wetlands and waters, putting fish and wildlife habitat and human health at risk.

In addition to providing essential habitat for numerous plant, fish and wildlife species that benefit sportsmen, wetlands offer flood protection, recharge groundwater, filter pollutants from drinking water sources and help control erosion. The TRCP’s top priorities related to the Clean Water Act are as follow:

◊ inclusive rulemaking to restore Clean Water Act protections to levels in place prior to 2001;
◊ government action to stop the harmful impacts of proposed large-scale mining in the Bristol Bay watershed.

Sportsmen experience the repercussions of climate change as declining populations of game species result in shortened seasons and fewer hunting opportunities.

How we address the challenges of climate change now will dictate whether future generations will continue to enjoy our time-honored sporting traditions. The TRCP’s top priorities related to climate change are as follow:

◊ additional funding and federal resources to help fish and wildlife adapt to climate change;
◊ educating sportsmen and policy makers about predicted impacts of climate change on the habitat and distribution of fish and game (www.seasonsend.org).

Visit TRCP.org to learn more.