Theodore Roosevelt had the foresight to address conservation issues still important to hunting and fishing today. Now, his vision is our mission.

OUR MISSION
TO GUARANTEE ALL AMERICANS QUALITY PLACES TO HUNT AND FISH
MAKE SOME NOISE FOR THE QUIET MOMENTS

Celebrating our most recent efforts to create a crescendo of support for conservation of the places where silence unlocks the possibilities in the natural world around us.

SILENCE AND SOLITUDE ARE certainly part of the appeal of spending time in the field or on the water. Away from our email inboxes, with cell phones dormant in our pockets, we’re able to slow down, breathe a little deeper, and think more clearly. The focus it takes to be successful—to stalk down a game trail, perfectly present a fly, pole a flat, or draw back a bow without getting busted—demands commitment and quiet.

But we all know that when it comes to conservation, hunters and anglers can’t afford to be silent. In fact, it will take nothing less than a powerful, diverse, and unified crescendo of voices from the hunting and fishing community to ensure that wildlife habitat, clean water, sportsmen’s access, and conservation funding support our traditions for generations to come.

This is why the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership exists: To convene, engage, and mobilize national and regional organizations, outdoor recreation businesses, and individual hunters and anglers to effect federal policy change around the conservation issues that matter.

There are also major opportunities. For example, legislation is advancing that could shift marine fisheries management to better serve the needs of recreational anglers and enhance both habitat and access on private lands.

Though we need to work with and react to the administration, the current state of American politics does not set our agenda. Our litmus test will always be what is best for fish and wildlife—and, therefore, sportsmen and women. Like our organization’s namesake once did, we advocate for legacy-setting policies and funding solutions.

We can’t afford to be shortsighted or stop speaking up.

There is a cost when a misplaced step kicks up the buck you’d rather see from your stand, and there will be a cost if sportsmen and outdoor brands abstain from engaging on the issues that will define hunting and fishing’s future. That’s why we’re here to welcome advocates from all across the outdoor recreation community.

Some things are worth making noise about. Join us at trcp.org/wakethewoods.

Sincerely,

Whit Fosburgh, President & CEO

Rod Nelson, Board Chairman
In 2017, the battle to keep public lands in public hands came to a head, and sportsmen and women were there to meet the charge—all state and federal bills aimed at selling or handing over ownership of public lands to the states were defeated. Most noteworthy was H.R. 621, introduced by then-Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah), which would have sold off 3.3 million acres of public land to pay down the national debt. Sportsmen were part of a ground-swell of opposition, with more than 10,000 TRCP members contacting their lawmakers within a matter of weeks. The bill was ultimately withdrawn and Chaffetz left office.

Western lawmakers finally reckon with fierce opposition to public land transfer, but special interests won't stop there.

More than 55,000 individual sportsmen have submitted 490,000 letters to lawmakers in opposition to...
The TRCP also led a successful effort to convince Nevada Representative Mark Amodei to abandon a bill that would have transferred large swaths of BLM land to the state of Nevada.

While sportsmen have been successful in stopping outright attempts to sell or transfer public lands, special interests have brought this fight to Washington, D.C., where they are working to take over our public lands in new and less obvious ways. They want what they’ve always wanted—control over how these lands are managed, so they can open them up to unfettered development.

The TRCP has responded to this shifting strategy by partnering with businesses and organizations to launch Sportsmen’s Country, a new online hub for action and education on these threats. Here, we urge hunters and anglers to do more than just keep public lands public and hold lawmakers accountable for the responsible management of public lands. Sportsmen must remain as fired up about management as they have been about the sale of public lands, because access means nothing without opportunity. Do more than keep it public at sportsmenscountry.org

The TRCP also helped to organize rallies in support of public lands at state capitol buildings in New Mexico and Idaho.

**GAME CHANGER**

**IT’S NOT ENOUGH TO KEEP IT PUBLIC**

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**SPREENMEN APPROVED**

97% agree that conserving public lands for future generations is important.
KEEPPING CONSERVATION PROMISES

We may be on defense, but we’re not on our heels

DEFENDING SAGE GROUSE CONSERVATION PLANS

IN 2017, WE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED TO SEE THE implementation of sage-grouse conservation plans to restore 67 million acres of critical sagebrush habitat on public lands across 11 Western states. Instead, we found ourselves once again defending these widely supported, science-based plans from being undermined or rewritten.

In October 2017, the Department of the Interior issued a Secretarial Order calling for review and adjustment of the plans. Since then, the TRCP has advocated for keeping the plans intact and moving forward with habitat restoration projects to recover the bird. Here’s what we’ve accomplished:

• Organized a letter from 105 natural resource professionals urging DOI to follow the science
• Worked with MeatEater host Steven Rinella and Cornell University on a social-media-friendly video that drove more than 1,102 comments to DOI
• Submitted a technical assessment of the Secretarial Order and recommendations to DOI

SUPPORT THE BLM AND U.S. FOREST SERVICE PLANS TO CONSERVE THE GREATER SAGE GROUSE ON PUBLIC LANDS

82%

The sagebrush ecosystem also supports 350 other species, including many important to sportsmen.
The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership / 7

The Antiquities Act, signed into law in 1906 by Theodore Roosevelt, was thrust into the spotlight in 2017, when President Trump directed the Department of the Interior to review the status of 27 individual national monuments—22 of which allow hunting and fishing. During the summer review process, the TRCP worked with 25 sporting businesses and 10 partners to discourage the administration from taking precedent-setting actions to undermine this important conservation tool. We also advocated locally in Western states to prevent the alteration of monuments like Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks and the Upper Missouri River Breaks, which are of particular importance to sportsmen.

Following a report from Secretary Ryan Zinke recommending the potential reduction of six national monuments, President Trump signed proclamations in December 2017 to reduce the size of Grand Staircase-Escalante and Bears Ears national monuments in Utah. In a press statement, the TRCP announced that these actions set a bad precedent for public lands that hunters and anglers care about, upending 111 years of conservation in America and putting at risk the future status of all national monuments—even those that were created with sportsmen’s input and support.

In March 2017, just months after the BLM had finalized a much-needed revision of its 30-year-old land-use planning process, the new Planning 2.0 rule was eliminated by Congress. The TRCP had been instrumental in ensuring that Planning 2.0 would benefit public lands hunters and anglers and wildlife resources by providing additional opportunities for the public to be involved in land management decisions and directing the agency to identify intact habitats, wildlife migration corridors, and other critical areas for fish and wildlife. Unfortunately, conditions of the seldom-used Congressional Review Act ensure that the BLM cannot write a substantially similar rule in the future.

77% of sportsmen and women support keeping the existing number and size of national monuments available for hunting and fishing.
ENHANCING CONSERVATION IN THE NEXT FARM BILL

One major piece of legislation could create solutions for clean water, wildlife habitat, and sportsmen’s access on private land.
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership / 9

THE FARM BILL REPRESENTS the largest single source of federal conservation funding, and sportsmen have a long history of championing the programs that offer farmers and ranchers a menu of incentives to implement conservation practices on working lands. With reauthorization of the Farm Bill slated for 2018, the TRCP spent much of 2017 laying the groundwork for a coordinated advocacy campaign to convince lawmakers to keep and fund Farm Bill programs that improve private lands conservation efforts and support access across the nation. In August, the TRCP and 30 of its partners released a set of joint sportsmen’s recommendations which will serve as the playbook for 2018 advocacy.

THE PLAYBOOK FOR PRIVATE LANDS CONSERVATION

OPEN FIELDS FOREVER Voluntary public access on private lands is part of the legacy of Jim Range, our late co-founder, who drew this duck for one of our first annual reports.

TALK THE TALK

MEDIA MASTER CLASS

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, THE TRCP’S ANNUAL WESTERN MEDIA SUMMIT was held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, to highlight the opportunities for hunting and fishing in the 2018 Farm Bill. At the two-day event, reporters, editors, podcasters, and bloggers heard from conservation experts, local landowners, outdoor recreation brands, and key partners, including Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, and more.

EXPANDING ACCESS IN RURAL AMERICA

Two bills to strengthen the only federal program that opens hunter and angler access on private lands

The TRCP and its partners were instrumental in getting bipartisan legislation introduced in both the House and Senate to reauthorize and expand the popular Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program. This Farm Bill initiative, which was the brainchild of TRCP’s founder, Jim Range, is the only federal program targeted at increasing outdoor recreational access on private lands. More than 2.5 million acres of private land have been enrolled since 2008, and the Voluntary Public Access Improvement Act would increase the program’s funding from $40 million to $150 million over five years, creating more opportunities for sportsmen and women who support rural economies across America.

DO NOT WANT TO SEE CUTS TO CONSERVATION PROGRAMS IN THE UP COMING 2018 FARM BILL

SPORTSMEN APPROVED

87%
The Everglades is a bucket-list destination that needs conservation solutions—not delays.
ACTION FOR EVERGLADES FISH HABITAT

THE CAMPAIGN TO ACCELERATE
Everglades restoration scored a major victory in 2017 with the passage of S.B. 10, which authorized the use of state funds to acquire land south of Lake Okeechobee for a much-needed reservoir. Working with the Everglades Foundation, Captains for Clean Water, and others, the TRCP helped organize the “Now or Neverglades Sportfishing Day of Action” at the Florida Legislature, where more than 1,000 sportsmen demonstrated their support for the bill. Increased storage capacity for water south of Lake Okeechobee is of paramount importance to ensuring clean, fresh water can be moved into the Everglades and eventually Florida Bay, restoring sea grass beds and water quality in one of the nation’s most important fisheries. The longer it takes to implement a solution, the greater the setback for South Florida’s outdoor recreation and tourism economy, especially after 2017’s catastrophic hurricane season.

FISH FOOD

SETTING THE AGENDA ON FORAGE FISH

The TRCP worked with a coalition of sportfishing and environmental groups to advocate for improved sustainability of the Atlantic menhaden stock. The amendment to update management of this critical forage fish, which helps support stripers, tarpon, and many other gamefish, did not pass in a November vote. But the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission did commit to implementing more ecological and conservation-based menhaden management over the next three years.

contributed by boaters and anglers to the nation's gross domestic product, according to new data from the Department of Commerce

$40 Billion

ON THE RECORD

Modern Fish Act Advances

Legislation to bring marine fisheries management into the 21st century is on the move

TRCP Center for Marine Fisheries Director Chris Macaluso testified before a House Subcommittee in September 2017 in support of the “Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Act of 2017.” The TRCP and its sportfishing partners have worked closely with the House and Senate to advance the bill, containing many of our community’s recommendations, and as of publication, the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee had voted to advance the bill to the Senate floor. The Modern Fish Act allows regional fisheries management councils to maintain conservation measures and explore approaches that update management to better serve anglers. This includes strategies that have been used successfully by state agencies to manage coastal and inland fish species.
**WADING AGAINST THE CURRENT**

**CLEAN WATER RULES**

**HUNTERS AND ANGLERS RESPOND TO ROLLBACKS**

The majority of sportsmen and women—regardless of political affiliation—support Clean Water Act protections for headwater streams and wetlands. However, in 2017, the EPA took steps to repeal the very rule that helps defend coldwater fisheries and prevent wetlands loss. The TRCP successfully rallied hunters and anglers in support of the Clean Water Rule during a 60-day comment period, effectively driving more than 1,200 comments to the EPA condemning a rollback of the rule. In 2018, The TRCP will continue to work to maintain broad Clean Water Act protections for the streams and wetlands that allow sportsmen and women to pursue their passions.

Sportsmen told the EPA:

“I will have my first son this November. I hope he has the opportunity to come of age hunting and fishing. I don’t want to have to explain to him that there was once a time when our wetlands and flowing water were protected and we had access.” —Alex from California

“I grew up fishing and hunting with my family. Now that I have children of my own, I’m worried that they won’t have the same opportunities if the Clean Water Rule is repealed. The thought of future generations in this nation missing out on one of our greatest resources is horrifying.” —James from Utah

Facing a rollback of existing protections for headwaters and wetlands, sportsmen explain why clean water matters.

83% SUPPORT CLEAN WATER ACT PROTECTIONS FOR HEADWATER STREAMS AND WETLANDS

Take me fishing
MORE THAN EVER, OUR WORK TO MAINTAIN CLEAN water and healthy fisheries requires collaboration across all of TRCP’s policy centers. For example, water resources policy staff worked closely with agriculture and private lands staff on strategies to ensure that the 2018 Farm Bill will help restore stream flows and improve water quality. A new working group of partners focused on infrastructure policy is tracking opportunities for water resources and marine fisheries staffers to coordinate on advocacy for wetlands, sediment diversions, and Everglades restoration.

In recent years, we’ve experienced the first accelerated loss of wetlands since the Clean Water Act was enacted 45 years ago.
In 2019, conservation's share of the federal budget is slated to drop below one percent for the first time since the 1960s. This funding serves as the foundation for the country's $887-billion outdoor recreation economy and is critical to upholding access and opportunity for sportsmen and women of all stripes. The TRCP is leading the effort to gain congressional support for healthy funding levels for the agencies and programs that conserve wildlife, habitat, and access in America. In the coming year, the TRCP and our partners will be working to raise awareness and educate members of Congress about the need for a budget fix that stabilizes federal conservation funding and provides agencies with the resources necessary to maintain healthy fish and wildlife populations and sustain our outdoor recreation economy.

Consortion Funding Will Dip Below 1% of the Federal Budget

87% of sportsmen approved. Do not want to see funding cuts to conservation programs.
The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, and we take great pride in our financial efficiency, transparency, and accountability to donors. We work to use every one of your dollars as responsibly as possible by carefully monitoring our administrative and fundraising spending to ensure control, transparency, and effectiveness. In 2017, the TRCP spent 80 percent of your contributions on programs and just 20 percent on overhead.

For our efforts, the TRCP has received a four-star rating from Charity Navigator five years in a row—that’s the highest possible score for every year they have rated us. This puts our organization in the top 8 percent of American charities rated. The TRCP is also proud to have a Platinum Seal rating from GuideStar and the highest possible rating from the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance. Releasing this annual report is part of our promise of transparency to you—our donors, supporters, and members.
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THE TEAM

Wyoming field representative Nick Dobric with his latest archery bull.

Board member Frank Hugelmeyer rocking his TRCP hat on the Muskegon River in Michigan.

A covey of policy council, Board, and staff members after a quail hunt at George Hi Plantation.
Gene Gilliland with a nice redfish off the Louisiana coast during the TRCP policy council retreat.


We are better for having known Coby Tigert, and he will be sorely missed.
"Here is your country. Cherish these natural wonders, cherish the natural resources, cherish the history and romance as a sacred heritage, for your children and your children's children. DO NOT LET SELFISH MEN OR GREEDY INTERESTS SKIN YOUR COUNTRY OF ITS BEAUTY, its riches or its romance.”

—Theodore Roosevelt