



Photo: Dusan Smetana

AGRICULTURE

HISTORY

Much of the nation's most important fish and wildlife habitat exists on private land, and the Farm Bill, passed by Congress roughly every five years, has evolved into the nation's single-largest investment in private lands conservation. The voluntary, incentive-based conservation programs of the Farm Bill range from land easement programs that restore and protect wetlands to cost-share programs that assist landowners in implementing sound conservation practices on farm, ranch and forest lands across the country. The benefits of these practices extend far beyond enrolled acres, providing clean water, clean air, healthy fish and wildlife populations and opportunities for outdoor recreation for all Americans.



Photo: Paul Bramble

CHALLENGE

The 2012 Farm Bill is taking shape in a time of unprecedented budget cuts and partisan rancor. As Congress scours the federal budget to reduce spending, the Farm Bill conservation title will likely be targeted for drastic cuts. Adding to the challenge of crafting the 2012 Farm Bill is the pressure that high crop prices put on farmers to convert ever increasing acres of ecologically sensitive land to intensive production. As the need for conservation grows, the funds available for that conservation are in short supply. The 2012 Farm Bill, more than ever before, will require the hunting and fishing community to provide vocal support for the future of private lands conservation.

Photo: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Photo: Dusan Smetana



OUR STRATEGY

Beginning with the 2008 Farm Bill, the TRCP created the Agriculture and Wildlife Working Group, comprised of the foremost agriculture conservation policy experts from the nation's leading hunting and angling conservation organizations. The AWWG already has begun working together to craft sensible policy recommendations for the 2012 Farm Bill that seek to enhance the legislation's positive impact on fish and wildlife habitat and the national economy.

ACTION

Hunters and anglers rely on private lands for quality experiences afield, and Farm Bill conservation programs are by far the best way to assure that those private lands remain viable for the species that sportsmen and -women cherish most, from pheasants in Iowa, ducks in the Dakotas, and salmon in Oregon. The TRCP and our partner organizations will provide the tools necessary for hunters and anglers across the nation to express their support for Farm Bill conservation programs.

WHY THE TRCP?

The TRCP has an impressive track record of leading highly successful, highly credible coalitions of sportsmen leaders. The 2012 Farm Bill will be crafted in the most challenging political climate in recent memory, requiring precisely the kind of unified voice that TRCP is well-positioned to provide.

To learn more about the TRCP and the work we're doing, visit www.trcp.org or contact Meg McKinnon, Development Manager, at mmckinnon@trcp.org or 202-639-8727, ext. 24.



"For those of us who tromp around in cornfields after pheasants, geese or whitetails, the Farm Bill too often goes unrecognized as an incredible tool for conservation. With the voices of hunters and anglers, we can help make sure cost-effective conservation remains a part of this important legislation."

Steve Kline
Center for Agricultural
and Private Lands Director