



BARACK OBAMA: SUPPORTING THE RIGHTS AND TRADITIONS OF SPORTSMEN

Barack Obama did not grow up hunting and fishing, but he recognizes the great conservation legacy of America's hunters and anglers and has great respect for the passion that hunters and anglers have for their sport. Were it not for America's hunters and anglers, including the great icons like Theodore Roosevelt and Aldo Leopold, our nation would not have the tradition of sound game management, a system of ethical, science-based game laws and an extensive public lands estate on which to pursue the sport. Obama recognizes that we must forge a broad coalition if we are to address the great conservation challenges we face. America's hunters and anglers are a key constituency that must take an active role and have a powerful voice in this coalition.

PROTECTING GUN RIGHTS

Respect the Second Amendment: Millions of hunters and shooters own and use guns each year. Barack Obama believes the Second Amendment creates an individual right, and he respects the constitutional rights of Americans to bear arms. He will protect the rights of hunters and other law-abiding Americans to purchase, own, transport, and use guns.

EXPANDING ACCESS TO PLACES TO HUNT AND FISH

Barack Obama recognizes that American hunters and anglers are losing access to places to hunt and fish. Obama supports the Open Fields Incentives legislation that provides incentives to farmers and ranchers who voluntarily open their land to hunting, fishing and other wildlife-related activities.

CONSERVING FISH AND WILDLIFE

Barack Obama is fully committed to protecting the habitat for the fish and wildlife that sportsmen enjoy. He is an advocate for preserving our wetlands and supports a broad range of national conservation programs, including the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and the National Fish Habitat Plan.

Private Lands/Farm Bill: Because most land is privately owned, private landowners are the principal stewards of America's land and water. As a U.S. Senator, Barack Obama has supported conservation programs that serve as a resource to landowners and assist them with sustainable environmental planning and best land management practices. As president, Obama will make the conservation of private lands a priority. He will fight to increase funding for the Conservation Security Program and the major set-aside programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program, Wetlands Reserve Program, and Grasslands Reserve Program, so that rental rates can compete with rising commodity prices. Obama will direct the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior to place a special emphasis on restoration of habitat for important game species associated with specific regions of the United States, such as bobwhite quail and Eastern and Osceola turkey habitat in the South, ruffed grouse habitat in the Northeast, and sage grouse and pronghorn antelope habitat in the West. Obama also supports the use of tax incentives and other financial mechanisms to encourage private landowners to restore and protect habitat.

Saltwater Fishing: Barack Obama supports efforts to allocate a fair percentage of managed coastal fisheries to sport fishing, based on its economic value, and to restore coastal marine fish habitat damaged by sea level rise, hurricanes, and coastal development.

National Forests: National Forest roadless areas provide essential habitat for a broad range of plant and animal species, and clean drinking water. As president, Barack Obama will fight to protect roadless areas on Forest Service lands from all new road construction.

Wetlands: Barack Obama supports numerous efforts to protect wetlands, including full funding for the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and fulfilling the goal of “no net loss”, extending the swamp buster provisions of the Farm Bill, and amending the Clean Water Act to clarify that it protects isolated wetlands. His record on wetlands conservation dates back to his days as a state senator. In 2004, he was a cosponsor of the Wetlands Protection Act, which provides for the conservation of wetlands in Illinois. As a state senator, Obama also supported the creation of the Illinois Open Land Trust, which allows the state to buy property from willing sellers for conservation and recreation purposes and make grants and loans to local governments for acquiring land for open spaces.

Climate Change: Barack Obama recognizes that global warming is real, is happening now, and poses a real threat to America’s fish, wildlife, natural habitats, and the future of hunting and fishing. Obama supports proposals endorsed by dozens of national hunting and fishing organizations, including the Mule Deer Foundation, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, BASS/ESPN, Pheasants Forever, the American Sport fishing Association and Trout Unlimited, to devote billions of dollars annually to state game and fish agencies and federal land management agencies to help them ensure that fish and wildlife survive the impacts of climate change. Obama also has a plan to put America on the path to stop global climate change by reducing carbon emissions 80 percent by 2050 and investing in advanced technologies that will spur innovation, create millions of new jobs and help stop climate change.

EDUCATING YOUNG HUNTERS AND ANGLERS

Barack Obama understands the importance of America’s hunting and fishing traditions. For many, these activities help forge a conservation ethic that lasts a lifetime. He also recognizes that hunting and fishing are family activities that create bonds that last across generations. As president, Obama will provide state game and fish agencies with additional resources and encouragement to reach out to young men and women to educate them about hunting and fishing opportunities, hunter safety, and the basic principles of fish and wildlife management.