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Subcommittee Chairman John Fleming Questions Superfluous Spending and Increased Land Acquisition in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service FY 2012 Budget Request

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the House Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs held an oversight hearing on the FY 2012 budget request for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). The hearing focused on \$1.69 billion request for FWS, \$47.8 billion above FY '10 levels, and increased funding for government land acquisition.

“Two years ago, President Obama told a town hall meeting in Rio Rancho, New Mexico that current deficit spending was ‘unsustainable’ and that: ‘We are mortgaging our children’s future with more and more debt.’ I agree with the President. It was, therefore, alarming to see the President recommend funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund 145 percent higher than when he came into office. ... We simply cannot afford this type of federal growth and the federal government should not be profiting from the misery of our constituents who have watched their land values fall,” **said Subcommittee Chairman John Fleming (LA).**

[Click here to read Subcommittee Chairman Fleming’s full opening statement.](#)

Get the Facts:

- Despite the FWS’ growing operations and maintenance backlog that is now approaching \$4 billion, the FY '12 budget request for land acquisition is \$140 million. This is \$53.6 million more than FY '10 and the highest level ever requested for this account.
- The Administration has proposed spending cuts on the maintenance of the National Wildlife Refuge System and reduced funding for the National Wildlife Refuge Fund. This fund was created in 1935 and is designed to compensate local communities for the loss of tax revenues when the Fish and Wildlife Service purchases private lands in their community.
- On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) into law with the expectation of keeping national unemployment levels below 8 percent and creating over 3 million new jobs. As of December 31, 2010 the FWS had fully obligated the \$280 million it received for 839 individual projects. What remains unclear is how many permanent, part-time or

temporary jobs were created as a result of this spending.

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