

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN DOC HASTINGS

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House Approves Bipartisan Legislation to Safeguard Hunting & Fishing from Bureaucratic Restrictions and Limitations

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the House of Representatives passed [H.R. 4089](#), the *Sportsmen's Heritage Act of 2012*, with a bipartisan vote of 274-146. This bill protects the traditional right of American sportsmen to fish and hunt from unjustified bureaucratic restrictions and limitations. It will protect American jobs and foster economic growth by supporting recreational opportunities on these federal lands as well as reaffirm existing law barring the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from banning traditional ammunition and fishing tackle.

"Passage of this bill will prevent the federal government from grossly overstepping its bounds, preserve sportsmen's rights, and protect the American jobs and rural economies that are supported by outdoor recreation. I applaud the House for passing this legislation and encourage the Senate to follow our lead," **said Natural Resources Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04).**

"This legislation importantly preserves the rights of hunters, fishers and recreational shooters and ensures that they continue to have the opportunity to access our nation's public lands. Radical special interest groups have been working feverishly to impose new restrictions that limit a host of recreational activities on public lands. They have co-opted the Environmental Protection Agency as their vehicle to implement these wrongheaded policies, making legislation such as the Sportsmen's Heritage Act necessary to thwart their short-sided efforts. I am pleased that this bill passed in the House and hope that common sense prevails and the Senate considers this legislation as well. While they're at it, I hope they will also consider taking up the budget, but I'm certainly not going to hold my breath," **said Subcommittee on National, Parks, Forests and Public Lands Chairman Rob Bishop (UT-01).**

"I think it is important to recognize the contributions that sportsmen make to protect our nation's most precious resources. Outdoor activities like hunting and fishing are a central part of our heritage and way of life, but they also help fund a good portion of our conservation efforts," **said Rep. Jeff Miller (FL-01).** *"We must remain ever diligent to ensure the rights of sportsmen. Thanks to the members of the Sportsmen's community, Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, and the House Committee on Natural Resources, H.R. 4089 will be able to address some of the most pressing concerns the outdoors community faces."*

"This initiative reflects my belief that it is critical to protect the rights of sportsmen in our area. Like many in the First District, I have enjoyed hunting and fishing in Northern Michigan

all of my life. I want to make sure these activities are protected for future generations of Northern Michiganders. Hunting, fishing, and shooting sports are an important part of Northern Michigan's heritage and access to these activities needs to be protected," **said Rep. Dan Benishek (MI-01).**

"With the Recreational Shooting Protection Act to help preserve the shooting sports as a critical part of this bill, I am proud to have helped introduce this legislation to protect many opportunities for sportsmen all over the country from being placed in a indefinite bureaucratic chokehold," **said Rep. Jeff Flake (AZ-06).**

"The House passed a good, common-sense piece of legislation today," **said Rep. Don Young (AK- At large).** *"In addition to paving the way for an expansion of hunting and fishing activities on public lands, the House is correcting a decades-old wrong that I have been working on for years. The 41 dead polar bears that this legislation affects, were not only hunted and harvested legally, but are currently sitting in Canadian warehouses where they hold absolutely no conservation value. Not only is this a bipartisan issue, but I have worked with the Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure their concerns were taken into account. Every step of the way, these hunters have followed the law – it's time we return to them what is rightfully theirs."*

"Our sportsmen devote their time, money and efforts toward ensuring that our nation's fish and wildlife are sustainable for all Americans to enjoy," **said Rep. Paul Broun, M.D. (GA-10).** *"In return, I whole-heartedly support the passage of the Sportsmen's Heritage Act so that we can protect our hunters and anglers' rights while also fostering land conservation nationwide. This bill guarantees that future generations can continue to hunt, fish, and enjoy the God-given natural resources that were bestowed on this country."*

Specifically, the Sportsmen's Heritage Act of 2012:

- Supports access for hunting and fishing on public lands. By implementing an "open until closed" management policy, it protects sportsmen from arbitrary efforts by the federal government to block public lands from hunting and fishing activities.
- Protects against unnecessary closures of certain public lands to recreational shooting.
- Eliminates government red tape for the importation of specific, legal hunting trophies. It is focused on resolving specific, existing cases and doesn't open the door to unlimited future imports.
- Protects the use of traditional ammunition and tackle by blocking an end-run around existing federal law and barring the EPA from banning such ammunition.

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