

Committee on Resources,

Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife & Oceans

[fisheries](#) - - Rep. Wayne Gilchrest, Chairman

U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515-6232 - - (202) 226-0200

Witness Statement

**TESTIMONY OF
DR. GORDON GUYER
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PHEASANTS FOREVER**

Before the
COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FISHERIES CONSERVATION, WILDLIFE AND OCEANS

Concerning:
H.R. 1230 Establishing the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge
June 21, 2001
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, my name is Dave Nomsen. I am Vice-president of Governmental Affairs for Pheasants Forever from Alexandria, MN. I am pleased to be here today on behalf of Dr. Gordon Guyer and Pheasants Forever.

Dr. Guyer is currently serving as Chairman of the Board for St. Paul, MN based Pheasants Forever. Dr. Guyer is President Emeritus of Michigan State University and previous Director of the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Agriculture in Michigan. As Chairman of the Board for Pheasants Forever, Dr. Guyer represents nearly 100,000 of our nations' sportsmen and sportswomen and Pheasants Forever 550 chapters nationwide in 28 states. Pheasants Forever was founded in 1982 and annually completes in excess of 32,000 wildlife habitat conservation projects in cooperation with willing farmers and landowners and natural resources agencies.

Pheasants Forever is pleased to offer our complete support for HR 1230 establishing the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. We believe that this refuge will provide tremendous benefits to sportsmen and sportswomen. We are pleased to see that hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education are specifically listed as priority uses of the proposed refuge.

We believe that HR 1230 is a significant piece of legislation and when completed will offer tremendous wildlife conservation and environmental benefits to not only our nations sportsmen, but society as a whole. In the attached letter to Representative Dingell, Dr. Guyer points out how important the establishment of the refuge will be in terms of both wildlife and water quality enhancement. Dr. Guyer points out the value of this area as a waterfowl migration corridor and has personally enjoyed some of the fine waterfowling experiences this area offers. Preservation of the Lower Detroit River ecosystem through HR 1230 can ensure the future of fine waterfowling in this area and the millions who live nearby will benefit from the refuges wildlife. The refuge will benefit numerous species of waterfowl and fish, provide habitat for other birds,

butterflies, and mammals. Preserving this area will also improve water quality. Healthy wetland ecosystems can absorb nutrients and contaminants from runoff and reduce sediment loads improving water quality not only for Michigan but also for the entire Lake Huron and Lake Erie watershed.

HR 1230 will complement Pheasants Forever's activities in Michigan. Chapters complete projects that while focused on improving pheasants and pheasant habitat, these projects reduce soil erosion, benefits numerous species of wildlife, and improve water quality. Many of these projects are within the watershed above the Lower Detroit River and involve the successful Conservation Reserve and Wetland Reserve Programs. We believe that the addition of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge will move us toward a more comprehensive land management program befitting Michigan farmers and landowners, sportsmen and sportswomen, and society as a whole. We are pleased to see provisions providing protection for landowners decisions regarding land acquisition. At Pheasants Forever all of our projects are voluntary and completed with willing farmers and landowners. We believe that by incorporating these provisions, local and community support for the refuge will be strengthened.

Mr. Chairman, thank-you for the opportunity to testify in support of HR 1230. The Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge can benefit this nations sportsmen and sportswomen, all conservationists, and everyone interested in a healthy environment. Please feel free to contact us for additional information and support regarding these issues. I would be happy to take questions at the appropriate time. Thank-you.

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