Congress of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20515

February 7, 2017

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

President Trump:

On January 19, 2017, one day before you took office, the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) issued Director's Order 219 with the purpose of banning the use of traditional lead based ammunition and tackle on federal lands over a five year period. This is a blow to sportsmen and fishermen across the country and we write today urging you to rescind this burdensome directive. Sportsmen and fishermen are some of our country's most dedicated conservationists; this order only serves to hinder them from participating in the recreational use of federal lands they've enjoyed for decades.

Use of traditional lead ammunition and tackle has been prevalent in North America since its settlement. While FWS argues this directive is to the benefit of human, fish, and wildlife health, to this date, no scientific evidence has linked the use of lead to negative population levels of wildlife. In fact, healthy population levels of many species depend on hunting and angling participation. Lead based ammunition and tackle is overwhelmingly preferred by sportsmen and fishermen alike for its superior performance, availability, and cost. Limiting access to lead could contribute to decreased participation in these activities which could harm wildlife and the ecosystems they inhabit.

Unfortunately the reasoning behind this directive isn't the only aspect lacking credibility. The timing as well is more than suspect. Issued on the last full day of the previous administration, FWS sought no input from industry, sportsmen and conservationists to aid in its decision. Dialog between federal agencies and the industries and people they serve is essential to good governance. Without communication between these entities, we find ourselves in situations such as this, with ill-conceived regulations that only serve to satisfy certain political entities and harm those who care about these issues the most.

In light of your recent decision to freeze all new federal regulations; we encourage you to take a hard look at overturning this FWS directive. Access to public land for hunting and fishing has been in jeopardy for many years now. With your administration, you have an opportunity to reverse this trend and restore access to public lands to all Americans. We appreciate your attention to this critical issue and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

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