

TESTIMONY OF GREG KNADLE, VICE PRESIDENT, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION
BEFORE THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERIOR,
ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES REGARDING
**FY 2014 BUDGET FOR THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE
SERVICE, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT AND FOREST SERVICE**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding FY 2014 funding on behalf of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). **NFWF's FY 2014 appropriations request will be matched at least dollar for dollar with non-federal funds to conserve fish, wildlife and their habitats through local partnerships.**

We believe that NFWF is a sound investment in a time of constrained budgets because of our proven track record and statutory requirement to leverage federal funding with private contributions to maximize conservation benefit. We appreciate the Subcommittee's past support and respectfully request your approval of funding at the following levels:

- **\$ 7.525 million through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Resource Management appropriation;**
- **\$ 3 million through the Bureau of Land Management's Management of Lands and Resources appropriation; and**
- **\$ 3 million through the Forest Service's National Forest System appropriation.**

Since its inception, NFWF has leveraged nearly \$576 million in federal funds into more than \$2 billion in on-the-ground and in-the-water conservation with less than 5% aggregate overhead to the federal government and 100 staff nationwide. In 2012, NFWF supported a total of 505 projects. We used \$42.6 million in federal funds as a springboard to leverage an additional \$149.5 million in private contributions and grantee matching funds, for a total investment of more than \$192 million.

NFWF was established by Congress in 1984 to catalyze private investments to conserve fish, wildlife and their habitats. NFWF is required by law to match each federally-appropriated dollar with a minimum of one non-federal dollar. We consistently exceed this requirement by leveraging federal funds at a 3:1 average ratio while building consensus and emphasizing accountability, measurable results, and sustainable conservation outcomes.

The goal of NFWF is to ensure abundant wildlife species in order to allow the economic health of our nation to continue. The key elements of our approach include: (1) leverage, (2) efficiency, (3) partnerships, (4) transparency, and (5) measurable outcomes.

I want to highlight a couple of NFWF projects that you may have heard about recently.

Hurricane Sandy Response: Hurricane Sandy surged up the Eastern Seaboard in October 2012, devastating coastal communities in eight states. The storm was catastrophic in the mid-Atlantic, causing 199 deaths and \$200 billion in property damage from North Carolina to New England. Sandy's high winds and water moved masses of coastal sediments and large debris, eroding

important beaches that are prime feeding grounds for a small shorebird called the Red Knot. These birds fly 30,000 miles annually from wintering grounds in Argentina to their breeding grounds in the Arctic and back. The beaches of Delaware Bay, where the horseshoe crabs lay their eggs, provide a vital stopover feeding area for the bird were heavily impacted by hurricane Sandy. NFWF immediately funded local groups to start restoring these beaches in a race against the bird's migration. By May of this year key beaches will be ready for the feeding birds, reducing the risk of a population crash and decreasing the chance that the bird will become critically endangered.

BP/Transocean Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Settlement: In early 2013, a U.S. District Court approved two plea agreements resolving the criminal cases against BP and Transocean which arose out of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. The agreements direct a total payment of \$2.544 billion to the NFWF to fund projects benefitting the natural resources of the Gulf Coast that were impacted by the oil spill. NFWF will carry out the plea agreements through its newly established *Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund* (Fund). Over the next five years, NFWF will receive a total of \$1.272 billion for barrier island and river diversion projects in Louisiana, \$356 million each for natural resource projects in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi, and \$203 million for similar projects in Texas. This program and the funds received pursuant to the settlement will be managed separately from all other NFWF programs.

NFWF Partnerships

With the Subcommittee's support, FY 2013 funds will support our long-standing partnerships and initiatives with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Forest Service. Some of our priority initiatives for FY 2014 are described below:

Chesapeake Bay, Great Lakes, and Long Island Sound: Watershed health plays an important role in fish and wildlife conservation and has been a feature of NFWF's grantmaking since establishing our partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1998. In the last decade, NFWF has formed strategic public-private partnerships to restore and protect fish and wildlife habitat while improving water quality in the Chesapeake Bay, Great Lakes, and Long Island Sound. Federal partners in the programs include EPA, Department of Interior agencies, USDA's Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and others. NFWF leverages various federal funds for these partnerships but, more importantly, has attracted private contributions from corporations and other private foundations. Through these partnerships, federal agencies are able to leverage resources with NFWF's corporate sponsors and private contributions to increase the impact any one of them could have alone. NFWF's watershed grant programs continued positive results in 2012 with priority project requests far exceeding available funds.

Path of the Pronghorn: The epic migration of pronghorn across Wyoming is one of the longest of its kind in North America. In recent years, it had become one of the most treacherous. Along the path to and from the animals' wintering grounds, new development, fencing, and highways were blocking the age-old passage. Twice a year, thousands of pronghorn converged on a particularly dangerous bottleneck on Route 191, dodging vehicles as they crossed the highway. More than 700 pronghorn and mule deer had been killed and injured along a 27-mile stretch since 2007. Since 2005, NFWF had supported a multi-tiered approach to saving the path of the

pronghorn. After convening initial discussions with federal and state agencies, we launched a wider examination of pronghorn conservation. In 2012, a unique solution provided a safer way: the opening of two new wildlife overpasses and a series of underpasses designed to save the pronghorn and other animals from deadly interactions with traffic. NFWF worked with State and Federal partners on the fencing and passage issues that allow the pronghorn to benefit from the overpasses.

Longleaf Pine Ecosystems: In the Carolina low country and throughout the Southeast, the longleaf pine forest that once dominated the landscape now occupies less than three percent of its historic range. The trees provide shelter and sustenance for many species including the diminutive red-cockaded woodpecker. To protect both the forest and the species that depend on it, and to help ensure that the military mission of U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) bases and installations in the Southeast is maintained, NFWF signed its first-ever agreement with the DOD in 2011. It targets restoration of longleaf forests in high-priority buffer lands around DOD installations. The public-private effort includes support from the U.S. Forest Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and founding partner Southern Company, along with its four operating companies (Alabama Power, Georgia Power, Gulf Power, and Mississippi Power), and a new partnership with International Paper, which invests in sustainable management of the forests that supply its raw materials.

Jobs and Economic Benefits from Conservation Investments

In 2012, NFWF commissioned a study, *The Conservation Economy in America: Direct investments and economic contributions*, to determine the economic impacts of federal, state, local and private investments in natural resource conservation. The minimum total investment in natural resource conservation in the U.S. is \$38.8 billion annually. This is a conservative figure given that data on the local and private investments is limited. More importantly, the total economic activity and jobs created by this spending is \$93.2 billion and 660,000 respectively. When this data is combined with the economic output from outdoor recreation and historic preservation, the total economic impact is \$1.7 trillion, returning \$211 billion in federal, state and local tax revenue, and supporting 12.8 million jobs annually. This economy is largely dependent on federal investments in public lands, recreation and conservation programs that are funded in the Interior and Environment appropriation.

NFWF Reauthorization

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Reauthorization Act (H.R. 263) was introduced in the House in February 2012 and a companion bill (S. 51) was introduced in the Senate, both with strong bipartisan support. Both bills renew NFWF's direct appropriations authorization at a level of \$25 million, a reduction in authorization of \$5 million, for an additional five years. The \$25 million authorization includes \$15 million annually through the Department of the Interior; \$5 million annually through the U.S. Department of Agriculture; and \$5 million annually through the Department of Commerce. The bills affirm the original purposes of NFWF and strengthen NFWF's ability to raise private dollars, working with federal agencies more effectively, reducing bureaucratic burdens, and maximizing conservation outcomes. Importantly, the reauthorization will ensure NFWF's ability to save money for the federal government through efficient grant administration, effective collaboration, and significant leverage through private sector contributions.

H. R. 263 is sponsored by Congressman Grimm (NY) and Congressman Dingell (MI). S. 51 is sponsored by Chairman Boxer and Ranking member Vitter and include the following co-sponsors: Baucus (MT), Cardin (MD), Cochran (MS), Collins (ME), Roberts (KS), Stabenow (MI), Tester (MT), Udall (NM), and Whitehouse (RI). Legislative hearings are expected in both the House and the Senate in 2013.

Conclusion

For nearly three decades, NFWF has been at the forefront of national conservation activity. With our partners, NFWF has contributed to some of the nation's most important conservation programs, invested millions in worthy and successful projects, and spearheaded programs to conserve our nation's most treasured natural resources. We have a successful model of coordinating and leveraging federal funds and attracting support from the private sector to address the most significant threats to fish and wildlife populations and their habitats. NFWF currently has partnerships with 14 federal agencies and more than 50 corporations and private foundations.

Meaningful and measurable outcomes, evaluation, and accountability are NFWF's building blocks to ensure maximum conservation impact. We are working directly with the federal agencies and our other partners to maximize results and produce sustainable conservation outcomes. To that end, NFWF is incorporating monitoring and evaluation into our programs to measure progress, promote adaptive management, demonstrate results, and continuously learn from project investments. We look forward to building on our partnerships with our federal agency partners in FY 2014 and appreciate the Subcommittee's continued support of these collaborative efforts.

Background on National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

As of FY 2012, NFWF has awarded over 11,600 grants to national and community-based organizations through successful partnerships with the Department of Interior Agencies, USDA's Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Defense, and others. This collaborative model brings together multiple federal agencies with state, tribal and local governments and private organizations to implement coordinated conservation strategies in all 50 states.

We work directly with federal and state agencies and our other partners to measure progress, promote adaptive management, demonstrate results, and continuously learn from project investments. NFWF's grant-making involves a thorough internal and external review process. Peer reviews involve federal and state agencies, affected industry, non-profit organizations, and academics. Grants are reviewed by the NFWF's science and evaluation team before being recommended to the Board of Directors for approval. By law, Congressional offices are notified 30 days in advance of any grant that will be given out in their district or state that includes more than \$10,000 in federal funds.

Mr. Chairman, we greatly appreciate your continued support and hope the Subcommittee will approve funding for the Foundation in FY 2014.