

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 2013 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 2013 funding for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). **NFWF's FY 2013 appropriations request will be matched 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 General Administration 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 \$2 billion in on-the-ground and in-the-water conservation with less than 5% aggregate overhead to the federal government and fewer than 100 staff nationwide.

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.

A positive example of this approach is our ongoing response to the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. As you know, NFWF took immediate action following the oil spill to help protect the species most at risk. NFWF's long-standing relationships with federal and state agencies, scientists, and on-the-ground conservation organizations were invaluable in assessing local wildlife needs and shaping effective responses. In the first phase of its Gulf response, NFWF invested in 22 projects which are now delivering results in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida and Texas. This first phase of projects was financed using \$8.8 million from the Recovered Oil Fund for Wildlife, established by BP with proceeds from the sale of oil recovered

from the spill site, as well as a \$2.25 million commitment from Walmart. Since then, NFWF has invested an additional \$14.1 million from the Recovered Oil Fund for Wildlife and other sources — \$22.9 million total — to bolster populations of species affected by the spill in advance of formal restoration efforts. These investments have helped to pilot cost-effective conservation approaches and build capacity in the region to sustain conservation outcomes. With our federal and private partners, more than 500,000 acres of coastal of freshwater wetland habitat was established to benefit a variety of migratory birds. Other investments have increased the number of sea turtle hatchlings by over 100,000 and are ensuring the survival of an additional 800-1,000 adult and juvenile sea turtles annually.

### **NFWF Partnerships**

With the Subcommittee's support, FY 2013 funds will support our long-standing partnerships and new initiatives with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and Forest Service (FS). Some of our priority initiatives for FY 2013 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, Forest Service, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, NOAA, 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 to increase the impact any one of them could have alone. NFWF's watershed grant programs continued positive results in 2011 with priority project requests far exceeding available funds.

**Path of the Pronghorn:** In 2009, NFWF and our partners identified the Green River Basin of Wyoming (Basin) as a priority area for coordinated conservation efforts. The Basin supports significant populations of sage grouse, mule deer, pronghorn and elk. These species are threatened by habitat fragmentation, subdivision, fencing across key migration corridors, increased mortality along local roads and highways, and conflicts with expanding energy development on their wintering range. In partnership with FWS, BLM, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, Walmart and the Turner Foundation, NFWF has focused its grants to address these threats including improvements to fencing so that pronghorn and other wildlife can migrate more easily, reducing the effects of roads on wildlife, and protecting key parcels where subdivision and development threaten the entire migration corridor. With NFWF support, 121 miles of barbed-wire fencing has been modified to enable movement through the corridor by pronghorn, 23,000 acres of habitat is now protected through voluntary conservation easements and the State of Wyoming is constructing state-of-the-art highway crossings for wildlife. Success in this region is being used as a model to develop other wildlife corridor initiatives in the Northern Rockies.

## **Jobs and Economic Benefits from Conservation Investments**

In 2011, NFWF commissioned a report by Southwick Associates that revealed that investments in natural resource conservation have a strong positive impact on local jobs and economies. The report examines existing data on the economic value of natural resource conservation, outdoor recreation and historic preservation. It calculates the total U.S. economic impact of these three areas as \$1.06 trillion dollars. This includes 9.4 million jobs and \$107 billion in federal, state and local tax revenues.

## **NFWF Reauthorization**

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Reauthorization Act (S. 1494) was introduced in August 2011 with strong bipartisan support. S. 1494 renews NFWF's direct appropriations authorization level of \$30 million for an additional five years. The \$30 million authorization includes \$20 million annually through the Department of the Interior; \$5 million annually through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA); and \$5 million annually through the Department of Commerce. S. 1494 affirms the original purposes of NFWF and strengthens NFWF's ability to raise private dollars, work with federal agencies more effectively, reduce bureaucratic burdens, and maximize conservation outcomes. Importantly, S. 1494 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.

S. 1494 is sponsored by Chairwoman Boxer and includes the following co-sponsors: Baucus (D-MT), Bingaman (D-NM), Cardin (D-MD), Cochran (R-MS), Collins (R-ME), Murkowski (R-AK), Roberts (R-KS), Snowe (R-ME), Tester (MT), Thune (R-SD), Udall (D-NM), and Whitehouse (D-RI). A legislative hearing by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works is expected in March 2012. A companion bill in the House of Representatives is pending.

## **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, the Foundation 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 FWS, BLM and FS in FY 2013 and appreciate the Subcommittee's continued support of these collaborative efforts.

### **Background on National Fish and Wildlife Foundation**

As of FY 2011, the Foundation 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, 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 2013.