



## Hunters and Anglers: Supporting Our Nation's Economy and Conservation

**Hunting and fishing are not simply traditions or hobbies – they are fundamental components of our nation's economy.** Tens of millions of Americans enjoy these activities every year. The money they spend supports everything from major manufacturing industries to small businesses in communities across the country. It also generates hundreds of millions of dollars each year for wildlife management, habitat conservation, and public access.

These economic and conservation benefits plus hundreds of thousands of American jobs all depend on clean water and productive wetlands.

### Streams and Wetlands At Risk

Healthy populations of fish and waterfowl and success in the field depend on clean water and abundant wetlands. Yet the streams and lakes that support trout and other fish and wetlands essential to ducks are at increasing risk of pollution and destruction. These resources are threatened by U.S. Supreme Court decisions in *SWANCC* (2001) and *Rapanos* (2006) and subsequent agency guidance issued in 2003 and 2008. Twenty million acres of wetlands, especially in the critical prairie pothole “duck factory,” have already lost Clean Water Act protections. Nearly 60 percent of streams nationwide – particularly small streams with the cleanest, coolest water – are also at risk.

### America's Hunters and Anglers: Millions Strong

Hunting and angling have always been popular activities among Americans of all ages. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which conducts the most comprehensive assessment of hunting and angling nationwide, more than **14 million Americans of all ages are hunters**. More than **38 million Americans, including children, are anglers**.

### Hunting and Angling Drive Economic Growth, Support Jobs

Hunters and anglers spend tens of billions of dollars annually to pursue the sports they enjoy. Their spending supports our economy at every level – from coffee shops and gas stations in small communities to major companies that manufacture firearms, boats, and fishing tackle. These expenditures directly support jobs in almost every corner of the country.

- Based on a 2011 Southwick Associates report, **hunters and anglers contributed more than \$95 billion to the economy in 2006**. This total includes expenditures for goods, services, and federal and state taxes. It does not include the additional economic benefits this spending produces, such as jobs created or supported at local retailers or national manufacturers.
- According to the Fish and Wildlife Service, the **top 10 states for expenditures by hunters and anglers** in 2006 were
  - Texas: \$6.23 billion
  - Florida: \$5.03 billion
  - Pennsylvania: \$3.96 billion
  - California: \$3.80 billion
  - Minnesota: \$3.60 billion
  - Michigan: \$3.51 billion
  - Wisconsin: \$3.17 billion
  - Missouri: \$2.51 billion
  - Ohio: \$1.97 billion
  - New York: \$1.96 billion

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- The Fish and Wildlife Service estimates that **America's 1.3 million duck hunters had a positive economic impact in 2006 of more than \$2.3 billion, which supported more than 27,000 private sector jobs.**
- The American Sportfishing Association reports that **anglers generated nearly \$125 billion in total economic activity in 2006 and supported more than 1 million jobs.** Freshwater fishing, which is most closely tied to the waters threatened by the Supreme Court decisions, generated approximately \$88 billion – 70 percent of the total.
- The Fish and Wildlife Service reports **that 6.7 million trout anglers contribute nearly \$5 billion annually to the U.S. economy.**

## Hunters and Anglers Fund Conservation Nationwide

In addition to boosting the economy, America's hunters and anglers provide a significant proportion of the funding that directly supports wildlife management, habitat conservation, and recreational access at the local and state levels.

Hunters and anglers agreed decades ago to pay federal excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, fishing rods and tackle, archery equipment, and motorboat fuel to fund wildlife and fisheries restoration. These taxes, distributed

to the states every year, along with license and other fees account for the majority of state fish and wildlife agency budgets. Although these payments directly support hunting and angling, they also provide incredible benefits to millions of other Americans who enjoy outdoor recreation, visit public lands, and watch wildlife.

The contributions of hunters and anglers are significant both annually and historically:

- **In 2011, states received nearly \$749 million in hunter/angler excise taxes** – \$364 million for conserving and restoring fisheries, \$384 million for wildlife.
- Over the past 70 years, **hunters have paid more than \$6.4 billion in taxes that directly support wildlife restoration, habitat conservation, and hunter education.**
- Since the 1950s, **anglers have paid more than \$6.5 billion in taxes that directly support fisheries restoration and public access to rivers, lakes, and other waters.**

If fewer people fish because small streams are polluted or hunt ducks because wetlands are drained, the revenue and economic activity associated with every aspect of hunting and angling will diminish. This will directly and negatively impact fish and wildlife management and habitat conservation in every state.



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