

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF SPORTSMEN'S CAUCUSES  
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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: November 21, 2005

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STATE LEGISLATORS GATHER FOR SPORTSMEN'S SUMMIT AS OUTDOOR RIGHTS ARE TARGETED AT STATE LEVEL, PRO-SPORTSMEN LAWMAKERS UNITE

St. Michaels, Maryland: As deer and waterfowl seasons opened last week across the country, a distinctive gathering of state lawmakers was taking place in one of America's most favored sportsmen's paradises - the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Legislators from 20 states met at the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses 2nd Annual Sportsmen-Legislator Summit - "Promoting a Pro-Sportsmen's Agenda" to formulate a unified front in protecting the interests of sportsmen in the halls of state government. In its second year, the NASC Annual Meeting is the only forum that provides a venue for focused discussion and interaction among state policy makers and the hunting and fishing community.

The NASC Annual Meeting gave legislators the opportunity to learn about model legislation they can introduce in their home states to benefit wildlife, hunting and fishing. The meeting also included informative educational seminars designed to update legislators on issues of importance to their sporting constituency.

Legislators united through state legislative sportsmen's caucuses are ensuring pro-sportsmen's policies are passed and that anti-hunting and fishing legislation is defeated. As Representative Dan Reitz (D-IL) remarked during the meeting, "Joining the sportsmen's caucuses makes good political sense." With 38 million sportsmen and women and with a likely voter turnout rate of around 80%, American citizens who hunt and fish not only take their outdoor pastimes seriously, but they also vote for candidates who will stand strong on issues of importance to sportsmen when in public office.

"Despite the burgeoning amount of money spent by anti-hunting and fishing activists, state sportsmen's caucuses have proven to be an effective front in defeating anti-sportsmen legislation, while simultaneously promoting the interests of their sporting constituency through proactive legislation advanced with the support of the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses," stated Jeff Crane, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation President. "The simple, yet powerful mission of NASC is to create a network of state caucuses working together, sharing information, duplicating pro-sportsmen's legislation from one state to the next."

"Bringing like-minded legislators together to discuss and formulate policy has been tremendously successful. Since the first sportsmen-legislator summit took place in 2004, state sportsmen's

caucuses have passed numerous sportsmen friendly bills," noted Senator John Astle (D-MD). From Oregon to Florida, sportsmen's concerns are brought to the forefront of political debate through active state legislative sportsmen's caucuses, allies in the halls of state government standing up for hunters, trappers, and anglers.

Discussions at this year's summit ranged from the controversial issue of resident versus non-resident licenses, fees and tags to the need for dedicated funding for state departments of natural resources to the use of ballot initiatives to restrict outdoor rights. Veteran state sportsmen's caucus legislators also shared their experiences and successes in passing NASC-adopted model legislation including No Net Loss of hunting lands, promotion of donated game meat programs to feed the hungry, ensuring dedicated funding for state wildlife agencies, and banning internet hunting.

This year's meeting was co-hosted by the Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Foundation, with the National Shooting Sports Foundation serving as presenting sponsor. Other sponsors of the meeting included the Archery Trade Association, American Sportfishing Association, Anheuser Busch, BASF, BASS, Beretta, Dallas Safari Club, International Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, International Paper, National Marine Manufacturers Association, National Wild Turkey Federation, Northeast Government Relations, Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation, Winchester Ammunition, and Yamaha.

Also participating in the summit were representatives from the Allied Sportsmen's Association of Florida, American Land Conservancy, Annapolis & Anne Arundel County Conference & Visitors Bureau, Arkansas Bureau of Legislative Research, Bass Pro Shops, Bowhunters Preservation Alliance, Boone and Crockett, Cabela's, Comcast, Conservation Federation of Missouri, Conservation Force, California Waterfowl Association, Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry, Federal Capital Communications Corp., Georgia Pacific, International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Nebraska Sportsmen's Foundation, New Mexico Legislative Sportsmen's Foundation, National Rifle Association, Oklahoma Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus, Pennsylvania Governor's Council on Hunting, Fishing, and Conservation, Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Responsive Management, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Safari Club International, Tanner & Associates, Tennessee Wildlife Federation, The Nature Conservancy, The Outdoor Channel, US Sportsmen's Alliance, UST and the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.