



TEAMING WITH WILDLIFE
a natural investment

OKLAHOMA'S TEAM WILDLIFE

Formed in support of the Teaming with Wildlife funding initiative

Running out of room!
(YEAH!) October 23, 1997

BUSINESSES

- Oklahoma Army Surplus #5, Tulsa
- Oklahoma Production Center, Tahlequah
- Southern Ranch Hunting Club & Lodge, Chandler
- Wheeler Dealer Bicycles, Oklahoma City
- McClain's RV Reparatons, Oklahoma City
- Beast Plains Design, Oklahoma City
- Fishmaster Mfg. Company, Oklahoma City
- Cameron Graphite Reels, Inc., Tulsa
- Thompson's General Store, Dewese
- Et River Paradise Marina, Grove
- Tulsa Zoo and Living Museum, Tulsa
- Heritage Manor Bed and Breakfast, Adise
- Stone Trailers, Oklahoma City
- All Cedar Birdfeeders, Noble
- Tulsa River Parks Authority, Tulsa
- Engle Lure Company, Lawton
- Army Surplus Stores, Inc., Oklahoma City
- Lake and Field Specialties, Enid
- Calrosepa Garden Design, Duncan
- Alligator Alley, Oklahoma City
- Davis Sports Lighting and Equipment, Norman
- H & H Gun Range, Oklahoma City
- Shal-A-Bird Birdhouses, Inc., Oklahoma City
- Tulsa County Park Department, Tulsa
- Weatherford Parks and Recreation Dept., Weatherford
- City of Ada Recreation Department, Ada
- City of Edmond/Arcadia Lake, Edmond
- Lawson Lakes and Lands Conservation, Lawton
- Claremore Parks and Recreation Department, Claremore
- Sapulpa Parks and Recreation Department, Sapulpa
- Kuriabor Nature Center, Del City
- Kern Tackle Company/Bass Pro Shops, Oklahoma City
- Fisherman's Choice L.L.C., Blanchard
- Oklahoma Biological Survey, Norman
- Oklahoma Natural Heritage Inventory, Norman
- Federal Recycling Technologies, Inc., Norman
- Mar'ell Resort, Gore
- Parkz Mfg. Inc./DBA Blue Wave Boats, Choctaw
- Water Wonders, Broken Arrow
- Arrow Trucking Company, Tulsa
- Tulsa Parks and Recreation Department, Tulsa
- The Garden Basket, Tahlequah
- Elephant Rock Nature Park, Tahlequah
- Springhill Farms, Rosevelt
- Orchard Farm and Home (for Oklahoma stores)
- Clear Creek Farm & Gardens, Poggil
- Junna Salmen Ranch, Woodward
- Rose Rock Landscapes, Midwest City
- Sarahline Nursery, Clinton

ORGANIZATIONS

- Sutton Aulen Research Center
- Fantier Wetlands Inc.
- Oklahoma Ear Thinks Fellowship
- Oklahoma Chapter, The Wildlife Society
- Eastern Oklahoma Quail Association
- Oklahoma Wildlife Federation
- Cleveland County Audubon Society
- The Sierra Club, Oklahoma Chapter
- Tri-City Dun Club
- Audubon Society of Central Oklahoma
- Keystone Quail Unlimited
- Deep Park Wetlands Coalition
- The Wildlife Society, OSU Student Chapter
- Sierra Club, Green Country Group
- Oklahoma Recreation and Parks Society
- Atoka County Chamber of Commerce
- OK Council of Nationally Accredited Flower Judges
- Bat Conservation Society of Oklahoma
- First OK Trappers & Predator Callers Association
- Make Every Home a Wildlife Habitat
- Oklahoma Native Plants Society
- Northeast Oklahoma Quail Unlimited Chapter
- Sallisaw Chamber of Commerce
- Pushmataha County Sportsman Club
- Save the Cienaras
- Safari Club International, Oklahoma State Chapter
- Tulsa Audubon Society
- Oklahoma Alliance for Geographic Education
- Isiah Walton League, Stillwater Women's Chapter
- Oklahoma Handicapped Sportsman Association
- Friends of Martin Park Nature Center
- Oklahoma Equestrian Trail Riders Association, Inc.
- Stillwater Businesses Inc.
- Lake Tenawa Association
- Caddo County Ducks Unlimited
- Karr Cantin Ice Sustainable Agriculture
- Horned Lizard Conservation Society (National Group)
- Oklahoma Garden Clubs, Inc.
- Arkansas Ducks Unlimited
- Ozley Nature Center Association
- American Fisheries Society, Oklahoma Chapter

Dear Water User: (or other interest - see examples + endorsers next pg)

We are collectively writing you today, in cooperation with the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, to inform you about an exciting national initiative that will be coming before Congress soon. This initiative, called "Teaming with Wildlife," is finally taking a look at providing much-needed funds for wildlife and the outdoors.

The needs facing Oklahoma's outdoor resources are great: many of our beloved wildlife species, including the Texas horned lizard and scissor-tailed flycatcher, are drastically declining. Wildlife habitat and natural areas continue to be lost to home subdivisions, agriculture and other developments. Many state and local parks are unable to upgrade basic trail systems for hikers, bikers and other recreational users. And our children are growing up without an appreciation of the wild places you and I take for granted. We need a solution to help balance the development, recreational and economic needs with those of our native wildlife so we can pass on our wealth of wildlife diversity to successive generations. Finding and implementing these solutions is what Teaming with Wildlife will provide.

As proposed, Teaming with Wildlife would raise up to \$350 million annually, of which \$5.5 million would return to Oklahoma. By law, these funds could only be spent on programs emphasizing wildlife diversity conservation, outdoor recreation and environmental education. The monies for these new programs would come from a small user fee, or excise tax, of one-quarter to 5 percent set on the manufacturer's (not wholesale or retail) price of various outdoor products, including camping equipment, bird seed and houses, optical equipment, film and photography equipment, off-road bikes and recreational vehicles.

Teaming with Wildlife is patterned after two of the most successful conservation funding methods ever, called the Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Acts. These programs have been in existence for the past 60 years and have a successful track record. Their funds also have never been misappropriated by Congress, because the guidelines governing their use have been written so specifically.

By assessing a similar, self-imposed excise tax on hunting and fishing equipment, sportsmen have raised billions of dollars for their needs. The successes speak for themselves. In 1910, Oklahoma had about 500 deer, what would have been considered endangered if applied under current circumstances; Oklahoma deer now number more than 150,000. Other populations that have increased include wild turkey, bass and Canada geese. Also, more than 900,000 acres are now in public ownership by the Wildlife Department due to the Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration funds. These areas aren't just used by hunters and anglers; they are used by all outdoor users.

We bring up these examples to say that if hunters and anglers can use this type of funding mechanism for their sport, we can do the same thing for our outdoor interests, whatever they may be. Funds dedicated to the outdoors are at an all-time low, but Teaming with Wildlife's passage by Congress would solve this problem.

Teaming with Wildlife is good for the resource. What good are the outdoors without wildlife, plants and fresh water? Teaming with Wildlife funds would go to research and protect rare and unique wildlife, such as Texas horned lizards and bats, to keep them from being listed as threatened or endangered and avoid expensive conservation measures. Funds also would keep common wildlife common so that our children and grandchildren also can appreciate them.

2) Teaming with Wildlife is good for outdoor users. Funds would go toward the purchase and lease of property and access for a variety of outdoor uses, from biking to hiking to bird watching to canoeing. This would drastically increase the amount of area available to outdoor users and would provide more solitary experiences for everyone.

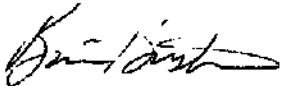
3) Teaming with Wildlife is good for outdoor businesses. With more areas available to recreate outdoors, more people will become outdoor users. This in turn means they will purchase more products from outdoor businesses and possibly become interested in other activities as they learn about them from other outdoorsmen.

As outdoor users and businesses ourselves, these are a few of the reasons why we have endorsed Teaming with Wildlife, and why we encourage you to join us. Don't miss this chance to be a conservation leader in our state; return the attached endorsement form today to the Wildlife Department. You'll join more than 2,400 other groups across the nation who support this concept and are interested in providing more funds for wildlife and outdoor recreation.

The attached newsletter, produced by the Wildlife Department, contains more information on Teaming with Wildlife and about different programs that would benefit from the initiative's passage. The enclosed *Oklahoma Watchable Wildlife Guide* is an example of how Teaming with Wildlife funds will be used to create and publicize outdoor recreational opportunities. It provides information and directions to many areas open to the public for wildlife viewing. If you have any concerns or questions about Teaming with Wildlife, please feel free to contact one of us or call the Wildlife Department's Ron Suttles at 405/521-4616.

Thank you for taking a look at this important initiative. We hope to see your name added to our number soon.

Sincerely,



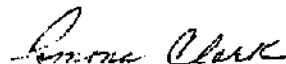
Brian Bristow, President
American Fisheries Society -- Oklahoma



Dave Bephtley, President
Elk River Paradise Marine, Grove



Pamela Parks, Co-Owner
Parks Mfg./DBA Blue Wave Boats, Checotah



Ramona Clark, Executive Director
Lake Texoma Association



Jackie Bubenik, Director
Tulsa River Parks Authority



Sid Bridges, President
Save the Cimarron

Hunting + Angling Associate: Southern Ranch Hunting Club/Lodge, H+H Gun Range, Eagle Lure Co., Fishermans Choice, NE OK Quail Unlimited, Ardmore DU, OK Wildlife Federation, OK Handicapped Sportsman Assoc., Safari Club -OK Station

Education Enthusiast: Tulsa Zoo, Kuriakos Nature Center, OK Alliance for Geographic Ed, OK Native Plant Society, Bat Cons. Soc. of OK, OK Natural Heritage Inventory/Biological Survey, Kerr Ctr. for Sustainable Ag, Oxley Nature

Backyard Enthusiast: Garden Basket, OK Production Ctr, All Cedar Birdfeeders, Clear Creek Farm + Garden, ONPS, Cleveland Co. Audubon, Make Every Home a Wildlife Habitat, Dial-A-Bird Birdhouses, Rose Rock Landscape

Motor Enthusiast: Southern Ranch, Elk River Marine, Elephant Rock Nature Park, Audubon Soc. of Central OK, Sierra Club -OK, Ardmore DU

Rec + Park Head: Tulsa River Parks, Tulsa Zoo, Tulsa Rec + Rec, Claremore Parks + Rec, OK Rec + Park Society, City of Edmond, Weatherford Parks + Rec

Bike Enthusiast: Wheeler Dealer Bicycles, El. Rock Park, Tulsa River Parks, Sierra Club OK, OK Earthbike Fellowship, OK Rec + Parks Society