

June 29, 1999

U. S. Representative Jay Dickey
2453 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Congressman Dickey:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Arkansas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. As a part of the world's oldest and largest nongovernmental organization devoted to the conservation of fishery resources, our main goal is to promote the wise management, conservation and use of the fishery and aquatic resources of Arkansas. We are writing in support of the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (S. 25 and H.R. 701 and 798). We endorse the use of revenues from Outer Continental Shelf extractions for conservation purposes. It makes good sense to utilize proceeds from nonrenewable resources for the conservation of our renewable resources.

The American Fisheries Society has worked with the Teaming with Wildlife Committee for years to find funding for nongame programs. Because funds from hunting and fishing license revenues are devoted primarily to the management of game fish and wildlife, we are especially interested in funding sources for the conservation and preservation of nongame and threatened and endangered (T&E) species. Preventing federal listings of T&E species demonstrates not only cost-effectiveness, but wise stewardship of our natural resources. We are particularly interested in the portions of the CARA bills that address state-level wildlife conservation, and strongly support a minimum 10% funding for this element, as provided in H.R. 701. We also agree that a subaccount of the Pittman-Robertson fund is an effective means to distribute these monies to states, provided that the P-R fund is not compromised in any way.

We support full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund to its previously authorized level of \$900 million annually (Title II in S. 25 and Title I of S. 446). Simply acquiring land, however, will not fully address fish and wildlife management concerns. Ongoing hands-on stewardship efforts are necessary to sustain these resources. We agree with wording in the bill to protect the rights of private landowners, such as the "willing seller" principle.

Our organization greatly appreciates legislative efforts to conserve our nation's fisheries and wildlife resources, and we urge you to support the CARA legislation.

Sincerely,

Brian Wagner
President

(Letter sent to Ark. Senators and Representatives)