

January 20, 2026

Secretary Doug Burgum
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Burgum,

On behalf of America's millions of hunters, anglers, wildlife professionals, conservationists, and outdoor enthusiasts, we write to express our strong support and gratitude for your signing of Secretarial Order (SO) 3447, *Expanding Hunting and Fishing Access, Removing Unnecessary Barriers, and Ensuring Consistency Across the Department of the Interior Lands and Waters*. By prioritizing the expansion of hunting and fishing access across Department of the Interior (DOI) lands and waters, you have reaffirmed that sportsmen and women are the backbone of our nation's conservation tradition.

Our community celebrates the Department's recognition of the central role hunters and anglers play in conservation. For generations, we have funded wildlife management and habitat restoration through license sales and excise taxes on equipment, creating the most successful conservation model in the world. SO 3447 correctly identifies that expanding these opportunities not only strengthens conservation outcomes but also serves as a critical economic driver for rural communities.

We are especially encouraged by the following directives within the Order:

- The "Open Unless Closed" Standard: We applaud the policy that public and federally managed lands should be open to hunting and fishing by default unless a specific, documented, and legally supported exception applies.
- FWS Commitment to Access: The community celebrates the goal for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to ensure that all national wildlife refuges and fish hatcheries are open to hunting and fishing within two years.
- Deregulatory Focus: We welcome the directive to remove unnecessary regulatory and administrative barriers, such as duplicative permits and outdated restrictions, that exceed what is required by statute or resource protection needs.
- Coordination with Partners: Strengthening alignment with State and Tribal wildlife agencies is essential for regulatory clarity and respecting the primary authority of states to manage wildlife.

This Order represents a vital step in fulfilling President Trump's Executive Order 14313, *"Establishing the President's Make America Beautiful Again Commission,"* which directed federal agencies to expand access to public lands for recreation, hunting, and fishing. As we look toward celebrating America's 250th anniversary, there is no better way to honor our heritage than by ensuring that the next generation of Americans has the opportunity to enjoy the freedom and self-reliance found in our great outdoors.

Access is paramount to the future of our sporting traditions. We thank you for your leadership in removing barriers and ensuring that America's public lands remain open to those who cherish and sustain them.

Sincerely,

American Woodcock Society
Archery Trade Association
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
Boone and Crockett Club
California Waterfowl Association
Catch A Dream Foundation
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Conservation Force
Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports
Dallas Safari Club
Delta Waterfowl
Ducks Unlimited
Houston Safari Club
Mule Deer Foundation
National Bobwhite & Grassland Initiative Foundation
National Deer Association
National Rifle Association
National Wild Turkey Federation
National Wildlife Federation
North American Falconers Association
North American Grouse Partnership
Orion – The Hunter's Institute
Pheasants Forever
Professional Outfitters and Guides of America
Quail Forever
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Ruffed Grouse Society
Safari Club International
Safari Club International Foundation
Sportsmen's Alliance
Texas Wildlife Association
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Whitetails Unlimited
Wild Sheep Foundation
Wildlife Forever
Wildlife Management Institute
Wildlife Mississippi