



For Immediate Release
February 2, 2023

Contact: DC Press Office
(202) 225-4261

Wittman Introduces Legislation Protecting Hunting, Fishing Access for Sportsmen

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, House Natural Resources Committee Member Congressman Rob Wittman (R-VA) announced the re-introduction of [H.R. 615](#) - *Protecting Access for Hunters and Anglers Act of 2023*. This bill, which currently has over 30 co-sponsors, would prevent the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture from banning the use of lead ammunition or tackle on federal lands and waters.

"I am happy to introduce the Protecting Access for Hunters and Anglers Act of 2023, and I am appreciative of the vast support from my colleagues on this legislation," **Wittman said**. "As an avid hunter and angler, I find the Biden Administration's attempt to restrict access for the nation's sportsmen and women who use traditional lead fishing tackle and ammunition on federal lands and waters, to be upsetting. This wholesale prohibition will only serve to incumber our sportsmen's ability to responsibly hunt and fish. The Protecting Access for Hunters and Anglers Act prevents the Administration from banning lead ammunition and tackle on federal lands and waters, unless such a regulation is consistent with state law and supported by science. I look forward to working with my colleagues to advance this legislation and continue to promote access to recreation for millions of Americans."

"The Protecting Access for Hunters and Anglers Act is an important piece of legislation to uphold state wildlife management authority and to protect against baseless attacks on the use of traditional ammunition and fishing tackle," **said Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation President and CEO Jeff Crane**.

"Traditional ammo and tackle are often the most accessible and readily available method of take of sportsmen and women. This legislation takes a pragmatic approach to halting efforts to ban traditional ammo and tackle by following a science-driven process and requiring the support of the impacted state fish and wildlife agency. CSF appreciates Congressman Wittman's continued support for America's sportsmen and women."

Background:

Congressman Wittman introduced this legislation in 2022 in response to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decision to enter into settlement negotiations with activist litigants like the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) over a lawsuit regarding the use of traditional ammunition and lead on over three million acres of federal land. The concern over the potential ban of lead ammunition and tackle is due to the fact that lead ammunition is easier and cheaper to make and it is also more readily available for consumers. Banning its use would make hunting less accessible by increasing the financial barriers for sportsmen and women.

On September 15, 2022, the Service published its Final Rule, “[2022-2023 Station-Specific Hunting and Sport Fishing Regulations](#)” in the Federal Register. While this rule opened new hunting and fishing opportunities on approximately 38,000 acres across eighteen National Wildlife Refuges in twelve states, it also phased out use of lead ammunition by 2026 on some of these lands.

To read the full text of this legislation, click [here](#).

Congressman Rob Wittman represents the 1st District of Virginia. He serves on the House Natural Resources Committee and the House Armed Services Committee, where he serves as the Vice Chairman of the full committee and as the Chairman of the Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee.

###

wittman.house.gov