

**Bear Trust International * Boone & Crockett Club * Campfire Club of
America * Dallas Safari Club * Izaak Walton League of America * Orion
The Hunters' Institute * Quality Deer Management Association *
Wildlife Forever * Wildlife Management Institute**

May 13, 2008

Honorable Members of the United States Senate
Capitol Hill
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: America's Sportsmen Conservationists Urge Senate Passage of Strong
Anti- Invasive Species Bill**

We the undersigned members of the American Wildlife Conservation Partners respectfully request the U.S. Senate to pass companion legislation to the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2007 (H.R. 2830). The House legislation passed with overwhelming bi-partisan support by a vote of 395 to 7.

H.R. 2830 is a major step in preventing aquatic invasive species from entering the Great Lakes and other U.S. waters thereby helping to protect our lakes, our state and national parks, forests, wildlife refuges and important private lands, our economy, our public health and our way of life. We urge the Senate to pass its version of the bill and President Bush to sign into law during this Congress. Action to create strong protections from invasive species is urgent because the longer we wait, the problem will only get worse and more costly.

Invasive species have wreaked havoc on Great Lakes fish and wildlife. The zebra mussel has eroded the base of the food chain. The round goby has consumed the eggs of smallmouth bass. Eurasian ruffe has competed with yellow perch and other fish—and feeds on the eggs of desirable sportfish such as Lake Whitefish. Recently, Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia, a non-native pathogen, has led to massive fish-kills. In all, invasive species threaten the sport fishery of the Great Lakes.

H.R. 2830 contains strong provisions to stop the introduction of invasive species via ballast water discharge—the No. 1 pathway non-native species like the zebra mussel have entered the Great Lakes and from there have migrated to other water bodies.

The Coast Guard bill contains provisions to stop the introduction of invasive species via ballast water discharge. The bill:

- Establishes for the first time strong ballast water treatment standards;
- Requires ballast water treatment technology on board commercial vessels in 2009 using an interim standard;
- Establishes an aggressive time line for new, stronger U.S. treatment standard starting in 2012; and
- Sets a national goal that ballast water discharged into U.S. waters contains no living organisms by 2015.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your leadership in conserving America's fish, wildlife and natural resources.

Sincerely,

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Orion The Hunters' Institute
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