

**Testimony of
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**Committee on Natural Resources
“Access Denied: The Growing Conflict Between Fishing,
Hunting, And Energy Development”
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee for this opportunity to express our viewpoints on conservation and preservation of our country’s lands and waters for use by hunters, fishermen and all who enjoy the outdoors.

My name is Kinsey Robinson and I am International President of the United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers, representing 25,000 members who work in the commercial and industrial sector of the construction industry.

I come from a family where the tradition has been to pass down to each succeeding generation, knowledge of the out-of-doors and the need for stewardship of the land. Both my paternal and maternal grandfathers were avid hunters and my father is a lifetime hunter and fisherman, who at 85 years old, still ventures into the field each fall in search of ring-necked pheasants. Hunting and fishing are part of who we are as a family.

My union from its beginning has been populated by outdoorsmen. After the second world war, when men returned home to take good paying union jobs in the roofing and waterproofing trades, they not only purchased homes and

appliances and automobiles, they also found that they could afford to purchase new guns and fishing equipment to pursue their recreational passions in off-work hours.

But there is a distinct difference between the union roofers of sixty years ago and those of today. Today's roofers still have good jobs, with the ability to purchase hunting and fishing supplies. But today's roofer is finding that access to lands and water for them, their children and grandchildren is becoming increasingly more restricted.

As a lifelong hunter and fisherman, I am passionate about preserving our lands and waters for current and future generations of hunters and fishermen, and making sure that there is public access to those areas as well.

That is why I am proud and privileged to have the Roofers organization as a charter union in the Union Sportsmen's Alliance (USA) and to be affiliated with the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP).

The TRCP and the USA have formed a partnership that will engage the activism of millions of dedicated sportsmen and women who choose to belong to unions.

The Union Sportsmen's Alliance is a one-of-a-kind hunting and fishing club of the TRCP and its 20 partner unions. It is designed exclusively for union members and their families that hunt, fish and enjoy the outdoors. The 20 unions currently affiliated with the USA and TRCP represent over 4.5 million union workers. We estimate that 70% of those members hunt and/or fish, meaning that approximately 3.2 million members of our unions are hunters, anglers or both.

While our members enjoy many benefits when they join the USA, their greatest benefit is that the USA and the TRCP strive to protect and maintain access to the best places to hunt and fish in America.

In a recent opinion survey of TRCP affiliated union members, the number one reason cited for wanting to join USA was to “protect and preserve places to hunt and fish for themselves and their families.”

The mission of the TRCP is “guaranteeing all Americans a place to fish and hunt”. The USA and its members hope to assist the TRCP in achieving that mission. The jurisdiction of this esteemed Committee certainly dovetails with the mission of both the TRCP and the USA. We believe that the strength and unity of purpose of the members of the USA and TRCP will provide a clarion voice for preservation of and access to hunting and fishing areas in this country.

While we certainly understand the need for energy development and support this country’s efforts towards making the United States energy independent, we believe that energy independence goals and energy development can occur without placing undue restriction on public access to lands that are used for hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreational activities.

We ask that this Committee heed the concerns of those Americans who wish to preserve the legacy of open lands and waters for those millions of hunters, fishermen, sportsmen and women who share in the love of our great outdoors.

Those of us who share in that love have always felt that we were the true conservationists and caretakers of God’s natural

resources. We understand the principle of protecting our natural resources so that future generations may enjoy what we have been privileged to enjoy. We ask this Committee's support in our future endeavors.

I thank the Chairman and the Committee members for this opportunity to express our views.