

Revenues Generated by Hunters and Anglers Would Rank #11 on the Fortune 500

WASHINGTON, DC - Spending over \$70 billion dollars a year in pursuit of their pastime, America's hunters and anglers would rank #11 on the Fortune 500 if they formed a corporation, according to a new report released today by the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation and the National Shooting Sports Foundation. Over 38 million Americans enjoy the outdoors - twice the number of labor unions members - and sportsmen support 1.6 million jobs, well more than Wal-Mart, the country's largest employer. American sportsmen are a demographic group worth a closer look.

"Because sportsmen enjoy hunting and fishing alone or in small groups, they are often overlooked as a constituency and as a substantial economic force," notes Melinda Gable, Executive Director for the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation. "These impressive statistics actually underestimate the impact of sportsmen since they do not take into account the millions of hunters and anglers under 16 years of age, and people who were not able to get out and hunt or fish in 2001."

The report, ***The American Sportsman ~ Take a Closer Look***, uses the results from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's *2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation* and compares hunters' and anglers' impact on the economy with other industries. When sportsmen's spending is thought of in business terms and compared to other sectors of the economy, it is remarkable how much state and federal tax revenues are generated, how many people are employed and how many sectors of the economy are impacted as a result of hunting and fishing. While economic analysts worried about a looming recession in 2001, each American sportsman was doing his part to keep the economy in motion, and together hunters and anglers were making a difference across America. From small rural towns scattered across our country's landscape to the bottom-line of Fortune 500 companies located in major cities - take away hunting and fishing, and you take away the equivalent of a multi-billion dollar corporation.

"Hunters and shooters have been widely acknowledged for their role in conserving our wildlife and natural resources," stated Doug Painter, President of the National Shooting Sports Foundation, "but they represent so much more than meets the eye. Hunters spend \$2 billion just on food when they take hunting trips - that's more than Americans spend on Domino's pizza. These statistics would be even larger if some 30 million sport shooters were incorporated into the spending estimates. NSSF is working with competitive and recreational shooting organizations to complete the economic picture with the inclusion of the non-hunting sport shooter."

While the combined national economic impact of sportsmen is remarkable, it is even more important to recognize the impact at the state and local level. In Florida, recreational anglers spend three times more each year than the cash receipts for the state's orange crop. In Minnesota, sportsmen pay \$175 million in state sales, fuel and income taxes equivalent to the salaries for 8% of the state's teachers. In Oregon, sportsmen support more jobs than are provided by Intel, Nike, Oregon State University and the University of Oregon combined. And in Montana, annual spending by sportsmen is nearly 3% of the entire Gross State Product.

"It is a fairly simple equation - hunters and anglers mean jobs in states and local communities that have made the effort to maintain their hunting and fishing opportunities," commented Gable. "The impact that sportsmen have on state economies should be a wake-up call to state governments to welcome and encourage hunting and fishing in their state."

The American Sportsman ~ Take a Closer Look with national statistics and an interactive map of state-specific information is available on the web at:
<http://www.sportsmenslink.org>.