

# IN THE ARENA

## FROM THE PRESIDENT



**B.B. Hollingsworth, Jr.**  
PRESIDENT

**With the Club's many new activities in recent years, we should remember that we began as the first nationwide organization to concentrate efforts on conservation policy. That was 1888, more than a decade before Theodore Roosevelt became president of the United States and established conservation as a national issue.**

As we adapt to our role in the 21st century amid a growing partnership with many wildlife conservation organizations, we continue to lead precisely how we began: personal efforts by Club members, conducted quietly and effectively. Our efforts are steady and continually successful despite the turbulence of national politics.

Several Club members traveled to Washington, D.C. to attend meetings September 4-6, 2018, with members of

Congress and to attend the annual banquet hosted by the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation. Led by Committee Co-Chairs Paul Phillips and James Cummins, and Chief of Staff Tony Schoonen, Club members Tim Brady, Jim Arnold, Morrie Stevens, and John Schreiner joined for several important meetings on Capitol Hill.

In those meetings, the Club raised the alarm bells on the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in deer and elk. The hunting community is alarmed that the spread of this disease could severely deplete deer and elk populations. A moratorium on interstate transportation of cervids is the only viable way to stop the spread of this disease until a certified live test can be identified. We are still studying the disease, and a live test is urgently needed.

We have asked members of Congress to support a renewed review by United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service on their standards for interstate transport of deer and elk, as we believe the current standards can be greatly improved. We are also asking Congress to urge the Department of the Interior and USDA to form a national CWD task force to unite agency efforts with state and private efforts.

Club members also offered a hearty "thank you" to Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, Sen. Steve Daines, R-Mont., Sen. Jon Tester D-Mont., and several representatives for including funding for the "recreational access" projects under the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. In the last

six years, access projects have opened hundreds of thousands of acres of federal land for hunting and angling in western states in previously inaccessible locations. Both the Senate and House of Representatives have continued this funding (\$12 million overall) in the pending appropriations bills for this access program. A win seems imminent for our D.C. team.

The pending Farm Bill reauthorization in Congress presents another great opportunity for the Club to advance its agenda. Club members met with members of Congress and their staff to relay our priorities in the forestry and conservation titles. The Club noted its support for Farm Bill reforms in the House and Senate bills addressing challenges to forest management on federal lands. More U.S. Forest Service tools lead to improved wildlife habitat for at-risk species and increase the ability to meet management goals for early successional habitat. Cuts to conservation funding through the 2014 Farm Bill,

**B&C Members attend the annual banquet hosted by the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: John Schreiner, James Cummins (Co-Chair, B&C Conservation Policy Committee), Tim Brady, Morrie Stevens, Josh Maxwell (House Committee on Agriculture), and Paul Phillips (Co-Chair, B&C Conservation Policy Committee).**



### LEARN MORE:

- Read more about the Boone and Crockett Club's involvement in Washington, D.C., on page 24. *Working to Improve Forest Health*, by James L. Cummins

previous appropriations bills, and sequestration have caused landowner demand to exceed supply. It is essential that the next Farm Bill does not further erode these valuable resources.

The Club has also proudly engaged with the Departments of Interior and Agriculture. This Administration has made sportsmen's issues a priority, particularly at Interior, where Secretary Zinke has promoted Pittman-Robertson funding, judiciously precluded certain mineral developments, and scrutinized national monuments for needless restrictions on hunting access. These actions advance the secretary's clear message from his first day on the job that wildlife conservation is a priority. His "Day 1" secretarial orders reversed anti-gun policy and advanced specific action on Executive Order 13443 on Hunting Heritage and Wildlife Conservation, which was a major initiative of the Club. Since then, additional orders have established a big game corridor conservation initiative and directed more hunting and fishing opportunities.

In September, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service finalized the expansion of

hunting access at 30 National Wildlife Refuges, approximately 250,000 new acres. With a refuge within an hour's drive of most major American metropolitan areas providing for more than 53 million visitors a year, refuges provide exceptional hunting opportunities. Refuges also support a \$2.4 billion recreation industry, making them structurally important to the American economy. The Club applauds Secretary Zinke and President Trump for their commitment to the conservation community and looks forward to continuing our work with them to expand hunting access on federal lands.

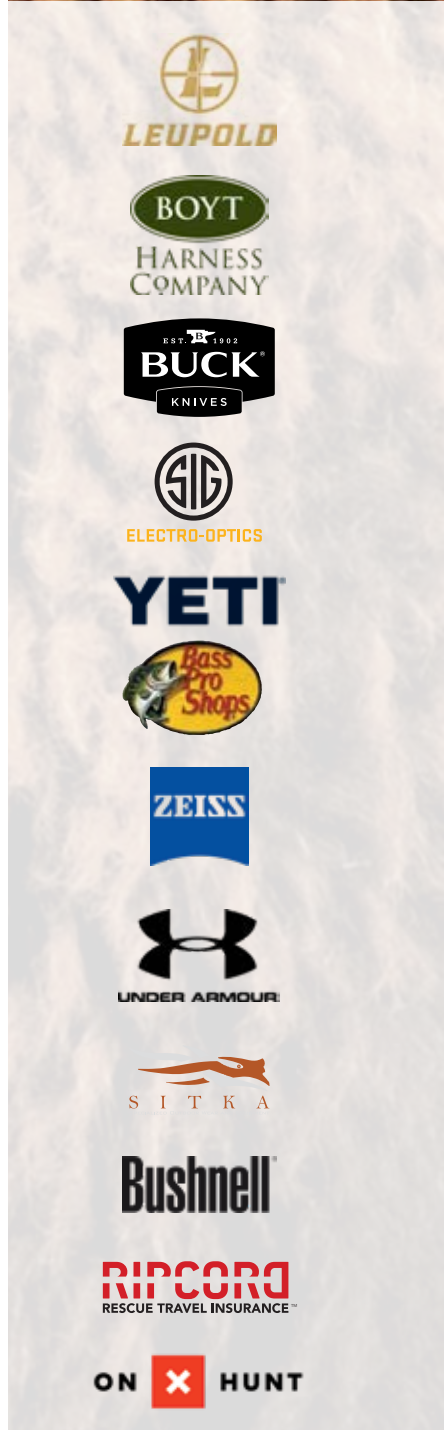
The Club weighed in favorably with Secretary Zinke on his plan to reorganize the Department of the Interior. Our support is no criticism of the department's workforce or work ethic, of which many of us have ourselves been part of during our careers. We support the department and are committed to its continuous improvement on a mission we share both professionally and personally. Improvement means pressing for more efficiency, effectiveness, and decisional authority at the field level; better coordination and cooperation

among federal, state, and local entities; and aligning work responsibilities with the ecology and socio-economics of communities. This will set the stage for collaboration among people focused on issues at appropriate scales.

Overall, we are proud to say that we work effectively with elected and appointed officials of both parties as they come and go in office and as majorities in Congress and control of the White House shift. As I review this record, I'm reminded that the new frontier is to implement this same sort of work in state legislatures and agencies, where issues such as CWD are playing out. My vision is that in the coming years the Club will help lead the community back in this direction as we continue to play our role nationally. I would be remiss here if I did not recognize the fine work our Washington team performs for the Club. Greg Schildwachter, David Anderson, and Mitch Butler are well respected and carry the gospel of Boone and Crockett in D.C. in fine fashion. Thank you, gentlemen. ■



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THE BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB ASKS THAT YOU PLEASE THANK OUR TRAILBLAZERS WITH YOUR PATRONAGE.