The Izaak Walton League of America

Farm Bill Forum Summary
Springfield, IL March 19, 2007

The Izaak Walton League of America held its third Farm Bill Forum in Springfield, IL on March 19th. Representatives of the following groups attended the meeting:
Illinois Department of Agriculture, Director Chuck Hartke
Illinois Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Illinois Farm Service Agency
Illinois Farmers Union
Illinois Stewardship Project
Agricultural Watershed Institute
Prairie Waters Network
Local landowners
Local Izaak Walton League members
Congressional offices:
Sen. Richard Durbin staff
Sen. Barack Obama staff

Media reports included:
WJBC-AM 1230, Bloomington, IL
WFMB-AM 1450, Springfield, IL
WMBD 1470, WIRL 1290, Peoria, IL
WRAM-AM 1330, Monmouth, IL
WTAD, WKAN, KGRC, KZZK radio, Quincy, IL
Illinois Public Radio, WUIS-FM 91.9, Springfield, IL
The State Journal-Register, Springfield, IL
WICS-TV ABC, Springfield, IL

The morning session involved time for each group to present their vision and policy platform for the 2007 Farm Bill. Notes on the main points that each group presented are available by emailing Anne Morris at almorris@iwla.org or calling her at 651.649.1446.

During the afternoon session of the meeting, the following common points of intersection and interest were recorded. (Note: Congressional and state agency staff acted as observers only.)

- Increase funding for conservation programs and maintain all conservation programs (WRP, CRP, CSP, EQIP, WHIP, etc).
- Increase technical assistance funding for conservation staff and equipment.
- Prioritize biomass energy demonstration and research targeting diverse sources and widely dispersed implementation and control.
- Maintain the safety net function of the commodity title to keep farms profitable and rural economies vital.