

# NEWS FROM WASHINGTON, D.C.



**Club President Tim Brady attended the latest conservation roundtable, co-hosted by Club Member Simon Roosevelt and Interior Secretary David Bernhardt, in Washington, D.C., in September. The conservation roundtable is a gathering of executives from America's top hunting, fishing and environmental organizations whose purpose is to develop an agenda for action on issues of mutual interest to hunting and non-hunting conservationists.**

This is the only effort to form an agenda across hunting and fishing groups and the many others who generalize on land and water, hiking, biking, paddling, and birdwatching. Hunters have refined the hunting agenda over nearly 20 years through the American Wildlife Conservation Partners (AWCP), which was founded at Club Headquarters in August 2000. As the AWCP agenda has been advancing hunting issues,

including much progress under this administration on access to public lands, no broader agenda is yet in place that unifies the entire conservation community.

First convened by Simon Roosevelt in 2012 for a cross-section of CEOs of the outdoor groups to identify common conservation issues, he moved the meetings to the Department of Interior in 2017. This was the third such meeting to be held in the Department of Interior rooftop conference room and co-hosted with the Interior secretary.

The primary issues discussed included expanding the Interior initiative on migratory big game habitat. Club President Brady presented the need for expanding this initiative to include summer range habitat and additional species, which had previously been under consideration at Interior. He proposed that interested partners join with the Club and DOI to pursue this proposal and incorporate the

participation of the USDA Forest Service, which manages most of the summer-range habitat for big game in the US. Several partner groups engaged, including the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (a key partner in funding habitat projects), the National Wildlife Federation, the Audubon Society, and Trout Unlimited. Our long-term partners at the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Wild Sheep Foundation, and Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation all are involved already.

Another key issue concerns the Endangered Species Act. With this law locked in a political standoff on Capitol Hill, needed improvements must come from the executive branch. Several groups identified the opportunity of recruiting private-sector funding for active wildlife management for species at risk by reexamining policies known generally as "mitigation." This is the practice by which investors

pay for improvements and security for wildlife habitat in ways that advance published conservation goals. When their work is certified as complete, the investors can sell "credits" from their lands under contract to developers whose projects affect the species involved. DOI is operating under a secretarial order to dismantle previous policies that define mitigation. In their place, the roundtable group will develop accountable, measurable policies by working with Interior.

The Club greatly appreciates Secretary Bernhardt, his staff, and the many participants who joined the discussion. As work continues, the Club will continue leading today's diverse conservation movement toward actions in 21<sup>st</sup> century conservation, just as the Club did at its founding and for the beginnings of the American conservation movement. ■

Regular member Simon Roosevelt (right) and Interior Secretary David Bernhardt co-chair the 2019 Conservation Roundtable. Club President Tim Brady was in attendance along with Professional Members Joel Pedersen, Nick Wiley and Ronald Regan.

