

**News for Immediate Release**

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## **Sportsmen Applaud House Passage of Mining Reform Bill**

*Bill brings unprecedented change to long-outdated law, will improve conditions throughout West while cutting future degradation from mining*

WASHINGTON – The House of Representatives today voted to approve a groundbreaking mining reform bill, the Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act of 2007 (HR 2262). The bill passed the House with bipartisan support and a final vote of 244-166. Sportsmen United for Sensible Mining hailed the House vote as a bellwether of history-making reform.

The bill would initiate the first-ever significant change to General Mining Law of 1872, which governs the mining of hard-rock minerals such as gold, silver and uranium on Western public lands. Under HR 2262, sales of public lands to mining corporations would end. Royalties of up to 4 percent would be assessed to existing mines and 8 percent to new mines, with proceeds funding cleanup of abandoned mines. New permitting and environmental guidelines also would be enacted.

The bill has been endorsed by Sportsmen United for Sensible Mining, a coalition of organizations and individual grassroots partners spearheaded by the National Wildlife Federation (NWF), the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP) and Trout Unlimited (TU). The sportsmen's alliance formed to preserve America's legacy of hunting and fishing through sensible mining practices.

"Sportsmen United for Sensible Mining thanks all of our congressmen who voted in favor of HR 2262," said Land Tawney, senior manager for Sportsmen United for Sensible Mining. "Their leadership will help ensure a healthy future for our country's public lands and sporting traditions. Hunters and anglers look forward to similar leadership in the Senate."

"Reform of the 1872 law will restrict mining from places with abundant fish and wildlife resources and recover royalties to help restore habitat – and hunting and fishing opportunities – on public lands," said TRCP President and CEO George Cooper. "Reform also will prohibit the sale of these public lands. America's sportsmen look forward to a time when our lands and waters no longer will be corrupted by fallout from negligent mining operations."

"The impacts of mining on Oregon's endangered salmon, steelhead and trout have been enormous," said Tom Wolf, chair of the Oregon council of TU. "The antiquated 1872 Mining Act has severely impacted Oregon rivers like the Rogue, Power, John Day and

Minam. The more than 600,000 Oregonians who buy fishing licenses deserve to be protected from the impacts of this ancient and malevolent law. Responsible anglers expect change – and soon.”

“America is ready for commonsense reforms to this outdated law,” said Jim Lyon, NWF vice president of conservation policy. “This bill gets us one step closer to recovering funds to help restore fish and wildlife habitat impacted by mining practices.”

Under the 1872 Mining Law, more than 270 million acres of federal land are open to hard-rock mining, mostly in the Rocky Mountain West. Because the 1872 law has never been meaningfully reformed, many of America’s most treasured public lands are at risk, including important wildlife habitat and hunting areas, valuable fisheries, popular recreation sites, vital municipal water supplies and sensitive roadless areas. Public lands contain more than 50 percent of the nation’s blue-ribbon trout streams and more than 80 percent of critical elk habitat.

***[Learn more about Sportsmen United for Sensible Mining at http://www.sensiblemining.org](http://www.sensiblemining.org)***