

PRESIDENT'S *Corner*

The Sportfishing Industry Mourns the Loss of a Great Friend

In January the sportfishing industry and conservation community lost a dear friend and leader in Jim Range. He may not have been widely known outside of the policymaking arena, but he had more of an impact on preserving our nation's natural resources than anyone I know. Although he only lived 63 years, anglers and hunters everywhere owe him a debt of gratitude.

Jim was most recently a Senior Legislative Policy Advisor for Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, a Washington, D.C., law firm. Over the past 30 years, however, he played an instrumental role in the crafting and final passage of a string of landmark laws, including the Clean Water Act. But his true cumulative influence on behalf of America's fish and wildlife resources is inestimable.

Jim was a leader in the truest sense of the word. No one was immune from the passion and genuine sincerity he brought to bear on efforts to safeguard our great outdoors. I've personally witnessed skeptics become true believers because Jim truly loved being outdoors. And Jim just didn't believe in failure; the word just



wasn't in his vocabulary. He would do whatever it took to safeguard our outdoor heritage. He had a real talent, a true gift, for being able to bring everyone else along with him. Jim attributed much of the success that he and his colleagues had in the policymaking arena to their ability to work in a bipartisan fashion, putting America's outdoor resources above party politics. He often paraphrased

President Ronald Reagan, saying, "It's amazing what you can get done in this town when you don't worry about who gets the credit."

He spent many years on Capitol Hill as a vocal advocate for conserving our nation's public lands and resources. Among several influential positions he held, Jim was chief counsel to Senator Howard Baker when the senator served as majority leader. Jim also served on the boards of directors for Trout Unlimited, Ducks Unlimited, the Wetlands America Trust, the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation, the American Sportfishing Association, the American Bird Conservancy, the Pacific Forest Trust, the Yellowstone Park Foundation and the Bonefish and Tarpon Trust.

But Jim was perhaps most proud of The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, the organization he founded in 2004, which he served as chairman of the board of directors.

In 2003 we awarded Jim the association's highest honor, the Norville Prosser Lifetime Achievement Award, for his dedication to the sportfishing industry and the sportfishing community. That same year he also received the U.S. Department of the Interior's Great Blue Heron Award, the highest honor given to an individual at the national level by the department, and the 2003 *Outdoor Life* Magazine Conservationist of the Year Award.

Jim fished and hunted throughout this country with a passion for the sport and a respect for the resources that was unparalleled. He made it his life's mission to ensure that our outdoors was preserved for everyone to enjoy, and he let nothing stand in his way. He will be greatly missed.

Mike Nussman
President & CEO