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NWF & MWF Laud Senator Tester's Restoration Forestry Bill

MISSOULA, MT (July 17, 2009) – The National Wildlife Federation and the Montana Wildlife Federation today hailed the introduction of the Montana Forest Jobs and Recreation Act by Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT).

“Senator Tester’s legislation shows how we can restore America’s forests, put people to work, and protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat,” said Larry Schweiger, president & CEO, National Wildlife Federation. “It’s a Montana-made solution that can work on national forests across the country.”

The Tester bill promotes restoration logging by directing the U.S. Forest Service to use its stewardship contracting authorities so that timber revenues can be used for road reclamation and watershed restoration projects. Logging is also focused on the urban-wildland interface to reduce wild fire threats and in areas where stands of lodge pole pine have been decimate by pine bark beetles.

The Tester bill protects some of Montana’s most important fish and wildlife habitats through wilderness designations. Altogether, the bill designates 25 new wilderness areas covering more than 670,000 acres on both Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service land.

“Senator Tester’s bill will create a legacy in both process and on-the-ground results that will benefit our children and their children,” said Tim Aldrich, president, Montana Wildlife Federation. “Key fish and wildlife habitats will be enhanced and protected for future generations while local economies and communities are strengthened by the economics associated with the logging designed to achieve multiple objectives of restoration forestry.”

The National Wildlife Federation was one of the conservation groups that helped build the Beaverhead-Deerlodge Partnership, which provided part of the framework for Senator Tester’s bill.

“The National Wildlife Federation has long believed that people working together can find enduring solutions for natural resource management,” said Tom France, regional executive director, National Wildlife Federation Northern Rockies and Prairies Regional Center. “The broad and diverse coalition of groups and companies that support Senator Tester’s bill is truly remarkable.”

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