



## **Safari Club International Victory Protects Hunting Throughout National Wildlife Refuge System**

April 13, 2011 (Washington, DC) – In a ruling issued today, Safari Club International (SCI) claimed a major victory in a lawsuit that has threatened hunting on National Wildlife Refuges since it was filed in 2003. Judge Gwin of the Ohio federal district court today issued a ruling in favor of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and SCI to protect our public lands and keep them open for hunting.

The Fund for Animals sued to challenge hunting on 37 refuges throughout the National Wildlife Refuge system, claiming that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) had not completed a sufficient environmental analysis of the impact of hunting on these refuges. SCI immediately joined as an intervenor in the case on behalf of the FWS in order to help defend the hunting opportunities that exist on the refuges.

In 2006, the case saw a setback, when a D.C. federal district court ruled in the Plaintiffs' favor, sending the matter back to the FWS to conduct additional environmental review. The case then expanded to include additional refuges that had been opened to hunting since the case began, and Plaintiffs amended their original claims in an attempt to stop hunting on almost 70 refuges throughout the country.

After the FWS complied with the court order to conduct additional environmental review, the case returned to court for its examination of the agency's revised efforts. Once again, SCI's litigators aggressively defended the agency's compliance, this time meeting with success. Judge Gwin issued a resounding ruling in favor of the FWS and SCI, leaving no room for question about the Fund for Animals' failure to substantiate its challenge against refuge hunting.

“This is a long overdue victory for SCI and our litigation team's efforts to protect the freedom to hunt and keep our public lands open for hunting,” said SCI President Larry Rudolph. “It is clear that the facts were on our side in this case. I commend Judge Gwin for his decision and believe that SCI's participation in this case proves once again that we truly are First for Hunters.”

SCI was joined in its intervention by U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, Delta Waterfowl Foundation, the California Waterfowl Association, and Izaak Walton League of America.

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### ***About the Hunters' Defense Fund:***

*Safari Club International Hunters' Defense Fund supports the important advocacy, conservation and legal work keeping hunters afield and promoting hunting worldwide. Donations to the Hunters' Defense*

*Fund have a direct impact on our freedom to hunt, wildlife conservation policy and important legislative, regulatory and legal issues. DONATE NOW: [www.safariclub.org/hunterdefense](http://www.safariclub.org/hunterdefense)*

***Becoming an SCI Member:***

*Joining Safari Club International is the best way to be an advocate for continuing our hunting heritage and supporting worldwide sustainable use conservation, wildlife education and humanitarian services.*

*JOIN NOW: [www.safariclub.org/Join](http://www.safariclub.org/Join).*

*Safari Club International – First For Hunters is the leader in protecting the freedom to hunt and in promoting wildlife conservation worldwide. SCI’s approximately 200 Chapters represent all 50 of the United States as well as 106 other countries. SCI’s proactive leadership in a host of cooperative wildlife conservation, outdoor education and humanitarian programs, with the SCI Foundation and other conservation groups, research institutions and government agencies, empowers sportsmen to be contributing community members and participants in sound wildlife management and conservation. Visit the home page [www.safariclub.org](http://www.safariclub.org) or call (520) 620-1220 for more information.*



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