Coburn Amendment 2917- Strike section establishing a National Fish Habitat Conservation Fund

Coburn Amendment 2917 would strike the section codifying the duplicative National Fish Habitat Conservation Fund

The federal government’s already provides ample funding for aquatic habitat conservation

* The Sportsmen’s Act would codify the National Fish Habitat Conservation fund, establishing a 27 member National Fish Habitat Board, providing $7.2 million in annual funding for fish habitat conservation projects and $1.5 million annually for technical and scientific assistance from FWS, NOAA, and USGS
* CBO scored this provision as standalone legislation at $32 million over the next 5 years
* This bill duplicates the existing and much larger federal aquatic habitat conservation efforts provided through the Dingell-Johnson/Wallop-Breaux Fund
* The Dingell-Johnson/Wallop-Breaux Fund is a mandatory program that collects receipts, from taxes on motorboat fuel, small engine fuel for outdoor power equipment, excise taxes on sport fishing equipment, and import duties on fishing boats and tackle
* These funds, totaling $625 million in FY2011, are expended on activities including state grants for sport fish restoration projects, coastal wetlands conservation and restoration programs, national aquatic resource outreach and communications, multi-state conservation grants, and interstate fishery commissions

This provision is duplicative and unnecessary

* The $9.9 million in annual habitat conservation funding authorized in the Sportsmen’s Act pales in comparison to the existing $625 million federal commitment
* If coordination is needed to improve and streamline aquatic habitat conservation efforts, Congress should work to ensure that federal, state, local, and private entities are free to coordinate rather than establishing more federal bureaucracy in the name of improvement
* The Government Accountability Office(GAO) has already identified $200 billion in duplicative and overlapping programs in the federal government, and Congress must stop adding programs to this ignoble list