SUPPORT H.R. 2179!!
(BILL LIFTING BAN ON TUNA FISHING)

On August 4, Congressman Randy “Duke” Cunningham (R-Escondido) introduced legislation (H.R. 2179) to remove U.S. embargoes against tuna fishermen in the eastern tropical Pacific. In light of the results and progress made by fishermen mastering new skills in the fishermen’s education program of the La Jolla-based Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), the Congressman feels the embargoes are not necessary and are undermining the success of the IATTC’s program.

“The fishermen’s education programs, supervised by the scientists of the IATTC, are reaping rewards and the embargoes are counterproductive,” said Teresa Platt, co-director of the non-profit Fishermen’s Coalition. “The international, high seas fleet is safely releasing an almost perfect 100 percent of the mammals involved in the fishing operations. However, the products of these responsible fishermen are embargoes by present U.S. policy. It’s time to treat good fishermen fairly and change our policy.”

Congressman Cunningham’s bill also overturns the statutory labeling definition of “dolphin safe” and returns control of the labeling parameters to the Federal Trade Commission. “Written in a manner that makes sense to the lawyers and no one else, the current ‘dolphin safe’ labeling requirements do not allow tuna caught without any dolphin mortality to be labeled ‘dolphin safe.’ The eastern Pacific fleet could reach absolute zero marine mammal mortality rates and never be able to label their product ‘dolphin safe.’ Ironically, substituting other gear causing high levels of marine mammal kills would produce a product that could be labeled ‘dolphin safe.’ Returning the Federal Trade Commission’s control over this label, as they have over all other labels, makes sense. Congressman Cunningham’s legislation focuses specifically on the issues facing the international eastern Pacific yellowfin tuna fishery, celebrating and securing the work of the scientists, statesmen and fishermen,” continued Ms. Platt.

The Fishermen’s Coalition asks for your help. Letters and phone calls to your Congressional representative supporting H.R. 2179 is needed.
A “THANK YOU” to all who have responded to the request for dues and contributions. We are still far short of funds to do what is needed. The Alliance for America is a non-profit organization and has 501c3 tax status.

Please look at your mailing label as we are now printing the month and year of your last contribution to the Alliance. No date, no support. The Alliance for America would like to publish more newsletters as supporters need to be informed of our activities. Fax machines are of great value to inform citizens of upcoming legislation very quickly, as the news media does not always give enough details and facts. We feel all citizens should be aware of pending legislation and how it may affect us. You as citizens are the voice of our country, and you need to be heard.

The New York Times published an article by Keith Schneider on Jan 9, 1995 regarding property rights. Due to this publication we received a great many phone calls requesting more information on the Alliance for America. During the week of Jan 16th several letters were mailed. If you are one that requested information and did not receive it, we apologize and wish you would contact us once more. Thanks.

Harry McIntosh - VP Administration

Executive Board Meets in D.C.

The Executive Board of the Alliance for America met on Sunday, January 29 at the Quality Hotel Capitol Hill in Washington, DC. Many issues were discussed, and several decisions were made. Alliance members from Alaska suggested establishing their state as a separate region, and the Board agreed. Formal action will be taken at the next annual meeting. General housekeeping chores included discussion of position papers, operation of the Alliance fax system, and educating Board members and the general membership concerning access and utilization of the Internet.

The Board decided that the Alliance will coordinate a Mini Fly-In to be held in June to coincide with a logging trip by the Western States Coalition. The timing will facilitate offering Congress suggestions for the Second Hundred days of this session. The group also considered pursuing status as a Non-Government Organization, resulting in a decision to go forward toward that goal. The final segment of the meeting consisted of organizing various appointments on Capitol Hill. The final item on the agenda was to watch the Super Bowl.

Cheryl Johnson, Secretary

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Earth Island Institute’s lawsuit against Commerce Department nets “pro bono” eco-attorneys a cool $800,000.

David Brower’s Earth Island Institute (EII) recently requested reimbursement from the Department of Commerce for over a quarter of a million dollars in “expenses” and $1.3 million for attorneys fees on a tuna/dolphin court case which was never won by the animal rights group and was filed in the wrong jurisdiction. A letter of protest was lodged with the judge against payment of any money to EII or their “pro bono” eco-attorneys (Heller, Ehrman, White & McAuliffe of San Francisco) by nine property rights and resource-use groups, including The Fishermen’s Coalition and Alliance for America. In spite of the lack of merit for the payment, the Commerce Department buckled and did not wait for the judge’s ruling. Commerce Department negotiated with EII and committed to releasing $800,000 of taxpayer money by December 31. The funds came from National Marine Fisheries’ Services’ budget. EII is now embroiled in a court case over turtles/shrimp and the infusion of fresh U.S. taxpayer cash should mean that the shrimpers can expect even harder times ahead.

Copies of the letter of protest can be obtained from The Fishermen’s Coalition.

Teresa Platt - Regional Director

MID-ATLANTIC REGION

Culpeper, Virginia is trying to revive its economy after battling for years against the historic designation of 15,000 acres of land which historians felt still belonged to the Civil War. Of course historians did not want to buy the land, merely control its use to zero--no use. Now its battle has shifted to a possible Tier III designation of the entire Hazel River, 20 miles of which flows through Culpeper County. This designation could prohibit the replacement of a much needed 20-year-old water treatment plant which is needed in the area now and for the future.

In the Hampton Roads area of Chesapeake, Virginia, tougher ozone regulations could increase the cost of gas and emissions testing to the residents. The reason is that violations were found on just five (5) days since 1991 at the areas monitoring station for ozone. Local officials want to be allowed to proceed with their own plans for coping with this “horrendous” problem rather than adopting federal procedures which would cost more than $100 million annually.

WELCOME: Sam Dills, our new State Director for Kentucky. His address is 1109 Benson Valley Rd., Frankfort, KY 40601. Phone/Fax: 502-223-3327. Sam is a Certified Land Fill Manager and has been closed down due to EPA’s changed regulations. It would cost him half a million dollars to up-grade his site. He said more new rules and restrictions would be coming in June.

We must communicate more closely within our Region. I need State Representatives from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Maryland. Anyone willing to collect and disseminate information for Your State please give me a call. This is an important Congress for us. We must work together to be effective. A little help from everyone helps us all! Day:703-368-9922 Home:703-754-7485 FAX:703-368-6573.

Pat Bradburn - Regional Director
WHAT ARE THEY DOING IN OUR SCHOOLS?

Hello again! This is the time of year I offer to go into the classroom and teach students about forest health and how to make paper. I have been very busy these last few weeks doing just that. In the Lewiston, Idaho Valley we also invite the students to come to the mill for a tour of the sawmill, paper mill, tissue mill, and also the green house where we grow the trees to replace what we have harvested. I also tell them of the by-products we get from the paper-making process. Products like, imitation Bacon-bits, imitation vanilla, baby food, animal feed, and the list goes on. That information usually astounds the teachers as well as the students.

In a small town in northern Washington (State) teachers gave a class of second graders a test on dinosaurs. The students were to read the question and then circle the correct picture that best answered the question. The first question was what dinosaurs lived in this area? The second was which dinosaur was a meat eater? The third was which helped dinosaurs catch food? The FOURTH question asked which way do people endanger animals? The choices being A) A man petting a dog; B) A girl petting a cat; C) A forest with a skidder setting by a deck of logs and a logging truck; D) A corral full of horses. The correct answer (of course) was the logger. Now you tell me what logging has to do with dinosaurs! We all have a need to help tell the truth about our resources. We cannot rely on our educators telling our story. Remember... Democracy is NOT a spectator’s sport. Get involved!

Rita Carlson-VP Nat’l Resources/Public Lands
Phone: 208-799-1178 Fax: 208-799-1031

Fishermen Develop Vision

Out of the ashes of the closure of the Northeast Atlantic comes a vision statement developed by the fishing families similar to the better known “Vision Document” developed by timber groups. “Vision 2000 and Beyond” is a blueprint for regional control and the restoration and management of a healthy fishery in the Northeast Atlantic.

“Vision 2000 and Beyond” states:

We envision a management system in which fishermen are full-scale participants, with responsibility for developing and doing on-going management, for participating in science to sustain management, and for participating in enforcement. We envision a management system based on a working, common-sense understanding of the ecosystem, a better understanding of critical habitats, and the balanced use of all living marine resources.

It will be wonderful for timber groups and fishing groups to discuss development and implementation of their two very similar Vision documents at the 1995 Fly-in For Freedom. Hopefully the good efforts of both groups of resource caretakers will be supported.

Teresa Platt - SouthWest Regional Director

MID-ATLANTIC REGION

Virginia: With no advance notice, state water officials have pushed back for at least a year a move to protect some of Virginia’s most pristine streams.

The State Water Control Board voted unanimously to delay the adoption of the streams into the “exceptional waters” program, in part to allay property rights concerns. Several members of Virginians For Property Rights have been appointed to the Citizens Advisory Committee to ensure that private property owners will be informed of such designations and their impact on the use of private property. I am an appointee and will keep you informed.

VA/MD: The nation’s largest Civil War group is considering moving from Fredericksburg, VA to Sharpsburg, MD in an effort to be closer to more popular nearby battlefields. They are looking for a rent-free agreement for about 10 years and expect to use their expertise to help defray development in the area.

Back in VA: The VA Outdoor Foundation (VOW), a state conservator agency, which holds 88,000 acres in the elite hunt country has agreed to lease 800 acres to the elite Friends of Bull Run which was organized to control the land. This “sweetheart deal” gives the tenant more control than the “landlord.” The restrictive use of the land and unusual terms of the lease have drawn great criticism throughout the Commonwealth. Oh, the terms? 15 years at $1.00 per year!

Pat Bradburn - Regional Director
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Annual Meeting — Alliance for America

The Alliance for America annual meeting took place in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 16-17. Several important topics were discussed, including a proposal to create the Alliance for America Foundation and a new Alaska region. Voting organizations will soon receive information on the proposed bylaw changes. It is extremely important the ballots be promptly returned.

Elections for 1996 were held. The following nominees were unanimously endorsed: Bruce Vincent (MT), President; Harry McIntosh (NY), VP Administration; Cheryl Johnson (NH), VP Property Rights; Rita Carlson (ID), VP Natural Resources/Public Land; Joanna Waugh (IN), Secretary; and Tom Hirons (OR), Treasurer.

Regional reports indicated that the Alliance for America's primary objective -- to coordinate, communicate and educate -- was highly successful in 1995. Everyone agreed, however, that member groups must be more proactive in defining the resource and property rights debate. To that end, Alliance for America has joined with 400+ organizations to form the Endangered Species Coalition. This group is helping guide congressional attempts to reform the Endangered Species Act. A committee of five -- Brian Bishop (RI), "Buck" Vandersteen (LA), David Howard (NY), Kathleen Benedetto (MT) and Cheryl Johnson (NH) -- was formed to develop an ESA strategy for the Alliance for America to begin a massive fund-raising campaign to support these efforts. ESA reform will be the most important battle of the 104th Congress. Alliance for America has been given a strategic seat at the table that must be occupied. All Alliance for America members will be called upon to actively and financially support this effort.

Goals were set for 1996 which focus on coalition building and networking with organizations at the state and local level. Bruce Vincent succinctly observed that the real fight is at home and a growing body is responding at that level. This carries over at the national level. Alliance for America members adjourned, rededicated to local activism.

Joanna Waugh -- Secretary
219-926-7007 or FAX 219-926-8879

E-Mail (America on Line)

We are pushing ahead with communication projects. Our goal is to get all the member organizations set up with an E-mail address. If you have one please send it to allianceam@aol.com so you can be included on our list. If you are not currently using the internet we can provide you with the software to connect to the online service 'America Online'. This will provide you with E-mail and access to the internet with a single easy to use connection. We hope to build a world wide web page for the Alliance for America in the coming months. This will give us a place to reach new people and a place to provide more detailed information about your issues.

Those people who participated in the E-mail seminar at the Alliance for America meeting Sept. 16th-17th are on the road to building this interchange.

Brian McIntosh — Communication Center
Internet - allianceam@aol.com

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On August 4, Congressman Randy "Duke" Cunningham (R-Escondido) introduced legislation (HER 2179) to remove U.S. embargoes against tuna fishermen in the eastern tropical Pacific. In light of the results and progress made by fishermen mastering new skills in the fishermen's education program of the La Jolla-based Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), the Congressman feels the embargoes are not necessary and are undermining the success of the IATTC's programs.

Ever since a fishermen's education program was initiated in the mid-80's and a multi-national agreement for fisheries management was signed in June of 1992, dolphin mortality has continued to plummet as fishermen near perfection in releasing dolphins unharmed from their fishing nets.

"The fishermen's education programs, supervised by the scientists of the IATTC are reaping rewards and the embargoes are counterproductive," said Teresa Platt, co-director of the non-profit Fishermen's Coalition. "The international high seas fleet is safely releasing an almost perfect 100 percent of the mammals involved in the fishing operations. However, the products of these responsible fishermen are embargoed by present U.S. policy. It's time to treat good fishermen fairly and change our policy."

An on-the-docks press conference in San Diego, August 8, 1995, brought fishermen and animal rights activists together in a face off over the bill. Fishermen carried signs as such as: "Save the baby tunas," "Fourth generation fisherman: ask: will there be a fifth?" and "Support responsible fishing." The animal rights group insisted that one dolphin killed by fishermen was enough to shut down this fishery. Upon further questioning, they also admitted that one dead tuna was too many.

"It's difficult to discuss conservation of dolphins, tunas, sharks and billfish with people who are philosophically opposed to any kind of fishing," commented Steve Medina, fourth generation fisherman. "Hopefully, the U.S. public will recognize that the 'Save the Dolphin' movement gave us many gains. But now the process discriminates against responsible fishermen with marine mammal mortality rates a fraction of what is allowed other U.S. fisheries. We are punishing the good guys and causing fishermen to become disillusioned with the process."

By harvesting the pure schools of large tuna which associate with dolphin, the fishermen avoid the waste of catching undersized tuna and concentrating the fishing on the large, mature fish helps fishermen avoid overfishing the resource. In contrast, "dolphin-safe" fishing heavily impacts baby tunas and results in bycatch (discard) rates as high as 30 percent. A recently passed United Nations resolution urges fisheries to reduce bycatch of unwanted species while present U.S. policy for the eastern Pacific tuna fisheries forces the tuna fishermen to dramatically increase bycatch in order to avoid a comparatively minor impact on dolphin stocks.

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"Written in a manner that makes sense to the lawyers and no one else, the current 'dolphin safe' labeling requirements do not allow tuna caught without any dolphin mortality to be labeled 'dolphin safe,'" Platt said. "The eastern Pacific fleet could reach absolute zero marine mammal mortality rates and never be able to label their product 'dolphin safe.' Ironically, substituting other gear causing high levels of marine mammal kills would produce a product that could be labeled 'dolphin safe.' Returning the Federal Trade Commission's control over this label as they have over all other labels, makes sense." Platt said, "Congressman Cunningham's legislation focuses specifically on the issues facing the international eastern Pacific yellow fin tuna fishery, celebrating and securing the work of the scientists, statesmen and fishermen."

The Fishermen's Coalition asks for your help. We need letters and phone calls to your Congressional representative supporting H.R. 2179.

Teresa Platt — SW Regional Director