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PARTNERSHIP FOR WETLANDS CONSERVATION (Senate - June 06, 1990)

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Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, on May 23, 1990, the Dow Chemical Co. announced a new 4-year partnership for wetlands conservation with Ducks Unlimited, Inc., the Nature Conservancy, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to preserve and protect North America's endangered wetlands.

During a press conference, which was held in my Capitol office, Dow presented the first installment of a \$3 million contribution for wetlands protection and restoration. This donation represents the largest corporate financial donation ever to benefit the North American Waterfowl Management Plan [NAWMP] and demonstrates Dow's dedication to environmental conservation and protection.

In my home State of South Carolina, we have some of the most beautiful wetlands in the country. The Ace basin, another fine example of a joint public and private venture, preserves 350,000 acres of wetlands in the Palmetto State. I am pleased that \$500,000 of Dow's contribution will go directly to fund the Ace basin project. Peach Point in Texas and the Hillman Marsh in Ontario, Canada will also receive funds for wetlands acquisition and restoration projects of the NAWMP.

The partnership established by the Dow Corp. with Ducks Unlimited, Inc., the Nature Conservancy, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation represents the type of cooperation and commitment that will make programs such as the NAWMP work. As a result, our wetlands and waterfowl will be preserved in all their natural splendor. It is clear that a strong economy and a strong ecology can coexist.

I would like to congratulate and express my appreciation to the Dow Chemical Co., Ducks Unlimited, Inc., the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the Nature Conservancy for their participation in this landmark partnership. Protection of our precious natural resources is a top priority for all concerned citizens and legislators, and is one of the most pressing issues facing our Nation today. I look forward to more innovative and beneficial partnerships that will help to preserve America's natural beauty.

Mr. President, I was pleased to participate, in and make remarks during, this press conference. I ask unanimous consent that additional statements delivered at the press conference by Mr. Frank Popoff, president and CEO of Dow Chemical Co.; James D. Range, chairman of the board, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; Matt B. Connolly, Jr., chairman of the North American Wetlands Conservation Council; John E. Walker, president of Ducks Unlimited, Inc.; and John Sawhill, president of the Nature Conservancy be printed in the **Record**.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the **Record**, as follows:

Statement by Matthew B. Connolly, Jr.

Ladies and gentlemen, Members of Congress, members of the media, distinguished guests. I am Matt Connolly, chairman of the recently established North American Wetlands Conservation Council and executive vice president of Ducks Unlimited. It is my great honor to introduce to you this morning some individuals who have formed a unique partnership.

One month ago, Americans from all walks of life and all points of view came together in celebration of Earth Day. Many words were spoken, many pages of `earth news' were printed, many measurements of how far we have come since 1970 were made. All worthwhile.

However, now that the party is over, it's time for the pledges of commitment to be transformed into actions of conviction. And that is why we are here today.

In a moment you will hear of a landmark effort which is a part of Dow's Conservation 2000 program. In support of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and in conjunction with Ducks Unlimited, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and The Nature Conservancy, today Dow is launching a `partnership in wetlands conservation' which is unique on several fronts. Truly international in scope, this partnership will address itself to wetland conservation throughout North America--in Canada, the United States and Mexico. [To make this possible, Dow is contributing an amount which is the largest single corporate grant to date to the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.]

You may think that waterfowl represent a vary narrow slice of the conservation agenda. Not so. Waterfowl are a barometer of the overall health of the environment. Presently they are sending us an alarming signal. When they are in trouble, then it is only a matter of time before we humans follow suit.

Unfortunately, some folks think of wetlands as nuisance areas that breed mosquitos or as a resource whose loss is largely overrated by environmentalists and politicians seeking a fresh spin on an old theme. Not so again. Wetlands are one of nature's greatest assets. Not only do they provide food and shelter for hundreds of wildlife species and thousands of plant species, but they also purify polluted run-off from urbanized landscapes, absorb flood waters such as those raging this week through Arkansas and provide recreational areas for wildlife enthusiasts and sportsmen. Reversing the trend of wetland loss and restoring wetland habitats which have been damaged over the decades present two of our greatest environmental challenges in this, the decade of the environment.

The challenge is monumental. Only through partnerships such as the one about to be announced will future generations of waterfowl, wildlife and humans alike be assured of a liveable Planet Earth.

Now, on behalf of Jim Range, Chairman of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; John Sawhill, President of The Nature Conservancy; John Walker, President of Ducks Unlimited and myself, I am honored to introduce to you Mr. Frank Popoff, president and chief executive officer of The Dow Chemical Company.

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Statement by Frank Popoff, President and CEO, Dow Chemical Co.

Thank you, Matt. It was just one month ago that I had the distinct privilege of joining the Secretary of the Interior, Manuel Lujan, at a ceremony here in Washington to announce Dow's participation in a partnership to recycle plastics, glass and aluminum in four of our best known National Parks. I am delighted to say that it is yet another partnership that brings me back to this great city today.

The partnership we're here to tell you about today is one which will advance wetlands conservation across the North American continent. This partnership links Dow with three premier conservation organizations: Ducks Unlimited, The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and The Nature Conservancy.

Let me emphasize how much we value our partnership with these organizations. I think that all of us here today recognize

that conservation and environmental protection are challenges best met by public/private sector partnerships like the one you see assembled today.

From the beginning of our discussions, we partners have focused our attention on providing tangible support for the North American Wetlands Conservation Act which President Bush signed into law in December of 1989.

One purpose of this Act is to encourage partnership among public agencies and other interests--such as Dow and conservation groups--to carry out the intent of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. This Plan, which was signed in 1986 by the Minister of Environment for Canada and the Secretary of the Interior for the United States, is designed to conserve and restore vital waterfowl habitats and increase the number of waterfowl throughout the continent.

As evidence of Dow's sincere desire to protect and conserve the environment--I take great pride today in announcing Dow's pledge of \$3 million over the next four years to support implementation of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. Here's how the money will be used.

Two and one-half million dollars will be dedicated to major keystone projects. The first three are: The ACE Basin in South Carolina; Hillman Marsh at Point Pelee in Ontario, Canada; and Peach Point Wildlife Area in Brazoria County, Texas. Dow and our partners will announce other keystone projects in the coming years in the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

The remaining half-million dollars is earmarked specifically for wetlands conservation on Dow property. I believe very strongly that conservation means doing more than contributing funds; it means taking action close to home, and finding ways to encourage our employees to become even more involved in conservation. In fact, the cover of our annual report this year features wetlands on our property in Joliet, Illinois. The wetlands project was conceived and developed by our employees.

Dow employees have been involved in numerous projects for years to conserve, restore and enhance more than 60,000 acres of wetlands.

In 1981, Dow donated more than 45,000 acres of land in the Atchafalaya Basin to the state of Louisiana in an effort to help preserve the nation's largest river basin swamp and keep much of it available for public access.

The Joliet site, another in Pittsburg, California, one in Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta, Canada, and even more throughout North America will benefit significantly from the funds we've committing today. And Dow employees, as practicing environmentalists, will manage the conservation projects.

Before you hear from our distinguished partners, I'd like to make one final announcement. Our commitment to wetlands conservation, along with the National Parks recycling program I mentioned earlier, are two important steps in a new program Dow is launching--it is called Conservation 2000. We believe the 1990s will truly be the decade of the environmental. Conservation 2000 is our way of rededicating Dow globally to heightened environmental conservation and protection.

As I announced in our Annual Report to stockholders earlier this year, you will see Dow announce several major environmental initiatives this year, including: a commitment to further emission reduction; a major conservation program; plastic recycling programs; and greater external involvement in our environmental activities.

You've now heard about our plastics recycling and conservation initiatives. I look forward to seeing many of you again as our Conservation 2000 projects develop and are announced over the next decade and beyond.

And now, as evidence of Dow's commitment to this partnership and to wetlands conservation, I will present our down

payment check of \$1 million to our other partners. May I ask them to join me: Jim Range of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, John Sawhill of The Nature Conservancy, and John Walker of Ducks Unlimited.

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Statement by John Walker

Frank, on behalf of Ducks Unlimited, it is indeed an honor to accept this most generous gift from Dow.

For several years now, Ducks Unlimited has had a very productive partnership with The Nature Conservancy and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Having Dow Chemical join this team at the level you just announced is a bold and unprecedented step on the part of Corporate America. Dow has just set the standard for other responsible and concerned corporations to meet. The level of commitment and the depth of vision Dow has exhibited in this 'partnership for wetlands conservation' program should serve as an inspiration to all corporations--large and small--to establish their niche in the conservation movement and move forward with dispatch.

As Matt mentioned, the Dow gift is unprecedented in magnitude--in both dollar amount and international scope. Furthermore, the habitat enhancement and restoration these funds make possible will leave an enduring legacy for future generations of wildlife and humans alike. With our partners, DU will expend these funds in several key areas.

The ACE Basin is one of the last undeveloped wetland ecosystems along the Atlantic Seaboard. Of critical importance to wintering waterfowl, these wetlands also provide productive havens for numerous other wildlife species, including seventeen state and federally recognized endangered species. Encompassing 350,000 acres, the management plan for the ACE concentrates on preserving the natural integrity of what is still an unspoiled area. The magnitude of this challenge is such that no single organization--public or private--could ensure a sound future for the ACE. This is what brought DU, The Nature Conservancy, the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Department, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the US Fish and Wildlife Service together. Dow's generous contribution will enable us to move forward aggressively.

Moving South to my home state, Peach Point is a significant stretch of Texas coastal marsh which has suffered from saltwater intrusion and frequent dry spells during the summer. In this case, the \$100,000 contributed by Dow will be used to build water control structures to retain scarce freshwater. This in turn will develop permanent marshes conducive to the breeding efforts of several duck species while providing healthy wintering habitat for numerous geese species and sandhill cranes.

Heading north across the border, The Hillman Marsh is located on the Lake Erie shoreline north of Point Pelee National Park in Ontario, Canada. There, Ducks Unlimited Canada will use Dow's \$400,000 to reconstruct the 477-acre marsh to turn the once ecologically poor area into a new haven for wetland wildlife. Biologists expect migrating ducks, swans and geese from Arctic nesting and molting grounds to rest at the marsh this fall after years of avoiding an often dry Hillman Marsh.

Additional projects on Dow properties and on other key wetland areas will be equally significant in their importance to North America's wetland inventory. When you get right down to it, this is gift of life and what greater gift is there?

Frank, on behalf of Ducks Unlimited, I thank you and I salute Dow for its commitment. I can assure you that we, in conjunction with our partners, will be deserving stewards of your generosity. Thank you.

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Remarks by James D. Range, Chairman of the Board, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

On behalf of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, I am pleased to acknowledge and accept the generous and unprecedented \$1 million contribution from The Dow Chemical Company as the first installment on a \$3 million grant to support wetland conservation under the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. This grant represents the largest corporate financial contribution that has been received by the Foundation for the Plan.

Dow's contribution is one of the most significant to benefit conservation that has been made by a corporation. No less significant is Dow's leadership in restoring wetlands on its own property. Dow's grant has triggered a match from the Foundation which, in turn, will be enlarged by the commitment of NAWMP partners like Ducks Unlimited and The Nature Conservancy.

I am pleased to announce today that the Foundation will match the \$1 million Dow contribution dollar for dollar as part of our commitment to the goals of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. This match will be provided to our partners, Ducks Unlimited, Inc. and The Nature Conservancy, and we will seek matching funds in succeeding years from Congress to match Dow's remaining \$2 million contribution.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation was established in 1984 by Congress and the President to enhance the Nation's fish, wildlife and plant resources. The Foundation is eligible to receive up to \$5 million a year in Federal matching funds to match private contributions. Since the Foundation's inception in 1984, we have provided a total of some \$24 million for 260 projects in cooperation with 145 partners, including corporations, private conservation groups, and state and Federal agencies. We have helped to fund over 70 different projects directly related to the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The Dow grant has stimulated the type of creative partnership that will be necessary to meet the objectives of the Plan throughout North America. This partnership is exactly the kind of initiative that was envisioned under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act which was passed by Congress and signed by President Bush last year.

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has made this event possible, including particularly, Mr. Frank Popoff, CEO of DOW, Secretary Lujan, Senator Thurmond, the other elected officials who are present, and our other conservation partners--Ducks Unlimited and The Nature Conservancy.

We are pleased to be a part of this important partnership and look forward to working with everyone who is involved to make it a success.

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Statement by John Sawhill, President and CEO, the Nature Conservancy

I would like to first and foremost thank Frank Popoff and Dow Chemical Company for their extraordinary leadership in creating Conservation 2,000. This innovative corporate approach to tackling several of the thorniest environmental problems facing us today will, I hope, become a national model. By marshalling their company's energies to create recycling programs for our national parks and by now becoming a lightning rod for the Partnership for Wetlands Conservation, Dow is illustrating the business sector's critical and intrinsic role in the preservation of our environment.

I'm honored to be among such distinguished leaders here from such a broad range of fields. Acknowledgement of key players. Our coming together reminds me of something I learned about recently talking with a biologist at the Conservancy. The concept was called an 'ecotone,' and it describes the border zones where different kinds of natural communities overlap. For example, where a forest meets a marsh, or a river meets the ocean. Apparently it is in these ecotones where the diversity of life becomes strongest.

I think that this is an apt analogy for this new public/private Partnership in Wetlands Conservation which Dow is so generously helping to catalyze. In these public/private ecotones, each organization can bring to bear its unique resources and tools to help get the job done. Our recent partnership with the Bureau of Land Management to work together to catalogue and better understand the most ecologically significant lands in its possession, as well as our ongoing work with Ducks Unlimited and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation represent hundreds of small actions taking place across the country each day that, step by step, are making a difference.

As everyone knows, a difference must be made. I applaud this administration's commitment to keep the heat turned up on the wetlands problem. It's a grisly situation that is hard to see in day to day life--over 450,000 acres lost each year. By allowing no new losses of wetlands, we are helping not just fish and fowl, but countless other plants and animals. The Conservancy estimates that over 70% of our country's imperiled species are dependent on some kind of wetland system. Because of this, almost half of all of the Conservancy's protection projects involve wetlands.

For whatever personal and professional reasons, we're all here because we believe that these wetlands are meaningful enough to us, either in a recreational or ecological sense, to make them worth the trouble of protecting. But in many ways, I think we're getting the better part of the deal. Wetlands are nature's flood control, water purifier, replenisher of groundwater and supplier of food to estuaries. They can do a lot of things that would be pretty difficult to for us to engineer on our own. River basins and bottomlands can turn ravaging floods into slowmoving streams by dispersing the force of the water. Bottomland treeroots can stabilize a forest floor and keep it from washing away too. Swamps, streams and rivers can hold floodwaters, and immobilize toxic insoluble compounds like mercury, push them to the floor and stop their flow to the sea.

The Partnership for Wetlands will be helping many places like this. One of them exists in South Carolina where the Ashepoo, Combahee and Edisto river basins meet. Known as the ACE Basin, this area is a crazy-quilt of different habitat types, from freshwater pools to salty tidal marshes. It has remained in an undeveloped, relatively unaltered state for over 30,000 years. While some of the land has been farmed and logged, the amount of forest in the basin has remained stable. The ACE's habitats continue to support populations of bald eagle, osprey, loggerhead sea turtles, deer, wood stork, bobcat and alligators.

The early settlers used the ACE for rice plantations in the 17th and 18th centuries. Later, a new generation of plantation owners used these abandoned impoundments to entice more migratory waterfowl to stopover. Today the ACE is only sixty miles from a rapidly expanding Charleston, one of the fastest growing regions in the U.S. One of the best and last areas of its type, the protection of the ACE has become a race against time. It's for places like the ACE that this partnership is so critical.

In closing, I would like to make the point that it's important to remember that wetlands do preserve wildlife and they do maintain economic benefits for society, but, like great works of art, they also provide a cultural link for us to our past, a value difficult to fathom.

My deep thanks to Dow for Dow for their tremendous investment in 'Partnership for Wetlands Conservation.' And for their ongoing dedication to enriching the world we all share. Thank you.

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