

**Conservation Federation of Missouri
2013 Resolutions**

Committee: Waterfowl and Wetlands

#15

Resolution's Author: David Graber and Mark Flaspohler

2013 Farm Bill Conservation Compliance Priorities

- 1 **WHEREAS**, For nearly 30 years, three important conservation measures (referred to as
- 2 “conservation compliance”) have been linked to most U.S. agricultural commodity programs as
- 3 a way to reduce soil erosion and deter wetland drainage; and,
- 4 **WHEREAS**, In exchange for taxpayer-funded commodity supports, farmers agreed to farm the
- 5 most productive lands, while minimizing impacts to highly erodible soils and wetlands; and,
- 6 **WHEREAS**, This long-standing agreement between American taxpayers and farmers has served
- 7 as an effective partnership model to promote sustainable land use, conserve wildlife habitat,
- 8 protect drinking water and provide flood protection; and,
- 9 **WHEREAS**, Since 1996, conservation compliance has not been linked to federal crop
- 10 insurance—one of the most important risk management tools for farmers; and,
- 11 **WHEREAS**, We believe farmers need a strong safety net against catastrophic weather and
- 12 volatile markets, but we do not support risk management programs that incentivize wetland
- 13 drainage and habitat destruction; and,
- 14 **WHEREAS**, Basic wetland protection policies and strong agricultural supports can co-exist just
- 15 as they have for the past three decades; and,
- 16 **WHEREAS**, More than 70 percent of our nation’s original grasslands have been lost and
- 17 accelerated conversion today threatens the future of continental waterfowl populations, grass-
- 18 based agriculture and our nation’s hunting heritage; and,
- 19 **WHEREAS**, A national sodsaver program is a free market approach that protects

20 landowner rights and taxpayer interests by basing federal crop insurance subsidies on the
21 productivity of the land, while saving taxpayers \$200 million over the next 10 years; and,
22 **WHEREAS**, We see a unique opportunity to create budget savings, while conserving our
23 nations' soil, water, and wildlife resources through fiscally sound conservation measures and
24 more efficient use of conservation practices, like the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and
25 wetland easements; and,
26 **WHEREAS**, Failure to enact a national Sodsaver program would create an uneven playing field
27 and regional inequities among producers across the country; and,
28 **WHEREAS**, Results of a recent poll released on June 25, 2012, by the National Farmers Union
29 indicate that America's farmers believe that conservation programs and environmental
30 stewardship should be key components of the new Farm Bill and that these provisions are critical
31 to their long-term economic viability: now, therefore, be it
32 **RESOLVED**, That the Conservation Federation of Missouri assembled at the Capitol Plaza
33 Hotel, Jefferson City, MO, this 24th day of February, 2013, urges the Missouri Congressional
34 Delegation to support the reauthorization of a 5-year Farm Bill that includes Conservation
35 Compliance measures to relink basic soil (Sodbuster) and Wetland Conservation measures
36 (Swampbuster) to federal crop insurance, to enact a national sodsaver program, and lastly, to
37 appropriate no less than \$6 billion of funding to the Conservation Title of the next farm bill.