TWA WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AND HUNTING HERITAGE STATEMENT

Wildlife management and hunting practices continue to change over time. TWA believes it is important to periodically examine those practices and review them within the context of our organization’s philosophical framework as expressed in our Mission Statement. This TWA Management and Hunting Heritage Statement summarizes our philosophy and will be used as a “litmus test” as our organization makes decisions and establishes future policies. The actions of Texas’ land stewards, wildlife managers and hunters not only affect the future of wildlife and habitat, but the integrity of wildlife management and hunting itself.

TWA believes that individuals have the right and the responsibility to make their own decisions along the reasonable continuum of ethics and does not intend for this Statement to be a rule, but rather a guide for the organization and its members.

“A peculiar virtue in wildlife ethics is that the hunter [or Wildlife Manager] ordinarily has no gallery to applaud or disapprove of his conduct. Whatever his acts, they are dictated by his own conscience, rather than a mob of onlookers. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of this fact.” Aldo Leopold

To that end:

- TWA will help foster the knowledge necessary for the land steward and/or hunter to continuously improve farm, ranch and hunting practices for the benefit and wise use of the natural resources.

- TWA will defend and promote the heritage and traditions of hunting.

- TWA believes the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, whereby wildlife is a public resource that is managed through the funds provided by hunters and land stewards through free market economics, licenses, permits and specified excise taxes, provides an example for the world to follow.

- TWA supports legal, fair chase hunting: Legal, fair chase hunting is defined as the ethical and sportsmanlike legal pursuit and taking of any wild game living in adequate native/naturalized habitat in a manner that does not give the hunter an improper or unfair advantage and provides the hunted animals with a reasonable chance, opportunity and inclination to avoid being found and to detect and escape the hunter.
• TWA believes that humans must play an active role in the conservation and management of quality ecosystems/habitat and that private lands in Texas, voluntarily managed by involved individuals, offer the greatest opportunity to enhance habitats and wildlife populations at little and often no cost to the public.

• TWA supports the use of hunting and wildlife/habitat management tools that improve habitat, wildlife populations and hunting opportunity.

TWA believes individual hunters or managers, as the case may be, should be guided by a hierarchy of ethics that includes the following tenets:

• obeying all applicable laws and regulations as well as the rules of the landowner on whose land one is hunting, managing or operating;

• respecting the customs of the locale where the hunting or management activities occur;

• exercising a personal code of behavior that reflect favorably on one’s abilities as a hunter or wildlife manager;

• attaining and maintaining the skills necessary to make the kill as certainly and quickly as possible;

• attaining the knowledge and skills necessary to enhance native habitat, subject to personal objectives, yet respectful of all wildlife populations;

• behaving in a manner that will bring no dishonor to the hunter, the hunted, or the heritage of hunting.

• promoting and supporting the next generation of ethical hunters and land stewards.

_Adopted August 2, 2006_