

Media Advisory

April 25, 2005

CONTACTS:

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Celebrate the 10th Anniversary of Safe Harbor that began in North Carolina Sandhills

On May 5 and 6 at Pinehurst Resort, Village of Pinehurst, N.C., come meet the inventors of the Safe Harbor Program and landowners from North Carolina and across the country who have enrolled in this innovative program that helps conserve imperiled species and frees landowners from fear of the Endangered Species Act. A decade ago the Safe Harbor idea was untried and untested. Today we know the concept is working across the U.S.

Attendees: Craig Manson, Assistant Secretary of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife and Parks
Fred Krupp, President, Environmental Defense
Sam Hamilton, Director, Region 4, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Brad Kocher, Vice-President, Pinehurst Resort

EVENT OUTLINE:

Thursday, May 5 , 5:30. - Reception & Dinner, *the Carolina Dining Room at Pinehurst*

Keynote Speaker Craig Manson, Assistant Secretary of the Interior. The creators of the safe harbor concept, Sandhills landowners and landowners from across the nation who have safe harbor agreements will be recognized. (Media interviews available.)

Friday, May 6, 9:00-11 a.m. *St. Andrews Room, Pinehurst Resort Clubhouse*

Townhall discussion on challenges and opportunities for private land conservation in U.S. Discussion will feature scientific experts and landowners from across the country. (Media interviews available)

Friday, May 6, 11:30 a.m. - *Donald Ross Grill Veranda & Sunroom, Pinehurst Resort Clubhouse*

Press conference and award presentation to Pinehurst Resort - Marking 10 years since U.S. conservation history was made when Pinehurst Resort become first landowner in the U.S. to enter into a Safe Harbor Agreement. *Immediately following tour golf course, other locations to see active nesting areas of endangered red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW). Photo ops:RCWs feeding young.* (Visuals of biologists banding young RCWs available by appointment earlier in the week. Call Patty Matteson, (919) 856-4520 (ext. 25) to arrange.)

BACKGROUND:

▪Before the safe harbor program, landowners in the N.C. Sandhills were cutting mature long-leaf pine trees that could attract the endangered RCW. They were trying to avoid harsh penalties under the rules of the Endangered Species Act.

▪In the early 1990s biologists from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Defense, Fort Bragg and N.C. State University joined conservationists to come up with an idea to allow private landowners some flexibility on the management of their lands. The program termed Safe Harbor was conceived. Pinehurst Golf Course was the first private landowner to sign up for the program. There are now 91 such agreements in the Sandhills.

▪In 1999, Safe Harbor became a national program. Today more than 320 private landowners are enrolled to conserve and protect 35 endangered and threatened species. Almost 3.6 million acres of private land have been enrolled in the Safe Harbor program.