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Refuge Association Honors Passing of Conservation Legend and Refuge Champion, John Dingell

WASHINGTON, D.C. (February 8, 2019) – It is with great sadness the National Wildlife Refuge Association recognizes the passing of one of the greatest conservationists of our time. Congressman John Dingell, architect of some of the most important conservation laws of our nation, passed yesterday in his beloved Detroit.

“This man -- this single human being -- had a profound impact on the lives of every American, whether they realize it or not,” said Geoffrey Haskett, President of the National Wildlife Refuge System. “Every single one of us benefited from his passion and his drive to make our lives better and his legacy will continue to have this impact on future generations.”

Congressman Dingell spent the entirety of his 59 years in Congress advocating for wildlife conservation. He was a member of the [Migratory Bird Conservation Commission](#) from 1969 until his retirement in 2014. During that tenure, he was instrumental in adding millions of acres to the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Dingell was the main architect on the Clean Water Act, he authored the Endangered Species Act, he wrote the National Environmental Policy Act, he authored the Refuge Administration Act of 1966 and sponsored the Refuge Improvement Act in 1997. He also established the [Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge](#) – the only international wildlife refuge in the nation.

Dingell made a lasting impact on the health of the entire nation in his nearly 60 years in office. In particular, he was instrumental in protecting and enhancing the National Wildlife Refuge System. His actions were a catalyst to create the National Wildlife Refuge Association in 1975. After witnessing his inspiring legislative accomplishments in the early 1970’s, retired Refuge System managers created the National Wildlife Refuge Association to protect the Refuge System and carry on Dingell’s legacy.

In May 2014, the National Wildlife Refuge Association recognized Congressman Dingell’s vast contributions by awarding him with our first ever [Theodore Roosevelt Lifetime Achievement Award](#).

Dingell was one of the greatest conservation heroes our country has ever known. The National Wildlife Refuge System and National Wildlife Refuge Association would not be what they are today without his help and support and we will greatly miss his strength, wit, passion and dedication to our nation and our nation’s wildlife heritage.

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The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge Association is to conserve America’s wildlife heritage for future generations through strategic programs that protect, enhance, and expand the National Wildlife Refuge System and the landscapes beyond its boundaries

that secure its ecological integrity. For more information, visit www.refugeassociation.org or contact [Kristen Berry](#), National Wildlife Refuge Association, 202-417-3803.