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Anti's Tout Intentions to End Michigan Dove Hunt

(Columbus) – The nation's largest anti-hunting organization is spearheading an aggressive campaign to ban dove hunting in Michigan.

The Humane Society of the United States' (HSUS) new political arm, HSUS Fund for Animals, has announced its campaign to raise \$100,000 to collect the 225,000 voters' signatures necessary to put the future of Michigan's dove hunt on the 2006 ballot.

In previous anti-hunting campaigns, HSUS has used paid signature gatherers to qualify issues for the ballot. The anti's appear to be employing the same tactic in Michigan. This action contradicts the anti's claim that the Michigan anti-dove hunting campaign is a locally-driven, grassroots effort.

The U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance and its partners in the Michigan Hunting Rights Campaign worked with key lawmakers in 2004 to pass legislation that made Michigan the 41st dove hunting state. Sportsmen are now being called to action to save the hunt.

"Michigan sportsmen must quickly mobilize their defense against the anti's," said U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance Vice President for Government Affairs Rob Sexton. "The merger of the HSUS and the Fund for Animals and changes in the organization's structure allow the group to utilize a significant amount of its reported \$95 million in financial resources on anti-hunting issues."

Sportsmen previewed changes to the anti's strategies when HSUS and the Fund for Animals pumped nearly \$800,000 into a 2004 anti-bear hunting ballot issue campaign in Maine.

The U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance is committed to work with other sportsmen leaders to develop a strategy to win at the polls in 2006. It will take an aggressive effort by sportsmen to counter the anti's efforts.

"The flood of money that the anti's put into the Maine campaign was unlike anything sportsmen had seen," said Sexton. "Fortunately, we organized early and raised money throughout the campaign to ensure a victory. Michigan sportsmen will need to muster even greater effort to protect dove hunting."

To get involved in the fight to defend Michigan's proud hunting heritage, contact the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance at (614) 888-4868 or e-mail info@ussportsmen.org.

The U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance protects the rights of hunters, anglers and trappers in the courts, legislatures, at the ballot, in Congress and through public education programs. For more information about the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance and its work, call (614) 888-4868 or visit its website, <http://www.ussportsmen.org/>.