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CONTACT:

John Peterson
GLCI Volunteer
jwpeterson@cox.net
Ph: 730-505-1782

Monti Golla
GLCI Administrator
grazinglands@verizon.com
Ph: 979-777-9779

The Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) applauds the Congressional House and Senate Agriculture Committees for their commitment to conservation.

Burke, VA, July 18, 2012. The Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) applaud leaders of both the federal Senate and House Agriculture Committees for recognizing the significant value of conservation in supporting America's long-term environmental and economic stability. In language released in both their versions of the 2012 Farm Bill, the leadership in both political parties demonstrated strong bipartisan support for locally-led soil and water conservation efforts.

"We fully recognize the need to get our nation's financial house in order, and we understand that means cuts in federal programs," said GLCI National Chairman Bob Drake of Davis, OK. "We are very pleased that the federal committee leadership has developed a balanced plan that recognizes the critical value of local leadership at the landscape scale. The two Farm Bills propose about a 10% cut over 10 years, approximately \$6 billion, to Farm Bill Title II Conservation Programs (the Farm Bill has 11 titles). That is more than the ill-fated super-committee proposed in 2011, and even more than what the agriculture share of the federal budget represents, about 2%. GLCI hopes other aspects of society bear their fair share of the federal budget cuts, as agriculture and conservation have demonstrated they will do."

"Investing in conservation simply makes sense," Drake continued. "Not only do Farm Bill conservation programs play a key role in supporting clean water, air, and healthy, productive soils, they also help producers avoid unnecessary regulation, and support our nation's long-term economic and food security. As we face increased pressure to produce food, feed, fuel, and fiber for a growing population, we simply cannot afford not to invest in natural resource conservation." The federal Farm Bills have always had strong bipartisan support.

GLCI's members in every state appreciate their opportunity to provide input throughout the legislative process. Specifically they are pleased to see bill language that: 1) protects critical conservation program funding, and 2) supports program consolidation for increased efficiency and ease of use for producers. LICA has always supported locally-led, voluntary incentives-based approaches to conservation delivery through our nations Soil & Water Conservation Districts.

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Since 1991, members of the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative in every state have paved the way for our country's growth and expansion. They have concentrated on scientific grazing lands technical assistance, and research and education. For more information about GLCI, visit: www.glci.org.

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Bob Drake - National GLCI Chair - P.O. Box 188 - Davis, OK 73030 - 580-369-2177 ph.