

To Whom It May Concern:

While "**America's Darling**" is the story of one individual, it is at the same time an instructive history of our country and an inspirational story of leadership. J. N. "Ding" Darling represented a unique package: the insight to early identify developing problems, the ability to devise solutions to those problems and the tactical skills to implement those solutions.

In the 1930's, Darling's leadership provided the Federal Duck Stamp Program, a program which has raised over \$2,000,000,000 inflation-adjusted dollars to purchase and preserve critical habitat for the National Wildlife Refuge System. That program remains viable today.

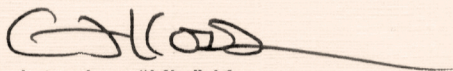
Also in the 1930's, Darling's leadership led to the formation of the National Wildlife Federation, the Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit Program and the Wildlife Management Institute. All three organizations remain viable today, continuing to make outstanding contributions toward the wise use of America's natural resources.

In the 1940's, Darling recognized that encroaching development would eventually impact the critically important wetlands of Sanibel Island, Florida, lying within the Pine Island Sound estuary. Darling brought together a coalition of citizens, elected officials and federal agencies to overcome significant obstacles and create the Sanibel National Wildlife Refuge. Renamed the *J. N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge* after Darling's death, the refuge includes over 6,000 acres of critical habitat that continues to nurture fish and wildlife into the twenty-first century.

Darling was a leader. People who perform extraordinarily well under difficult circumstances do not think of themselves as "heroes." It is only after the fact that others look back and deem the performance heroic. People, institutions and movements need heroes. "Ding" Darling was the "real deal" and his ethic remains with us today.

Just as "Ding" Darling was early to recognize the need for wise use of our nation's natural resources, he recognized persistent problems in other areas that most people failed to recognize or, if recognized, labored under the false impression that these were new problems unique to their own time in history. Darling drew through two World Wars and the terms of seven Presidents. He experienced the Great Depression, as well as times of great prosperity. By sharing "Ding" Darling's insights and stories of his leadership, **America's Darling** brings us history in real time and will inspire others in all walks of life.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Kip Koss", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Christopher "Kip" Koss