

Alpine Lakes Protection Society * American Rivers * American Whitewater *
Conservation Northwest * Gifford Pinchot Task Force * North Cascades Conservation Council *
Pacific Rivers Council * Pilchuck Audubon Society * Sierra Club - Washington Chapter *
The Mountaineers * The Wilderness Society * Washington Trails Association * Washington Wild *
WildEarth Guardians

November 21, 2014

The Honorable Senator Patty Murray
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Restoring America's Watersheds Act

Dear Senator Murray:

The undersigned members of the Washington Watershed Restoration Initiative (WWRI) are writing to thank you for joining Senator Tom Udall as an original cosponsor of the 'Restoring America's Watersheds Act' (S. 2916) introduced by Senator Martin Heinrich last week.

This legislation focuses on watershed health by making several effective programs such as Legacy Roads and Trails and the Watershed Condition Framework permanent and by increasing the funding level available for the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program for an additional five years. The bill would also establish the Water Source Protection Program, which would make it easier for the Forest Service to form partnerships with water utilities and other downstream water users that will bring new sources of funding for watershed restoration in the national forests.

As a coalition that has been advocating for the Legacy Roads and Trails program for six years, we are especially pleased to see that the legislation will permanently authorize this important program. Your leadership and dedication to the Legacy Roads and Trails program is greatly appreciated by this coalition and our supporters.

As you know, the WWRI coalition includes a mix of recreation and conservation groups, state agencies, and tribes. We work in different ways to protect and restore natural resources and ensure access to places we love but we come together in support of this program. Legacy Roads and Trails funds projects including culvert and bridge improvements for fish passage, road maintenance of needed roads, road decommissioning of unneeded roads, and trail improvements. The program has provided the momentum the Forest Service needs to begin addressing their neglected and vastly underfunded road system.

We are pleased to see your recognition of watershed health and the important role the Legacy Roads and Trails program plays in ensuring clean water for communities. Our coalition remains committed to working with you and the Forest Service to ensure this program receives adequate appropriations in the years to come.

Thank you for your commitment to this program and to the restoration of America's watersheds!

Sincerely,

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