

# OUTDOOR ALLIANCE

June 14, 2017

Rep. Tom McClintock  
Chair, House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands  
2312 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. Colleen Hanabusa  
Ranking Member, House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands  
422 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair McClintock and Ranking Member Hanabusa:

While we appreciate the Subcommittee's continued attention to the impacts of fire on our country's public lands, we write to share our community's opposition to the discussion draft for the "Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2017," which substantially undercuts opportunities for public involvement in land management decisions, shortcuts environmental protections, and endangers the health of our country's public lands.

Outdoor Alliance is a coalition of eight member-based organizations representing the human powered outdoor recreation community. The coalition includes Access Fund, American Canoe Association, American Whitewater, International Mountain Bicycling Association, Winter Wildlands Alliance, The Mountaineers, the American Alpine Club, and the Mazamas and represents the interests of the millions of Americans who climb, paddle, mountain bike, and backcountry ski and snowshoe on our nation's public lands, waters, and snowscapes.

The discussion draft shortcuts critical public participation requirements for management decisions on National Forests and BLM lands that have the potential for severe negative impacts on outdoor recreation, the outdoor recreation economy, and conservation values. Public lands management requires a balanced approach to sometimes-competing uses and values; this bill upsets this balance and inappropriately limits the ability of a full array of stakeholders to participate in the management process and, where necessary, initiate judicial review of agency actions.

Gateway communities to our public lands, as well as more geographically dispersed stakeholders, have a wide array of interests in our country's forests, and those forests, in turn, provide a wide range of benefits. The outdoor recreation economy alone—which is critically dependent on access to and protection of our country's forests—is responsible for \$887 billion in consumer spending annually and directly employs 7.6



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million Americans. While we recognize the importance of the timber industry to some communities and the need to sustainably generate forest products, this bill inappropriately elevates one interest over the diverse range of benefits provided by our forests, and most disappointingly, does so by limiting opportunities for the public to participate in generating and reviewing agency actions.

In particular, we strongly object to the creation of new, unnecessary categorical exclusions from review under the National Environmental Policy Act and provisions to severely curtail opportunities for judicial review.

We ask the Subcommittee to more carefully consider the diverse range of values provided by our nation's forests and set aside legislation that unfairly and unnecessarily harms opportunities for public participation in forest management decision-making.

Best regards,



Louis Geltman  
Policy Director  
Outdoor Alliance

cc: Adam Cramer, Executive Director, Outdoor Alliance  
Brady Robinson, Executive Director, Access Fund  
Wade Blackwood, Executive Director, American Canoe Association  
Mark Singleton, Executive Director, American Whitewater  
Dave Wiens, Executive Director, International Mountain Bicycling Association  
Mark Menlove, Executive Director, Winter Wildlands Alliance  
Tom Vogl, Chief Executive Officer, The Mountaineers  
Phil Powers, Executive Director, American Alpine Club  
Lee Davis, Executive Director, the Mazamas

