

# OUTDOOR ALLIANCE

Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
H-232 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader, House of Representatives  
233 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

## **Re: Forestry Title of H.R. 2, the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018 (Farm Bill)**

Dear Speaker Ryan and Minority Leader Pelosi,

Outdoor Alliance is a coalition of nine 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, the Mazamas, and Colorado Mountain Club 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.

Outdoor Alliance is concerned about several of the provisions in the Forestry Title of H.R. 2, the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018 (Farm Bill). This bill prioritizes the logging industry over all other forest stakeholders, including recreation interests. The federal forest provisions in the Farm Bill also run contrary to the wildfire funding agreement reached in the Fiscal Year 2018 Omnibus.

Our community has spoken out strongly against previous legislation in this Congress that would undermine public input and the public process around federal land management. This bill is no different. Indeed, many of the forestry provisions in the Farm Bill come directly from particularly objectionable forestry legislation, the Resilient Federal Forests Act (H.R. 2936).

The forestry provisions in the Farm Bill would create several new “categorical exclusions” (CEs) from the public participation and environmental analysis requirements of NEPA. Several of these CEs would double the size of the CEs just recently negotiated in the Omnibus. Further, Section 8503 of this bill would eliminate the “extraordinary circumstances” safeguard in NEPA, allowing CEs to be applied regardless of the unique nature of a landscape, removing an important final safeguard on streamlining measures that could otherwise at times be appropriate.



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The outdoor recreation community does not contest that logging is an appropriate use of some public lands, but taken together, the Farm Bill's provisions put logging above all other uses on federal public lands, and would direct agencies to disregard our community's interests entirely when making decisions about timber development.

The individuals and organizations who make up our community have also been outspoken supporters of the Roadless Rule. The Farm Bill undermines the Roadless Rule with language that could eliminate current regulatory protection of inventoried roadless areas. This is a non-starter for us.

Finally, the forestry provisions in the Farm Bill makes resource management and forest stewardship dependent on logging revenue. Resource management and forest stewardship projects have ancillary benefits for recreation, and tying these activities to logging revenue restricts agency decision-making and prioritizes timber extraction over other uses of National Forest lands.

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, Chief Executive Officer, American Alpine Club  
Lee Davis, Executive Director, the Mazamas  
Holly Barrass, Interim Executive Director, Colorado Mountain Club

