



March 1, 2022

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Outdoor recreation community and industry support for climate investments

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Speaker Pelosi,

On behalf of the human-powered outdoor recreation community and outdoor industry, we write to express our strong support for investments in climate resiliency, clean energy, and public lands and waters. The negotiations over the Build Back Better budget reconciliation package in the 117th Congress have identified a critical and overwhelmingly popular list of funding priorities to help address the climate crisis and the health of our public lands and waters. We strongly support swift action by Congress to pass a package of investments in clean energy and climate resilience, either as a stand-alone bill, or as part of a larger budget reconciliation package in 2022.

Both the scientific and political windows for addressing the climate crisis are quickly closing, and action is critically needed to curb the worst effects of climate change while helping our nation adapt to climate impacts that are now inevitable. With each passing year, our communities experience greater and greater challenges associated with climate change. For outdoor recreationists, these challenges range from region-wide closures of national forests due to wildfire danger, to extreme heat waves deterring outdoor recreation during peak season, to record low levels

of snowfall in areas that depend on ski tourism as a key component of their economy. With these challenges in mind, we support a full range of investments to address the climate crisis, recognizing that many of these investments will be outside of our direct expertise in public lands and waters conservation, access, and management. To this end, we support investments in clean energy procurement, tax credits, technology, manufacturing, and supply chains, as well as other aggressive measures to move our country towards President Biden's goal of 100 percent clean electricity by 2035.

We also emphasize the role that public lands and waters must play as climate solutions. The outdoor recreation community—and the associated outdoor economy—depend heavily on federal public lands and waters for recreation opportunities, ecosystem services like clean water, and in many cases for our livelihoods. Decades of inadequate investment have created significant challenges for our land management agencies, particularly with regard to wildfire, needed restoration work, and recreation infrastructure. Addressing these challenges continues to become more urgent as many of our federal public lands see increased visitation due to the pandemic and growing public interest in outdoor recreation. Congress has an opportunity—and an urgent need—to address the climate crisis while simultaneously improving the health of our public lands and waters and the recreational experiences and economic activity they support

Congress has already done the difficult work of negotiating a robust climate and public lands package that has the necessary support to become law. The climate and public lands provisions developed through the Build Back Better negotiations offer pathways towards climate mitigation that have broad support within Congress. These negotiations have come too far not to produce meaningful results for the American people, especially given the urgency of addressing the climate crisis before it is too late. It is imperative that Congress seize the opportunity to pass a climate package in 2022.

At a minimum, an updated climate and public lands reconciliation package should retain the following funding priorities from the Agriculture and Natural Resources titles of the Build Back Better Act:

- **National Forest System Restoration and Fuels Reduction Projects**, including funding for hazardous fuels reduction; Legacy Roads and Trails; land management planning and monitoring; trail maintenance; capital maintenance and improvements; more efficient and effective environmental reviews; protection of older and mature forests; and post-fire recovery.
- **Non-Federal Land Forest Restoration and Fuels Reduction Projects and Research**, including critical research and grants to expand equitable access to outdoor recreation.
- **State and Private Forestry Conservation Programs**, including funding for the Forest Legacy and Urban & Community Forestry Assistance programs.
- **Public Lands**, including key investments in National Parks and public conservation and resilience; National Parks and public lands conservation and ecosystem restoration; land projects; wildfire management; National Park Service deferred maintenance and Department of Interior housing; urban parks; National Heritage Areas; and withdrawals.
- **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge**, repealing the establishment of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge oil and gas leasing program.
- **Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing**, banning new leasing along the Atlantic and Pacific coasts and in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico.
- **Fossil Fuel Resources**, ensuring a more appropriate return for the public for fossil fuel development activities on public lands and waters and reducing market distortions that incentivize inappropriate speculation and development.
- **National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration**, including Investing in coastal communities and climate resilience; Pacific salmon restoration and conservation.
- **Department of the Interior Efficient and Effective Environmental Reviews**, to provide additional resources for the land management agencies to conduct environmental analysis and look for efficiencies that remain respectful of NEPA's core values.
- **Council on Environmental Quality**, including support for environmental and climate data collection and efficient and effective environmental reviews.
- **Conservation and Jobs Corps programs (CCC)**, enabling work to address climate change, conservation, equitable and sustainable recreation access, and local economic development while supporting career development for

the next generation of land management and recreation infrastructure professionals.

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Thank you for your leadership on climate, conservation, and recreation issues. We look forward to working with you to support climate action and stewardship for America's public lands and waters and hope Congress will move with purpose to tackle these critical challenges.

Best regards,



Louis Geltman
Policy Director
Outdoor Alliance



Shoren Brown
Interim Executive Director
The Conservation Alliance



Lise Aangeenbrug
Executive Director
Outdoor Industry Association



Our Organizations

Outdoor Alliance is a coalition of ten 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, Colorado Mountain Club, and Surfrider Foundation and represents the interests of the millions of Americans who climb, paddle, mountain bike, backcountry ski and snowshoe, and enjoy coastal recreation on our nation's public lands, waters, and snowscapes.

The Conservation Alliance is an organization of like-minded businesses whose collective contributions support grassroots environmental organizations and their efforts to protect wild places where outdoor enthusiasts recreate. Alliance funds have played a key role in protecting rivers, trails, wildlands and climbing areas. Membership in the Alliance is open to all companies who care about protecting our most threatened wild places for habitat and outdoor recreation. Since its inception in 1989, The Conservation Alliance has contributed more than \$21 million, helped to protect more than 51 million acres of wildlands; protect 3,107 miles of rivers; stop or remove 34 dams; designate five marine reserves; and purchase 14 climbing areas. For complete information on The Conservation Alliance, see www.conservationalliance.com.

Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) is the national trade association for the outdoor industry and is the title sponsor of Outdoor Retailer, the largest outdoor products tradeshow in North America. OIA serves over 1,300 manufacturers, suppliers, and retailers through a focus on international trade and public lands and recreation policy, sustainable business innovation and outdoor participation.