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**U.S. House of Representatives**  
**Committee on Natural Resources**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 26, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-221 United States Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Addison Mitchell McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-230 United States Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell,

On February 26, 2021, the U.S. House of Representatives cast a bipartisan vote to pass H.R. 803, the *Protecting America's Wilderness and Public Lands Act*. This important bill would conserve lands across the United States while supporting the outdoor recreation economy and a green transition. It is imperative that the Senate take up and pass H.R. 803, sending it to the President's desk for signature.

This bill, the result of decades of effort by communities across the nation, would protect lands in Arizona, California, Colorado, Washington, Maine, Oregon, Virginia and the Virgin Islands, providing protections for irreplaceable landscapes like the Grand Canyon and Colorado's Thompson Divide. The bill includes numerous innovative efforts, creating a pilot program for the capture and resale of methane from abandoned coal mines, establishing restoration lands to protect Northern California communities from wildfire, and enhancing access to public lands as a rehabilitation opportunity for veterans.

Furthermore, through the legislative process, the House added broadly supported proposals to H.R. 803, which only strengthen this effort. From efforts to establish programmatic management and support for the 55 designated National Heritage Areas to providing green space in urban, underserved, and park poor areas, H.R. 803 includes a robust and diverse set of proposals deserving of support in the Senate.

The core provisions of H.R. 803, all of which came out of the Natural Resources Committee, passed the House on *three* occasions last Congress, only to die in the Senate under its previous leadership. With a new Senate majority and the added support of newly elected Senators who represent these areas, it is time to act on H.R. 803.

Passing this legislation would be a significant step toward President Biden's ambitious conservation agenda, helping to support America the Beautiful while addressing the climate crisis. This multi-faceted approach would protect key carbon sinks in the Pacific Northwest, support working lands in Colorado, use a variety of public and private tools to support recreation in California, and would support tribal and environmental justice communities. It is a demonstration of Congress's commitment to work with local communities and organizations to support the lands and waters on which we all depend. We look forward to working with you to expeditiously enact H.R. 803.

If you or your members have questions regarding any of the provisions included in H.R. 803, please do not hesitate to reach out to us, our offices, or the offices of the House Natural Resources Committee.

Sincerely,



Raúl M. Grijalva  
Chair  
Committee on Natural Resources



Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress



Joe Neguse  
Chair  
Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and  
Public Lands



Jared Huffman  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife



Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



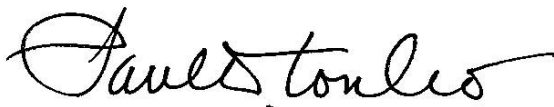
Derek Kilmer  
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Mark DeSaulnier  
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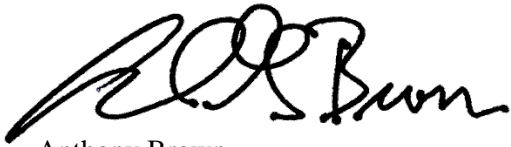
Chellie Pingree  
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Mark Pocan  
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