

June 3, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

During our time as Secretaries of the Interior, we had the privilege and responsibility of stewarding some of America's most incredible landscapes and natural and cultural treasures. Now, more than ever, we are all cognizant of the critical role of public lands in our lives, as places to recreate, to recharge and to seek solace in the midst of great uncertainty—and, also, to create jobs.

Together, we write to strongly urge swift passage and enactment of the Great American Outdoors Act (S. 3422) without any amendments. This bill (and its expected House companion) is critically needed to support the public lands upon which all Americans rely. The Great American Outdoors Act will advance the protection of America's special places and invest in the repair and restoration of deteriorating infrastructure. The bill will help address priority repairs in our National Parks and on other public lands by directing up to \$9.5 billion over five years to address maintenance needs within the National Park System, other public land agencies, and Bureau of Indian Education schools. It will also fully and permanently fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund, our nation's most important conservation program, as authorized at \$900 million every year to ensure protection of and access to our public lands.

The Great American Outdoors Act will help ensure a better, brighter future for nature and for all of us. As Secretaries, we have all experienced how public lands managed by the Department provide vital functions like wildlife habitat while preserving water quantity and quality, sustaining working landscapes and rural economies, increasing access for recreation opportunities, and stimulating the outdoor economy. Nationally, outdoor recreation contributes roughly \$778 billion in consumer spending and supports 5.2 million jobs. The Great American Outdoors Act will ensure that our parks and other public lands are maintained and enhanced so that they can continue to provide these critical benefits for generations to come.

We are pleased to see strong bipartisan support from the House and Senate—and from the President—for the Great American Outdoors Act. Americans need these public lands. And Americans need your continued leadership to deliver this historic legislation into law.

Sincerely,



Ryan Zinke
Secretary of the Interior 2017-2019



Sally Jewell
Secretary of the Interior 2013-2017



Ken Salazar
Secretary of the Interior 2009-2013



Dirk Kempthorne
Secretary of the Interior 2006-2009



Gale Norton
Secretary of the Interior 2001-2006



Bruce Babbitt
Secretary of the Interior 1993-2001