

June 12, 2017

Mr. Mick Mulvaney, Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
725 17th St., NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Mulvaney:

The 124 undersigned organizations represent millions of Americans who partake in outdoor recreation on this nation's forests, parks, and other public lands. Our members ski, climb, mountain bike, paddle, hike, and camp on public lands and they reap enormous benefits from these experiences. To pursue these activities, our members depend on having access to federal lands where they can immerse themselves in nature with their friends and families, away from urban areas and development.

On March 13<sup>th</sup> 2017, the President signed Executive Order 13781 directing you to develop a plan for reorganizing the executive branch including recommending agencies, programs, and functions for elimination.<sup>1</sup> Subsequently, you launched a 28-day comment period asking the American public to weigh in on how to reorganize, reduce, and eliminate agencies.<sup>2</sup> **We write to you today to express our strong support for continued and robust investment in the conservation and recreation programs of the land management agencies: the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and the Bureau of Land Management.** Together, these agencies administer on behalf of the American people 674 million acres of lands that see over half a billion visits annually.<sup>3</sup>

For a modest investment (less than 0.4% of the federal budget), our federal land management agencies generate innumerable benefits worth billions of dollars. They provide us clean water and air, trails and campgrounds, and unmatched outdoor recreation experiences. Most importantly, they provide the recreation infrastructure and opportunities that fuel a \$887 billion outdoor recreation economy that generates 7.6 million jobs.<sup>4</sup> In the 12 Western states alone, the agencies manage 193,500 miles of hiking trails and 12,659 miles of mountain bike trails. Likewise, virtually all backcountry skiing, 43% of whitewater paddling, and 71% of climbing in the West occurs on lands managed by these agencies<sup>5</sup>.

Funding the recreation and conservation programs of these agencies has an outsized impact and is a great investment for the American people. Consider that recreational visits to parks, forests, refuges, and other public lands generate \$33 billion in direct spending and nearly 600,000 jobs, and contribute \$37 billion to GDP annually.<sup>6</sup> Consider also that the clean water that our national forests provide to over 66

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/03/13/presidential-executive-order-comprehensive-plan-reorganizing-executive>

<sup>2</sup> 82 Fed. Reg. 22355 (March 15, 2017)

<sup>3</sup> See US Forest Service, 2012. National Visitor Use Monitoring Report. Available at: [https://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/nvum/2012%20National\\_Summary\\_Report\\_061413.pdf](https://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/nvum/2012%20National_Summary_Report_061413.pdf), Page 24; National Park Service. Annual Visitation Highlights. Available at: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/socialscience/annual-visitation-highlights.htm>; Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. 2015. Public Lands Statistics. Page 186; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Outdoor Industry Association, 2017. The Outdoor Recreation Economy. Available at: <https://outdoorindustry.org/resource/2017-outdoor-recreation-economy-report/>

<sup>5</sup> Data from Winter Wildlands Alliance, American Whitewater, and Mountain Project

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior Economic Report, FY 2015. Prepared by the Department of the Interior Office of Policy Analysis, June 17, 2016. Available at: [https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/fy2015\\_doi\\_econ\\_report\\_2016-06-20.pdf](https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/fy2015_doi_econ_report_2016-06-20.pdf). Table 2-2. See also US Forest Service, 2012. National Visitor Use Monitoring Report. Available at: [https://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/nvum/2012%20National\\_Summary\\_Report\\_061413.pdf](https://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/nvum/2012%20National_Summary_Report_061413.pdf). Page 24.

million people in 3,400 communities in 33 states is worth over \$7.2 billion annually.<sup>7</sup> In that same vein, clean air, clean water and other ecological services provided by our National Wildlife Refuges provide \$32.3 billion in benefits to local communities.<sup>8</sup>

Outdoor recreationists understand the link between healthy lands and healthy lifestyles. **We therefore urge you not to cut – and in fact invest more – in the conservation and recreation programs administered by the US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service. Likewise, we fully support the Environmental Protection Agency.** The EPA and its programs ensure that our public lands provide clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment. Without the EPA our public lands will lose these essential qualities.

While we disagree with the premise that drastic changes to our federal land management agencies are necessary, to the extent that you intend to reorganize and possibly eliminate agencies, we respectfully request that you consider the importance of the federal land management agencies and their conservation and recreation programs. These include, but certainly are not limited to, the 1) Forest Service's Recreation, Wilderness, and Heritage; Legacy Roads and Trails; Trails; Land Management Planning, Assessment, and Monitoring; and Fisheries and Wildlife Habitat Management Programs; 2) the BLM's Recreation Resources Management, National Landscape Conservation System; 3) The Operation of the National Park System, National Recreation and Preservation, and many other accounts within the National Park Service budget; and 4) Cross-cutting programs like the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

Adam Cramer  
Executive Director  
Outdoor Alliance  
Washington D.C.

On behalf of the following organizations:

**Alaska**

Brian Okonek  
President  
Alaska Quiet Rights Coalition  
Anchorage, AK

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<sup>7</sup> USDA Forest Service. Information on Water Resources. Available at:

[https://www.fs.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsinternet/cs/detail!/ut/p/z0/04\\_Sj9CPyKssy0xPLMnMz0vMAfljo8zjiQwgnNHCwN\\_DI8zPyBcqYKBfkO2oCABZcx5g/?position=Contribution%20Content.Html&pname=Forest%20Service&ss=119995&navtype=SubNavigation&pnavid=110140100000000&navid=1101401100000000&ttype=detail&cid=stelprdb5107778](https://www.fs.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsinternet/cs/detail!/ut/p/z0/04_Sj9CPyKssy0xPLMnMz0vMAfljo8zjiQwgnNHCwN_DI8zPyBcqYKBfkO2oCABZcx5g/?position=Contribution%20Content.Html&pname=Forest%20Service&ss=119995&navtype=SubNavigation&pnavid=110140100000000&navid=1101401100000000&ttype=detail&cid=stelprdb5107778)

<sup>8</sup> Southwick Associates, 2011. The Economics Associated with Outdoor Recreation, Natural Resources Conservation and Historic Preservation in the United States For: The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Available at:

<https://www.fws.gov/refuges/news/pdfs/TheEconomicValueofOutdoorRecreation%5B1%5D.pdf>

## **Alabama**

Tom Nelson, DVM  
President  
Northeast Alabama Bicycle Association  
Annsiton, AL

Mary Anne Swanstrom  
President  
SORBA Huntsville  
Huntsville, AL

James Wells  
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Southeastern Alabama Mountainbikers  
Dothan, AL

Joe Fuller  
Chapter President  
West Alabama Mountain Bike Association  
Tuscaloosa, AL

## **Arizona**

Lorraine Montuori  
President  
Desert Foothills Mountain Bike Association  
Cave Creek, AZ

Brent Roberts  
Board President  
Prescott mountain Bike Alliance  
Prescott, AZ

Michael Bonnette  
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Rim Country Mountain Biking Association  
Payson, AZ

## **California**

Steve Messer  
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Los Angeles, CA

Nate Greenberg  
President  
Eastern Sierra Avalanche Center  
Mammoth Lakes, CA

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Friends Of Joshua Tree  
Joshua Tree, CA

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Meadow Valley, CA

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Friends of the Inyo  
Bishop, CA

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Mammoth Lakes, CA

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Mammoth Lakes, CA

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SHARE Mountain Bike Club  
Corona Del Mar, CA

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Tahoe Backcountry Alliance  
South Lake Tahoe, CA

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Access Fund  
Boulder, CO

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Colorado Mountain Club  
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Cyclists 4 Community  
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Erie, CO

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High County River Rafters  
Wheat Ridge, CO

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Stewardship Coordinator  
The Golden Giddyup  
Golden, CO

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International Mountain Bicycling Association  
Boulder, CO

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Overland Mountain Bike Club  
Fort Collins, CO

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Protect Our Winters  
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Idaho Conservation League  
Boise, ID

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Sun Valley, ID

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Teton Valley Trails And Pathways  
Driggs, ID

Mark Menlove  
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Winter Wildlands Alliance  
Boise, ID

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Wood River Bicycle Coalition  
Sun Valley, ID

## **Mississippi**

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Hamilton, MT

Chad Broderius  
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Pedal United  
Billings/Red Lodge, MT

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Ian Jones  
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Bozeman, MT

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Western Montana Climbers Coalition  
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American Whitewater  
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Northwest North Carolina Mountain Bike  
Alliance  
Lenoir, NC

Stephen C. Williams  
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Piedmont Fat Tire Society  
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Tarheel Trailblazers  
Charlotte, NC

David Houskeeper  
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Triangle Off-Road Cyclists  
Morrisville, NC

**New Hampshire**

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Granite Chief  
Granite Backcountry Alliance  
North Conway, NH

**New Jersey**

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Trustee Kayak and Canoe Club of New York  
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**New Mexico**

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Chama Valley Outdoor Club  
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La Grande, OR

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Lower Columbia Canoe Club  
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rvaMORE  
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Luke Bakken  
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Spokane Mountaineers  
Spokane, WA

Yvonne Kraus  
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Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance  
Seattle, WA

Jennie Goldberg  
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Seattle, WA

John Latta  
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The Mountaineers  
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Jon Hoekstra  
Executive Director  
Mountains to Sound Greenway  
Seattle, WA

Shanna Gachen  
Membership Chair  
Washington Kayak Club  
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Paddle Trails Canoe Club (200+ members)  
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**Wyoming**

Charles Manganiello

Executive Director

Togwotee Backcountry Alliance

Lander, WY

Marco Restani

Executive Director

Wyoming Wilderness Association

Sheridan, WY

cc. Honorable Ryan Zinke, Secretary of the Interior  
Honorable Sonny Perdue, Secretary of Agriculture  
Senate Interior Appropriations Committee  
House Interior Appropriations Committee