

[DATE]

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

Dear Director Mulvaney:

The undersigned companies represent members of the outdoor industry whose businesses depend on outdoor recreation that takes place on America's public lands. Our customers hike, camp, mountain bike, ski, climb, and paddle in the great outdoors and their participation in these activities depends on having access to federal public lands and waters.

On March 13th 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. Subsequently, you launched [a 28-day comment period](#) asking the American public to weigh in on how to reorganize, reduce, and eliminate agencies.

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.¹ They are the stewards of our national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, monuments, and rivers, including remarkable places such as the Grand Canyon, the Wind River mountains, Yosemite, the Appalachian Trail, and the Everglades.

For a modest investment (less than 0.4% of the federal budget), our federal land management agencies generate innumerable benefits worth billions of dollars. These agencies build and maintain trails, campgrounds, and other recreation infrastructure and manage federal lands to provide unbeatable outdoor recreation experiences. Due to the stewardship of our federal land agencies, federal public lands fuel a robust [outdoor recreation economy valued at \\$887 billion annually](#), which supports 7.6 million jobs.²

Funding these agencies has an outsized impact and is a great investment for the American people. 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.³ Without increased support for federal land management agencies, however, recreation infrastructure will fall into disrepair and access

¹ 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. 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. Annual Performance Report FY2015, National Wildlife Refuge System. Page 12. Available at: F

² Outdoor Industry Association, 2017. The Outdoor Recreation Economy. Available at: <https://outdoorindustry.org/resource/2017-outdoor-recreation-economy-report/>

³ 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. 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. Page 24.

to public lands will be curtailed, diminishing the return on investment in the long run and handicapping our industry. We have already seen this come to pass in many areas across the country as a result of chronic underfunding.

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, as it ensures our public lands continue to provide clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment.** 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,

[RECREATION BUSINESSES]

cc. Honorable Ryan Zinke, Secretary of the Interior
Honorable Sonny Perdue, Secretary of Agriculture
Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chair, Senate Interior Appropriations Committee and Chair, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Honorable Tom Udall, Ranking Member, Senate Interior Appropriations Committee
Honorable Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Honorable Steve Daines, Chair, Subcommittee on Conservation, Forestry, and Natural Resources, Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
Honorable Michael Bennet, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Conservation, Forestry, and Natural Resources, Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

