

The Honorable David Bernhardt  
Secretary of Interior  
Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington DC 20240

January 24, 2020

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On behalf of our respective organizations, we write to acknowledge your Department's leadership on implementing the now-permanently reauthorized Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA), and we express our support for fully implementing it as soon as possible. FLTFA is a critical western lands program that—once implemented—will facilitate modified land exchanges to protect our nation's special places and increase public access and recreation. As you update the program under the new law, we strongly encourage you to look for ways to increase the efficiency of the program, including by delegating authority for land acquisition decisions.

FLTFA is a common-sense public lands tool that achieves economic and conservation goals with broad bipartisan support across the West. Originally authorized in 2000, FLTFA expired in 2011 and was permanently reauthorized in 2018 (P.L. 106-248). FLTFA facilitates strategic federal land sales by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to provide funding for high-priority land conservation within or adjacent to federal lands in the eleven contiguous western states and Alaska. Under FLTFA, the revenue generated from BLM land sales must be deposited into the Federal Land Disposal Account, as opposed to the U.S. Treasury, to allow BLM, U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to pursue land conservation projects that increase public access for outdoor recreation, hunting, and fishing; conserve wildlife habitat; protect water quality; and preserve historic and cultural resources. Furthermore, BLM will have additional funding to conduct sales and other administrative real estate work, increasing staff capacity. Once fully operational, these FLTFA land sales and acquisitions will again provide a critical tool for consolidating private and public land ownership, allowing for more efficient land management and expanded business operations.

While FLTFA is now permanently reauthorized, it is not yet operational. For that to happen, the BLM—working with its partner agencies—must fully implement the law, beginning with finalizing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between these agencies. The updates to the MOU must recognize the new provisions in the law that make certain recreation and other lands eligible under FLTFA, among other changes. In addition, we respectfully request that you work with the agencies to make the program more efficient, including delegating signature authority for land acquisition decisions to below the Secretary's office, to at least agency heads or division chiefs.

Thank you for prioritizing the implementation of FLTFA and we look forward to continuing to work with you to bring back this tool to improve public and private lands

management, public access and recreation opportunities and conservation across the West.

Sincerely,

Access Fund  
American Fly Fishing Trade Association  
American Public Land Exchange  
American Sportfishing Association  
American Woodcock Society  
Angler Action Foundation  
Archery Trade Association  
Arizona Trail Association  
Backcountry Horseman of Washington  
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers  
California Waterfowl Association  
Californians for Western Wilderness  
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation  
Conservation Lands Foundation  
Delta Waterfowl  
Endangered Habitats League  
Fly Fishers International  
Grand Teton National Park Foundation  
Henry's Fork Foundation  
Houston Safari Club  
Idaho Coalition of Land Trusts  
Izaak Walton League of America  
Land Trust Alliance  
Montana's Outdoor Legacy Foundation  
Mule Deer Foundation  
National Association of Forest Service  
Retirees

National Deer Alliance  
National Parks Conservation Association  
National Trust for Historic Preservation  
National Wild Turkey Federation  
National Wildlife Federation  
Nevada Land Trust  
Pacific Crest Trail Association  
Pope & Young Club  
Quality Deer Management Association  
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation  
Ruffed Grouse Society  
Soda Mountain Wilderness Council  
The Conservation Fund  
The Nature Conservancy  
The North American Grouse Partnership  
The Public Lands Foundation  
The Trust for Public Land  
The Wilderness Society  
The Wildlife Society  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership  
Trout Unlimited  
Western Landowners Alliance  
Western Rivers Conservancy  
Wilderness Land Trust  
Wildlife Mississippi