

May 20, 2022

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Chair
Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment and
Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
131 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment and
Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
125 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Fiscal Year 2023 Resource Protection and Maintenance funding for Resource Management Planning – Bureau of Land Management

Dear Chair Merkley and Ranking Member Murkowski:

Thank you for your continued work enhancing America's public lands and waters. We appreciate the task before you in developing the fiscal year 2023 appropriations bills and we are writing to urge support and resources for ongoing resource management planning efforts. With sufficient funding, there are several opportunities in the West for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to move forward quickly with planning priorities that will provide broad benefits to the public and facilitate implementation of planning goals and objectives for access, restoration, wildfires, angling and hunting, wildlife connectivity, demand for renewable and non-renewable energy sources and conservation.

We support continued funding increases to the BLM and appreciate Resource Management Plans (RMPs) as a tool that provides guidance on how project resources should be categorized, allocated, managed, and released. As stewards of our shared air, lands and waters, we appreciate that the President's budget proposes \$97 million for the BLM's resource management planning efforts. As you start working on the FY 2023 appropriations bill and developing budget items for the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, we ask that you provide the BLM with an even more robust funding increase for amending, revising and starting new plans.

Many of the existing RMPs guiding land managers across the west are outdated and do not adequately or consistently address big game connectivity, resilience of native trout watersheds, increased recreational demand, energy resource suitability, among others or align with state policy and the best available science. Updated plans need to reflect current resource conditions, as well as the will of the public.

The BLM is responsible for managing more land than any other Federal agency and is charged with stewardship responsibilities on nearly 245 million surface acres of public land and 700 million acres of onshore subsurface mineral estate. Ensuring a balance of multiple uses across these vast landscapes requires strategic and up-to-date planning. Outdated land use plans impact all public land uses – from energy development, to restoration, to outdoor recreation – and result in inefficient management that doesn't meet the needs of the public.

Hunters and anglers are witnessing the ramifications of the varying cycles of precipitation, drought and extreme wildfires, and know firsthand the need to get the planning process back on track and bring balance back to public lands management. With an increase in appropriations to the BLM for RMP

revisions, all stakeholders will be able to actively engage in the planning process and ensure the health, diversity, and productivity of our shared public lands for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

AFFTA Fisheries Fund
American Sportfishing Association
American Woodcock Society
Archery Trade Association
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Council to Advance Hunting and Shooting Sports
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Far Bank
Idaho Trout Unlimited
Michigan Trout Unlimited
Montana Trout Unlimited
Muley Fanatic Foundation
National Deer Association
National Leadership Council of Trout Unlimited Responsible Mining and Energy
National Wild Turkey Federation
National Wildlife Federation
New Mexico Trout Unlimited
Oregon Trout Unlimited
Pheasants Forever, Inc.
Quail Forever
Ruffed Grouse Society
Safari Club International
Seek Outside
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Trout Unlimited
Utah Trout Unlimited
Wildlife Forever
Wildlife Management Institute
Wyoming Trout Unlimited