

Alaska Wilderness League * American Forests * American Hiking Society * Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education * Center for American Progress * Center for Western Priorities * Choose Outdoors * Conservation Lands Foundation * Continental Divide Trail Coalition * Defenders of Wildlife * Environmental Protection Information Center * GreenLatinos * Hells Canyon Preservation Council * Hipcamp * Hispanics Enjoying Camping, Hunting and Outdoors (HECHO) * International Mountain Bicycling Association * Klamath Forest Alliance * La Madre Tierra * League of Conservation Voters * Los Padres Forest Watch * National Interscholastic Cycling Association * National Wildlife Federation * Northern Forest Canoe Trail * Northwest Youth Corps * Ocean Conservancy * Outdoors Empowered Network * Public Land Solutions * Public Lands Service Coalition * Sierra Club * Surfrider Foundation * The Corps Network * The Mountain Pact * The Trust for Public Land * The Wilderness Society

April 13, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

America's public lands and waters contribute significantly to the nation's \$646 billion outdoor recreation economy, supporting millions of jobs and providing exceptional recreational opportunities. On behalf of our members and millions of supporters across the country, we are writing to urge you to begin measuring the full economic benefits of our nation's great outdoors.

Public lands and waters, and the outdoor recreation industry that they support, are critical components of local and regional economies. In addition to generating consumer spending and supporting millions of jobs, our public lands and waters improve public health, attract new residents to growing communities, draw visitors from all over the world and increase overall quality of life.

Our organizations understand the central role of our natural resources to the American economy and we are thankful for the great strides that the Obama Administration has made protecting many of the nation's most treasured outdoor places. We also believe that the economic impacts of these decisions should be measured by the U.S. government. America's outdoor economy and its millions of jobs deserve to be counted, like every other major sector of the U.S. economy.

In order to begin to measure the overall contributions of America's public lands and waters to the economy, we urge you to direct the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), in coordination with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Census Bureau, and natural resource agencies within the Departments of the Interior, Commerce and Agriculture, to take steps to report on the employment and economic activity

associated with the outdoor recreation industry. A similar initiative is currently underway at BEA, in partnership with the National Endowment of the Arts, to measure the value of arts and culture to the country's economy.

As our organizations prepare to join the Obama Administration in celebrating the Centennial of the National Park Service next year, we are confident that a plan to better account for the true economic value of America's great outdoors would set the stage for another century of both conservation and economic growth. We urge you to take these crucial first steps to recognize outdoor recreation as one of the country's most powerful economic sectors.

Sincerely,

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Los Padres Forest Watch
National Interscholastic Cycling Association
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Sierra Club
Surfrider Foundation
The Corps Network
The Mountain Pact
The Trust for Public Land
The Wilderness Society

Cc:

The Honorable Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior

The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture

Jason Furman, Chair, White House Council of Economic Advisors

Christy Goldfuss, Acting Chair, White House Council on Environmental Quality

Brian Deese, Senior Advisor, The White House