



October 25, 2019

Rep. Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. Kevin McCarthy
House Republican Leader
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Outdoor recreation community support for the CORE Act, Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act, and the Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

On behalf of the outdoor recreation community and the outdoor industry, we write to express our strong support for the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy (CORE) Act (H.R. 823), the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act (H.R. 1373), and the Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act (H.R. 2181). These three bills support outdoor recreation and conservation values, as well as the outdoor recreation economy, and we hope to see them passed with strong bipartisan support.

Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy (CORE) Act (H.R. 823)

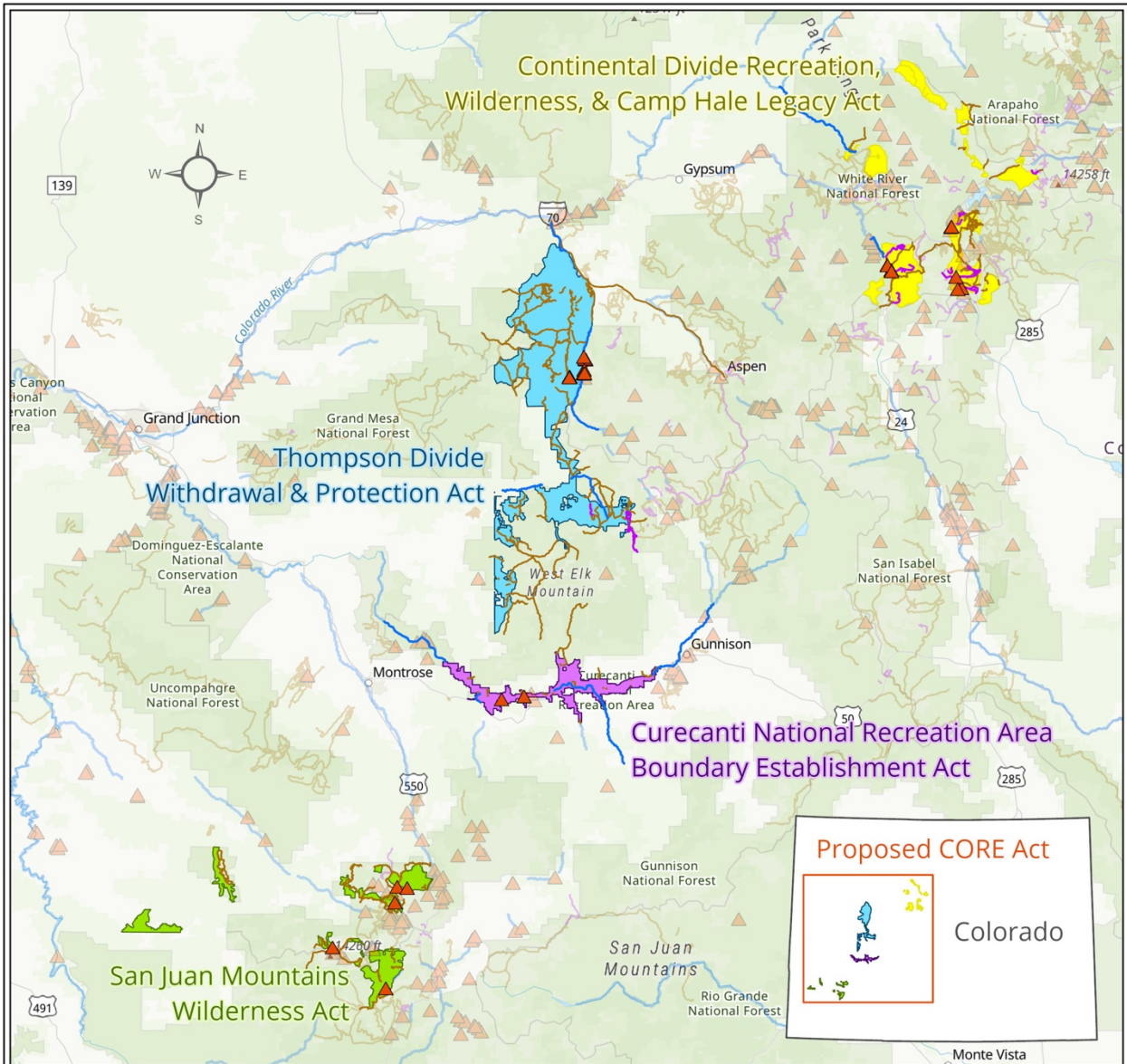
As outdoor recreationists passionate about the protection of the natural landscapes where we enjoy our varied pursuits, we strongly support the thoughtful protections embodied in the CORE Act. In addition to its essential protections for conservation values, the bill also protects hundreds of miles of trails, scores of climbing sites, more than 20 miles of whitewater paddling opportunities, and valued backcountry ski terrain.



In the San Juans, the Sheep Mountain Special Management Area protects backcountry ski terrain near Lizard Head Pass and creates management for the Ophir Valley area for new mountain biking trails near the town of Ophir. The Liberty Bell and Whitehouse Wilderness additions protect world-class hiking and climbing opportunities in the iconic Mt. Sneffels range while allowing for a trail corridor for the iconic Liberty Bell/Hardrock 100 trail. In the Continental Divide bill, the Tenmile Wilderness and Recreation Management Areas provide opportunities for long ridgeline technical traverses, challenging backcountry ski terrain, and world class mountain biking, and the Spraddle Creek Wilderness addition provides a primitive backcountry area in close proximity to downtown Vail while keeping the future mountain bike extension of the North Vail Trail viable. These designations allow for a new Wilderness-urban interface that provides a unique opportunity to experience and protect these important landscapes.

All of the proposed designations in the CORE Act have been carefully vetted by recreation groups, and designations protect and enhance recreational opportunities like hiking, climbing, skiing, and mountain biking. The mineral withdrawals and resource protections in this bill further preserve the scenic and natural qualities of these landscapes.

We are particularly pleased to support legislation that designates Wilderness while also using other protective designations where more appropriate. This approach is essential, in particular, for protecting and enhancing mountain biking opportunities. Because of the collaborative approach employed in the bill's development, embracing input from local and national mountain biking stakeholders among others, the legislation enjoys broad support from the mountain biking community. This approach—embracing alternative designations where appropriate to protect both existing and prospective mountain biking opportunities—should be considered a model for other protective designation efforts around the country.



Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act

- Continental Divide Recreation, Wilderness, and Camp Hale Legacy Act
- Curecanti National Recreation Area Boundary Establishment Act
- San Juan Mountains Wilderness Act
- Thompson Divide Withdrawal and Protection Act

- ▲ Recreation
- ▲ Rock Climbing
- Whitewater Paddling River
- Backcountry Ski Trail
- Trail

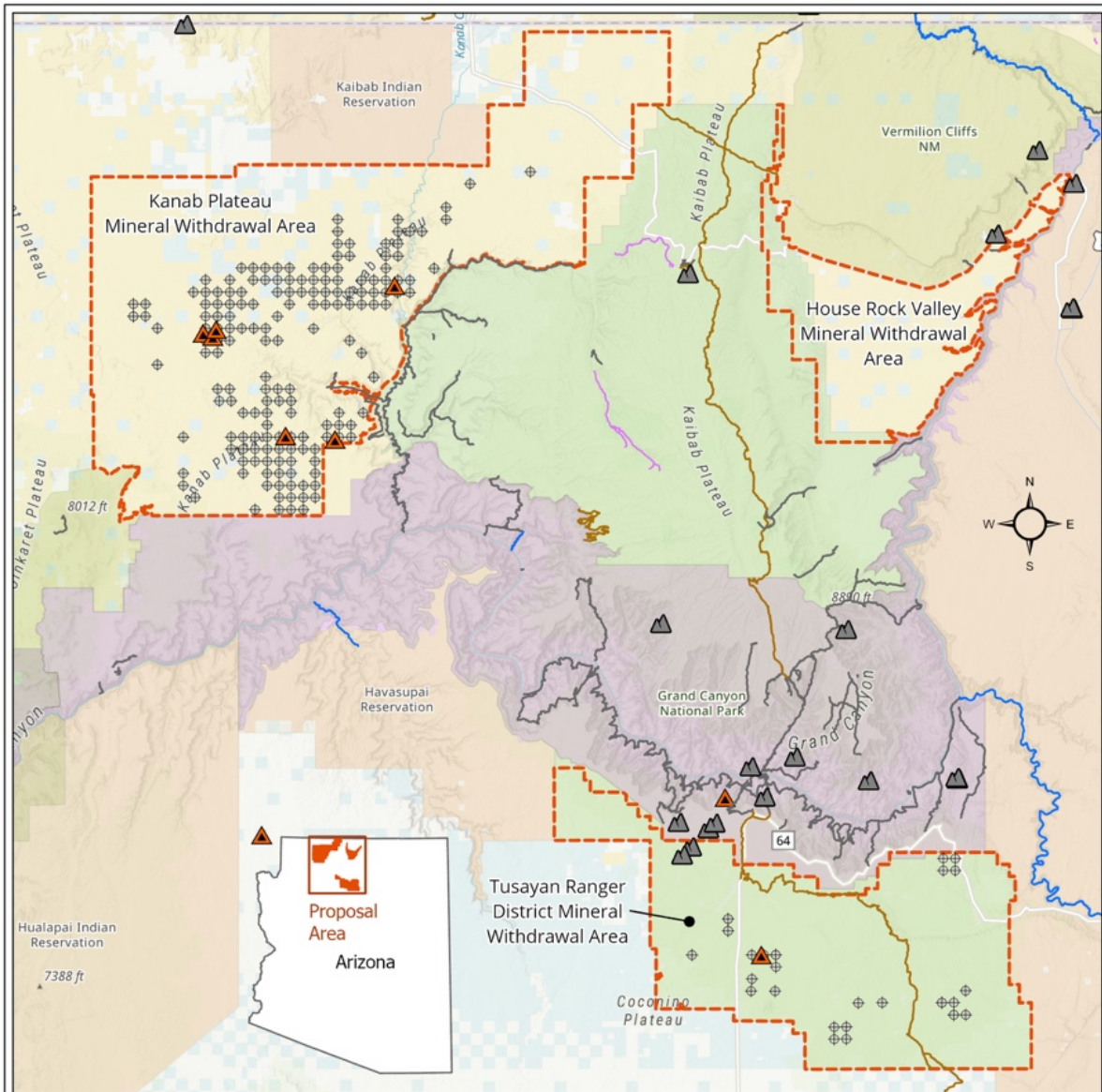
0 20 Miles



Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act (H.R. 1373)

The Grand Canyon of the Colorado and its surrounding landscape is an American icon. The area contains innumerable attributes and features of geologic, historic, scientific, and ecological value. It also supports a wide diversity of recreational pursuits that allow visitors to experience this one-of-a-kind landscape, and the importance and prominence of this area is difficult to overstate. Our community strongly supports measures intended to protect the Grand Canyon, its surrounding environment, and visitors through the mineral withdrawal prescribed in the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act. Among other benefits, these withdrawals will help to protect water quality and the visitor experience, as well as directly protect trails and climbing areas within the withdrawal area.

Our community was actively engaged in supporting a 20-year administrative mineral withdrawal for the lands covered by H.R. 1373, and the Interior Department announced that withdrawal in 2012, protecting roughly one million acres of public land surrounding Grand Canyon National Park from any mining activity. The future status of that withdrawal is under threat, however, and Congress should make these protections permanent through H.R. 1373.



Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act

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| Proposed Mineral Withdrawal Area | Recreation | Energy |
| Native American Reservation | Rock Climbing Site | Uranium Mine |
| Bureau of Land Management | Whitewater Paddling | Active Mining Claim |
| Forest Service | Hiking Trail | |
| National Park Service | Hiking, Mountain Biking Trail | |
| State | Motorized Trail | |



Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act (H.R. 2181)

The outdoor recreation community supports passage of the Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act to protect the cultural, historic, conservation, and recreation values of the Greater Chaco region. The area possesses valued cultural resources and opportunities for quiet outdoor recreation, and energy and mineral development are incompatible with the values of this area. The lands that would be protected by H.R. 2181 surround Chaco Culture National Historical Park, an iconic National Park Service unit and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, preserving the largest collection of Native American archaeological sites in the United States. H.R. 2181 would prevent any future oil and gas leasing or development of minerals on public lands located within a 10-mile radius of Chaco Canyon. The legislation has been introduced into both chambers of Congress, and is supported by every member of the New Mexico delegation. In February, 2019, the Bureau of Land Management removed parcels of land within the proposed withdrawal area from a lease sale, responding to intense public support for protecting these lands. Our National Parks are important destinations for outdoor recreation, and it makes sense to preserve the lands surrounding those parks.

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On behalf of the outdoor recreation community, thank you for considering these important protections. We strongly encourage Congress to continue building on the bipartisan success of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act, and we believe passage of these three bills is an excellent step forward in this process.

Best regards,



Louis Geltman
Policy Director
Outdoor Alliance



John Sterling
Executive Director
The Conservation Alliance



Patricia Rojas-Ungar
VP, Government Affairs
Outdoor Industry Association



Our Organizations

Outdoor Alliance

Outdoor Alliance is a coalition of ten member-based organizations representing the human powered outdoor recreation community. The coalition includes Access Fund, American Canoe Association, American Whitewater, International Mountain Bicycling Association, Winter Wildlands Alliance, The Mountaineers, the American Alpine Club, the Mazamas, Colorado Mountain Club, and Surfrider Foundation and represents the interests of the millions of Americans who climb, paddle, mountain bike, backcountry ski and snowshoe, and enjoy coastal recreation on our nation's public lands, waters, and snowscapes.

The Conservation Alliance

The Conservation Alliance is an organization of like-minded businesses whose collective contributions support grassroots environmental organizations and their efforts to protect wild places where outdoor enthusiasts recreate. Alliance funds have played a key role in protecting rivers, trails, wildlands and climbing areas. Membership in the Alliance is open to all companies who care about protecting our most threatened wild places for habitat and outdoor recreation. Since its inception in 1989, The Conservation Alliance has contributed more than \$21 million, helped to protect more than 51 million acres of wildlands; protect 3,107 miles of rivers; stop or remove 34 dams; designate five marine reserves; and purchase 14 climbing areas. For complete information on The Conservation Alliance, see www.conservationalliance.com.

Outdoor Industry Association

Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) is the national trade association for the outdoor industry and is the title sponsor of Outdoor Retailer, the largest outdoor products tradeshow in North America. OIA serves over 1,300 manufacturers, suppliers, and retailers through a focus on international trade and public lands and recreation policy, sustainable business innovation and outdoor participation.