

October 7, 2015

The Honorable Rob Bishop
United States House of Representatives
1203 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Raul Grijalva
United States House of Representatives
2108 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom McClintock
United States House of Representatives
123 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Niki Tsongas
United States House of Representatives
1511 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Grijalva, Chairman McClintock, and Ranking Member Tsongas:

On behalf of our respective organizations, we urge you to amend or change the language in the Sportsmen's Heritage Access and Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) Act (H.R. 2406) at Title IX regarding the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA) in order to ensure that FLTFA remains a "land for land" program, the successful model that provided a critical tool to western lands from 2000-2011.

We appreciate that FLTFA reauthorization is included in the SHARE Act, and hope to work with you to truly reinstate FLTFA, an important western land management tool for the eleven western states and Alaska that allows strategic Bureau of Land Management lands to be sold for higher and better uses and the proceeds from those land sales to protect high priority conservation lands. Unfortunately, in the markup text, this "land for land" approach is undermined by allowing FLTFA proceeds to be directed to either land purchases or deferred maintenance. We find it problematic that the legislation authorizes up to 100 percent of the Federal Land Disposal Account (43 U.S.C. 2305(c)) to be directed to deferred maintenance. This revision means funding is no longer guaranteed for land conservation, and conservation could receive zero dollars. We oppose this concept and such drastic changes to FLTFA. We cannot abandon what works. FLTFA has a proven track-record and significant bipartisan support.

We support the successful FLTFA concept that ensures at least 80 percent of the Federal Land Disposal Account is directed to land purchases, the "land for land" model that made FLTFA successful before. We urge Congress to amend or change the language so that the legislation ensures at least 80 percent for the "land for land" model, rather than leaving the proceed distribution uncertain and open-ended.

Unless the language is changed, there is no guarantee that FLTFA will be a program that provides increased access for hunting and fishing, preserves cultural resources, conserves water and critical habitat, allows local economies to thrive, and protects our nation's special places. FLTFA helps resolve the checkerboard of public and private lands in the West by consolidating these lands and reducing costs. FLTFA is too important to leave open-ended and to chance. The legislation should ensure "land for land" implementation.

Sincerely,

Access Fund
American Hiking Society
American Whitewater
Arizona Conservation Partners
Arizona Land and Water Trust
Association of Northwest Steelheaders
Californians for Western Wilderness
Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts
Colorado Mountain Club
Columbia Land Trust
Conservation Lands Foundation
Conservatives for Responsible Stewardship
Crow Canyon Archaeological Center
Friends of Gold Butte
Friends of Organ Mountains - Desert Peaks
Friends of the Missouri Breaks National Monument
Friends of the Sonoran Desert
Grand Staircase Escalante Partners
Great Old Broads for Wilderness
GreenLatinos
Hancock Timber Resource Group
Idaho Coalition of Land Trusts
Idaho Rivers United
Klamath Forest Alliance
Land Trust Alliance
Mazamas
Montana Wilderness Association
National Trust for Historic Preservation
National Wild Turkey Federation
National Wildlife Federation
Nevada Land Trust
Northwest Guides and Anglers Association
Oregon Natural Desert Association
Outdoor Alliance
Pacific Crest Trail Association
Partnership for the National Trails System
Port Blakely Tree Farms, L.P.
Professional Outfitters and Guides of America
Public Lands Foundation.
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
San Juan Citizens Alliance
Soda Mountain Wilderness Council
The Ala Kahakai Trail Association
The Conservation Fund
The Trust for Public Land
The Wilderness Land Trust.
The Wilderness Society
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Trout Unlimited
Tuleyome
Western Rivers Conservancy

Wild Sheep Foundation
Wildlife Forever
Wildlife Management Institute
Winter Wildlands Alliance

cc:

Congressman Dan Newhouse
Congressman Don Young
Congressman Louie Gohmert
Congressman Doug Lamborn
Congressman Rob Wittman
Congressman John Fleming
Congressman Tom McClintock
Congressman Glenn Thompson
Congresswoman Cynthia Lummis
Congressman Dan Benishek
Congressman Jeff Duncan
Congressman Paul Gosar
Congressman Raul Labrador
Congressman Doug LaMalfa
Congressman Bradley Byrne
Congressman Jeff Denham
Congressman Paul Cook
Congressman Bruce Westerman
Congressman Garret Graves
Congressman Ryan Zinke
Congressman Jody Hice
Congresswoman Aumua Amata Coleman
Radewagen
Congressman Tom MacArthur

Congressman Alex Mooney
Congressman Crescent Hardy
Congresswoman Grace Napolitano
Congresswoman Madeleine Bordallo
Congressman Jim Costa
Congressman Gregorio Kilili Camacho
Sablan
Congressman Pedro Pierluisi
Congressman Jared Huffman
Congressman Raul Ruiz
Congressman Alan Lowenthal
Congressman Matt Cartwright
Congressman Don Beyer
Congressman Norma Torres
Congresswoman Debbie Dingell
Congressman Mark Takai
Congressman Ruben Gallego
Congresswoman Lois Capps
Congressman Jared Polis
Congresswoman Suzan DelBene
Congressman Ben Ray Lujan
Congressman Dana Rohrabacher
Congressman Michael Simpson
Congressman Chris Stewart