

**Arizona Wildlife Federation | Colorado Wildlife Federation | New Mexico Wildlife Federation**

October 29, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
House of Representatives  
United States Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
H-329  
United States Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Raul Grijalva  
Chair  
Committee on Natural Resources  
1324 Longworth HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rob Bishop  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Natural Resources  
1329 Longworth HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Chair Grijalva, and Ranking Member Bishop:

The Arizona Wildlife Federation, Colorado Wildlife Federation, and New Mexico Wildlife Federation write to lend our support to H.R. 1373, the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act, H.R. 823, the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act, and H.R. 2181, the Chaco Cultural Heritage Protection Act. These three pieces of legislation would help protect key natural, cultural and water resources for fish and wildlife and all Americans who live, work, and play in the Southwest. We appreciate their consideration by the full House of Representatives, and encourage the support of all members.

The Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act would help protect the health of tribal people in Arizona, the water quality of the Colorado River, and numerous wildlife species, while still allowing for the multiple-use of these public lands. Despite the Department of the Interior's temporary mineral withdrawal for the area, it is crucial that Congress act to permanently protect the lands around Grand Canyon National Park. Future uranium mining could irreparably harm the health of local residents, their water supply, and the wildlife that call this place home. Grand Canyon is a place of international and national significance, which is why a resolution passed during the National Wildlife Federation's annual meeting, led by the Arizona Wildlife Federation and garnering the support of all the federation's affiliates, calling for permanent protection from new uranium mining in this iconic place. That resolution is attached.

The Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act would designate new wilderness, special management and national recreation areas, among others to ensure that we will always have

special places in Colorado to hunt, fish, and recreate. The bill would safeguard approximately 400,000 acres of Colorado’s most wild and historic landscapes that define Colorado and ensure a way of life. Particularly important is the sprawling Thompson Divide—a one-of-a-kind landscape rich with wild country and abundant fish and wildlife populations. Roughly half of the area is roadless providing refuge for numerous economically and ecologically important wildlife species, including large populations of elk.

The Chaco Cultural Heritage Protection Act would protect the area and cultural sites around Chaco Canyon from oil and gas development. Chaco Canyon is a world heritage site known globally for its archaeological significance and cultural importance. Containing over 5,000 fragile archaeological artifacts, and with buildings and sacred dwellings still standing from the 9th, 10th and 11th centuries, Chaco Canyon is home to an ancient network of villages, sacred shrines and communications sites. Modern-day pueblos and tribes throughout the Southwest claim cultural affiliation and connection to Chaco Canyon, which attracts thousands of visitors every year.

Our organizations have sought protection for these landscapes, and the fish, wildlife, and people who call them home, for years. They are the right policies to enact for Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico and indeed the nation—leaving a public lands legacy to future generations. We are proud to lend our full support to these bills, and urge their approval by the House of Representatives.

Thank you, and please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Brad Powell

President

Arizona Wildlife Federation

Suzanne O’Neil

Executive Director

Colorado Wildlife Federation

Jesse Deubel

Executive Director

New Mexico Wildlife Federation