July 9, 2013

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC  20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC  20510

Dear Senator Reid and Senator McConnell:

On behalf of the millions of hunters and anglers our organizations represent, we are writing to express our view that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) needs strong leadership in place now to tackle the many pending environmental and conservation-related challenges our country faces, and urge the Senate to confirm Gina McCarthy as EPA Administrator as soon as possible.

In addition to being part of our rich national sporting heritage, hunting and fishing drive considerable economic activity throughout the country. In 2011 alone, more than 90 million U.S. residents spent close to $145 billion on wildlife recreation activities: 1% of the Gross Domestic Product. Clean air, clean water, and abundant wildlife are fundamental to the sustainability of these traditions and the jobs they support.

The EPA plays a vital role in protecting fish and wildlife habitat and thus ensuring sporting opportunities for future generations of American sportsmen and -women. As such, strong, common-sense leadership by the EPA is needed to address the many issues within its jurisdiction that affect hunters and anglers, including protecting our streams and wetlands from pollution and ill-considered development, keeping toxins from impacting our fish and wildlife, and achieving the long-term goal of restoring fishable and swimmable waters across the country.

The next EPA Administrator will play an important role in restoring iconic waters like the Great Lakes, Mississippi River Delta and Chesapeake Bay, protecting Bristol Bay's world class fisheries and taking sensible steps to reduce pollution from power plants and other sources.

Gina McCarthy is highly qualified to lead the agency and take on these challenges. She is adept at working with diverse stakeholders and decision-makers at all levels of government, and has consistently placed conservation stewardship above political ideology, having worked under both Republican and Democratic administrations at the state and federal levels.

Sportsmen and -women across the country take seriously our responsibility to impart our love for the outdoors to the next generation of hunters and anglers, and we applaud Ms. McCarthy’s strong advocacy for connecting children with nature through her “No Child Left Inside” initiative, which she promoted while at the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. It is a program with goals shared by many of our organizations.

In sum, Gina McCarthy is a capable, effective, and fair voice for the environment, wildlife and economic growth, and deserves to be expeditiously confirmed by the U.S. Senate to the position of EPA Administrator.

Sincerely,
American Fly Fishing Trade Association
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Berkley Conservation Institute
Bull Moose Sportsmen’s Alliance
Izaak Walton League of America
National Wildlife Federation
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Trout Unlimited
Arkansas Wildlife Federation
Yell County Wildlife Federation (AR)
White River Conservancy (AR)
Delaware Nature Society
Kansas Wildlife Federation
Androscoggin Wooden Boat Works (ME)
Maine Wilderness Guides Organization
Northwoods Canoe Company (ME)
Great Lakes Council of the Federation of Fly Fishers
Michigan League of Conservation Voters
Clean Minnesota River
Lake City Sportsman’s Club (MN)
Minnesota Conservation Federation
Izaak Walton League of America, Minnesota Division
Izaak Walton League of America, Austin, MN Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America, Bush Lake, MN Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America, Cass County, MN Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America, Jaques, MN Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America, Minnehaha, MN Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America, Owatonna, MN Chapter
Natural Resources Club (MN)
New Ulm Area Sport Fishermen (MN)
Wildlife Forever (MN)
Mississippi Wildlife Federation
Conservation Federation of Missouri
Belknap County Sportsmen’s Club (NH)
Buck Mercier Guide Service (NH)
Diver’s Den Sport Shop (NH)
K&S Outdoor Adventures Guide Service (NH)
Morse Sporting Goods (NH)
Opechee Trading Post (NH)
Suds N’ Soda Sport Shop (NH)
Trout Unlimited, New Hampshire Council
Trout Unlimited, Ammonoosuc, NH Chapter
Wildlife Sports and Taxidermy Sport Shop (NH)
North Carolina Wildlife Federation
Trout Unlimited, North Carolina Council
Trout Unlimited, Rocky River, NC Chapter
Trout Unlimited, Table Rock, NC Chapter
North Dakota Wildlife Federation
Association of Northwest Steelheaders
Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association
Northwest Guides and Anglers Association
Wild Salmon Center (OR)
Izaak Walton League of America, Berks County, PA Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America, Brownsville, PA Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America, Fairmont Springs, PA Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America, Franklin County, PA Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America, Harry Enstrom Chapter (PA)
Izaak Walton League of America, John Harris Chapter (PA)
Izaak Walton League of America, Lancaster Red Rose Chapter (PA)
Izaak Walton League of America, Lebanon County, PA Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America, Oil City, PA Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America, Uniontown, PA Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America, Washington County, PA Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America, York County, PA Chapter
PennFuture
South Dakota Wildlife Federation
West Virginia Rivers Coalition

cc: United States Senate