



June 11, 2026

The Honorable Bruce Westerman

Chairman
House Natural Resources Committee
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Support for the Great American Outdoors Act 250

Dear Chairman Westerman:

The sun rises on America at Point Udall, St. Croix, and it sets on Peaked Island, Alaska. In the expanses between are a continent and islands, states and territories, parks and trails — all embody America’s 250-year legacy. Today, we celebrate the shared commitment to conserve the great outdoors and steward our nation’s vast natural resources for energy development through the introduction of the Great American Outdoors Act 250.

Western Energy Alliance is the leader and champion for independent oil and natural gas companies in the West. Working with a vibrant membership base for over 50 years, our expert staff, active committees, and committed board members form a collaborative and welcoming community of professionals dedicated to abundant, affordable energy and a high-quality life for all.

In 2020, Republicans and Democrats in Congress came together to pass, and President Trump signed into law, the Great American Outdoors Act. Conceived in the largest bipartisan conservation bill in 50 years was the Legacy Restoration Fund (LRF) to protect our most iconic landscapes and set a vision for restoring cherished public lands.

Revenues for LRF are derived from energy produced on non-park, non-wilderness public lands designated by Congress, the U.S. Department of the Interior, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture with robust public input for multiple uses. LRF funding is made possible because of oil and natural gas developed on public lands across the Alliance’s region of Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. As producers, our industry is especially proud to be the predominant funder of the LRF, providing an estimated 95% of available revenues.

Since 2020, 1,651 projects in national parks, forests, wetlands, and other public lands have received \$8.3 billion. Examples across our western region include:

- **Yellowstone National Park** - \$388 million to protect natural assets like Old Faithful and to improve boardwalks, trails, bridges, roads, and infrastructure
- **Theodore Roosevelt National Park** - \$56 million to repair trails, roadways, and drainage systems and to increase access for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians
- **Rocky Mountain National Park** - \$43 million to improve the Kawuneeche Visitor Center, Moraine Park Campground, and infrastructure throughout the park
- **Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest** - \$11 million to improve the Pineview Reservoir Recreation Complex, picnic areas, trails, restrooms, and roads
- **Gila National Forest** - \$7 million to improve roadway access to the Gila Wilderness, the Negrito Fire Base, and several recreation sites.

For over a century, Congress has developed balanced uses of public lands as it shaped land management policies. Starting with the National Park Service Organic Act of 1916 and the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, the balance was extended throughout the century in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, Land and Water Conservation Fund, and many other laws.

Congress has recognized on a bipartisan basis there are iconic and historic landscapes that ought to be set aside because they define our nation's unique natural beauty or they consecrate historic landmarks that make America great. Other lands are rich in natural resources and have been set aside for multiple use and sustained yield. These are working landscapes owned by the public for the benefit of the public. Together, all of these lands sustain our nation by offering fuel, fiber, food, and fun.

The beauty of the LRF is that it sits right at the confluence of that balanced approach. Further, LRF extends the tradition of responsible land management into the 22nd century.

We are pleased to support the Great American Outdoors Act 250 and reauthorization of the LRF through 2030. The hard-working men and women in the oil and natural gas industry support responsible land management policies. From the drill bit to the trailhead, they work to protect the environment and conserve public lands while producing the energy our nation needs. They are proud that their work will continue to sustain the LRF for years to come.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Melissa Simpson
President