



May 16, 2023

Dear Chairman Westerman,

Thank you for the recent opportunity for the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) to testify at the Legislative Hearing on H.R.2989, the Save Our Sequoias Act, before the House Natural Resources Committee. We appreciate the time and attention you and your staff have taken to craft legislation we can now support.

NPCA believes it is critically important Congress and the administration work in tandem to ensure the survival of majestic giant sequoia trees and their habitat on the west slopes of the Sierra Nevada. To that end, we were pleased to have worked with you on targeted changes to the legislative text that we believe achieve our goals of protecting and enhancing the precious sequoia groves.

Americans hold so much pride for our national parks and are concerned when we are faced with losing iconic species. 5.4 million visitors from across the country and world flocked to Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks last year, home to these audacious, humongous trees that stand the test of time.

While giant sequoias are resilient trees known to be fire-resistant due to their fibrous bark, warmer weather and longer, more intense drought are having a profound effect on these trees. The unprecedented numbers of large sequoias dying in severe wildfires, dying from bark beetle attacks, and acute foliage dieback have created an urgent need to preserve and enhance the resilience of existing giant sequoia groves.

We agree with taking congressional action to declare an emergency in order to ensure the survival of giant sequoias. To this end, the federal agencies, state of California, and Tribes should work together to develop a science-based plan supported by dedicated, sustained federal funding and staffing. We also support transparency as the National Park Service and US Forest Service along with partners address grove-by-grove resilience and enhancement, and report their progress while setting priorities for future efforts.

We look forward to working with you, Ranking Member Grijalva and your counterparts in the Senate on a final version of the bill that achieves the following goals-- urgency, science-based decision making, collaboration, transparency and funding. We are pleased to support H.R.2989 as amended by the Westerman managers amendment to the Save Our Sequoias Act, and appreciate working with you, Speaker McCarthy and all of the bipartisan Members supporting the bill to continue our urgent effort to protect the majestic giant sequoias groves.

Sincerely,
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National Parks Conservation Association

NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

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