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**Chris Wood**  
President and CEO

February 6, 2024

The Honorable Bruce Westerman  
Chairman  
House Committee on Natural Resources  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington D.C. 20510

The Honorable Raúl Grijalva  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Natural Resources  
1332 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: Mining Regulatory Clarity Act (H.R. 2925)**

Dear Chairman Westerman and Ranking Member Grijalva:

On behalf of Trout Unlimited's 300,000 members and supporters across the country, I am writing to share Trout Unlimited's perspective on the Mining Regulatory Clarity Act (H.R. 2925), scheduled to be considered in the Committee's February 6 business meeting.

With regard to the effect of H.R. 2925 within areas that have been withdrawn for mining laws, we note that the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Representative Stauber would clarify that the discovery of a valuable mineral deposit is still required to establish claim validity in withdrawn areas. This is important to maintain a high bar before a valid right is established on mining claims within protected areas where mining is otherwise prohibited. We appreciate that this much-needed provision has been incorporated.

It is important to note, however, that the *Rosemont* decision only concerns the permanent occupancy of an off-site mining claim for ancillary uses necessary to support a valid mining operation – nothing more. Yet, in attempting to address uncertainty stemming from the *Rosemont* decision, H.R. 2925 casts an unnecessarily wide net, including exploration, prospecting, means of access, and ancillary uses over which *Rosemont* has no bearing. As such, we urge the Committee to ensure that the legislation is narrowly targeted to address only the specific uncertainties created by the *Rosemont* decision.

Moreover, we urge Congress to pursue a more targeted, holistic solution that provides certainty for the mining industry, but that also establishes a 21st century mining law that conserves and restores fish and wildlife habitat, sacred sites and drinking water supplies. Legislation to address the *Rosemont* decision must be coupled with a royalty and/or fee on the extraction of hardrock minerals from public lands that is both fair for the mining industry and that generates significant revenue to help clean up the legacy of abandoned hard rock mines. Additionally, a modern mining law should provide some level of discretion for public land management agencies to determine – upfront – lands available for mining activities.

We have fought, bickered, and disagreed over mining on public lands for over 100 years. Certainly, there is a commonsense compromise within our reach that helps clean up the mistakes of the past and allow for responsible mining in the future. You have TU's commitment to work in good faith to strike a balance we can all support.

Sincerely,