

September 4, 2025

The Honorable Bruce Westerman

Chairman
U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jared Huffman

Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources
1332 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Field Hearing on “The Great American Outdoors Act: Modernizing and Maintaining National Parks to Celebrate America’s 250th Birthday.”

Dear Chairman Westerman:

America’s oil and natural gas producers are proud to be the largest funders of federal conservation programs under the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA), and we thank you for holding a field hearing promoting the National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund (LRF). Western Energy Alliance supports the reauthorization of LRF.

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, the Alliance stands as a credible leader, advocate, and champion of industry. 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 of life for all.

Under GAOA, revenues for LRF come directly from energy produced on non-park, non-wilderness public lands designated by Congress, the Department of the Interior (DOI), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) with robust public input for multiple-uses and sustained yield. 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. We estimate based on annual data from DOI’s Office of Natural Resources Revenue that oil and natural gas producers operating on public lands deliver 95% of the funds available for GAOA programs.

Since 2020, 1,624 national parks, national forests, and other public lands projects have received \$8.2 billion. Projects span from the Virgin Island’s National Park and Acadia National Park in Maine to the east, to the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska, to Guam’s War in the Pacific National Historic Park in the West. Examples in the West include:

- **Grand Teton National Park** - \$78 million combined to preserving the iconic 4 Lazy F Ranch and providing additional housing for National Park Service (NPS) staff; repairing the park’s headquarters complex; repairing Moose-Wilson Road that is a primary route to several recreational locations inside the park; and improving water treatment systems vital to protecting Jackson Lake and supporting 2.1 million visitors annually

- **Redwood National and State Park** - \$25 million to remove 60-miles of legacy logging roads nearby the Prairie Creek watershed
- **Theodore Roosevelt National Park** - \$56 million combined to repair erosion, trails, roadways, and drainage systems to restore and increase access for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians
- **Rocky Mountain National Park** - \$43 million combined to rehabilitate the popular Kawuneeche Visitor Center and water systems serving the Moraine Park Campground, as well as electrical systems, parking and roads throughout the park.

For the past several years public lands have faced a double whammy of bureaucratic mismanagement and damage caused by overcrowding. NPS's maintenance backlog across all 433 units is \$23.3 billion. A 2024 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report documented numerous problems, including the growing costs to administer programs, conduct environmental reviews, and complete projects. Across all public lands managed by DOI and USDA, the maintenance backlog totals \$33 billion.

While our industry is the leading source of revenues to address the conservation and maintenance needs of national parks and other public lands, the LRF is set to expire at the end of the federal government's fiscal year later this month. That is unless Congress acts quickly. We support legislation to reauthorize LRF, including the bipartisan America the Beautiful Act in the Senate introduced by GAOA's original co-author Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT).

Our national parks and other public lands continue to require attention and protection. Thanks to the work of hard-working men and women in the oil and natural gas industry, the revenues will continue to be available from federal energy development to financially sustain LRF's conservation programs for many years to come.

Sincerely,



Melissa Simpson
President