



**BACKCOUNTRY
HUNTERS & ANGLERS**

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March 27, 2023

The Honorable Bruce Westerman
Chairman
House Natural Resources Committee
202 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Raul Grijalva
Ranking Member
House Natural Resources Committee
1203 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Westerman and Ranking Member Grijalva,

On behalf of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers (BHA), the voice for our wild public lands, waters, and wildlife, we write in support of the following legislation being considered by the House Natural Resources Committee. BHA encourages the committee to advance the Simplifying Outdoor Access for Recreation Act (H.R. 1527), the Federal Interior Land Media Act (H.R. 1576), and the Range Access Act (H.R. 1614). We commend the bill sponsors and committee leadership for their commitment to increasing and improving opportunities that would benefit sportsmen and women on our public lands and waters.

The Simplifying Outdoor Access for Recreation (SOAR) Act would expedite and simplify the permitting process for accessing public lands and waters by eliminating duplicative processes, reducing costs, and shortening processing times. It would also create greater flexibility and improve permitting for outfitters and guides through authorizing joint permits for activities covering lands managed by multiple agencies. Hunters, anglers, and other outdoor recreators would benefit from modernization and simplification of processes like these that will ultimately make more opportunities available.

The Federal Interior Land Media (FILM) Act would remove fees and permit requirements for filming and recording on lands expanding the current use of this policy on National Park System lands to all lands managed by the Department of the Interior and Department of Agriculture. This would eliminate red tape for small film crews on public lands while still allowing for the agencies to manage activities with their discretion such as to ensure wildlife are not disturbed.

The Range Access Act would require that the United States Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) maintain a publicly accessible recreational shooting range that does not charge a user fee in each National Forest and BLM district. Importantly it will ensure safe and accessible opportunities for sportsmen and women to practice marksmanship ahead of hunting season. Doing so will also provide an established area for the public to practice safe shooting, and alleviate pressure and pollution created by non-designated shooting ranges on our public lands.



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BHA supported the recent introduction of the America's Outdoor Recreation Act (S.873) by Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairman Joe Manchin and Ranking Member John Barrasso. We urge you to not only advance H.R. 1527, H.R. 1576, and H.R. 1614, but to consider additional legislation that would create a comprehensive package of outdoor recreation priorities supported by important constituencies like hunters and anglers. These bills have important benefits for all those who enjoy recreating on our public lands and waters, and we look forward to working closely with you to advance our shared priorities into law.

Sincerely,

John Gale
Vice President - Policy and Government Relations
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers

