



May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Chair Teresa Leger Fernández  
House Natural Resources,  
Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples of  
the United States  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member Don Young  
House Natural Resources,  
Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples of  
the United States  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Leger Fernández, Ranking Member Young, and Members of the Subcommittee:

On behalf of our more than one million members and supporters, The Wilderness Society (TWS) writes to express our view on bills being heard before the Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples of the United States on May 20, 2021.

**H.R. 2930, Safeguarding Tribal Objects of Patrimony (STOP) Act of 2021**

TWS supports H.R. 2930, the Safeguarding Tribal Objects of Patrimony (STOP) Act of 2021, sponsored by Representative Leger Fernández. H.R. 2930 aims to better protect Native remains, sacred objects, and objects of patrimony by strengthening penalties under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), make NAGPRA internationally applicable, strengthen efforts to repatriate objects of patrimony from other countries, and facilitate the return of objects of patrimony. The STOP Act is critical to ending illegal trafficking in tribal cultural heritage and bringing home critical sacred objects, including objects of patrimony that have been removed from tribal communities. TWS supports these important goals. We support H.R. 2930 and urge all members of the Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples of the United States to support the STOP Act.

**Requirements, Expectations, and Standard Procedures for Executive Consultation with Tribes (RESPECT) Act (Discussion Draft)**

TWS supports the goals of the RESPECT Act, sponsored by Chairman Grijalva, and encourages the committee to further advance this important discussion. The discussion draft of the RESPECT Act aims to improve the consultation process between Native American Tribes and the Federal government by imposing numerous standards and requirements on government-to-government consultation, including when to initiate consultation and how to carry out consultation. TWS supports promoting enhanced and responsive standards for communication and participation emphasizing respect, trust and shared responsibility with native populations.

Established channels of collaboration between federal agencies and Tribal and Indigenous populations are integral to ensuring respectful and transparent community collaboration in the development and implementation of federal policies and programs. Effective consultation and coordination by federal agencies with Tribes and Indigenous communities is vital in ensuring federal decision making better incorporates and addresses the interests of native populations.

TWS supports the goals of the discussion draft and looks forward to continuing to work with Chairman Grijalva, the committee, and tribal leaders on the RESPECT Act as the legislation advances.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Drew McConville". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Drew McConville  
Senior Managing Director, Government Relations  
The Wilderness Society