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NPCA Positions for April 2nd House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands Hearing

March 29, 2019

Dear Representative,

Since 1919, National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) has been the leading voice of the American people in protecting and enhancing our National Park System. On behalf of our more than 1.3 million members and supporters nationwide, I urge you to support the following two bills when they come before the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands for a hearing on Tuesday, April 2nd.

H.R. 823 – Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy (CORE) Act: NPCA **supports** this legislation to protect 400,000 acres of public lands in Colorado, including providing a long-overdue boundary designation for the Curecanti National Recreation Area (NRA), one of Colorado’s thirteen national park units. Although the NRA was created in 1965, it was never afforded enabling legislation by Congress, and therefore its boundary was never designated. This administrative deficiency seems minor, but it has limited the National Park Service’s ability to efficiently manage the area. The CORE Act fixes this by providing an appropriate boundary through transfer and exchange of land with the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. The proposed boundary adjustment is the result of a years-long extensive public planning process and will allow the National Park Service to work with landowners to enhance the long-term conservation of natural, recreational and scenic resources within the park unit. The CORE Act is also a response to the interests of nearly one million visitors who travel to the area to fish, hike and recreate, and to the local gateway economies that depend upon this visitation and enhancement of its recreational opportunities.

H.R. 1708 – Rim of the Valley Corridor Preservation Act: From the Santa Susana Mountains to the heart of the city at El Pueblo de Los Angeles, the Rim of the Valley is an area rich in historic and cultural sites and critical wildlife corridors, waterways and landscapes worthy of national recognition and protection by the National Park Service. With more than 17 million people, the Los Angeles Metropolitan area is the second most populous region of the country; yet has less open space per capita than all other large cities on the west coast. NPCA **supports** the Rim of the Valley legislation that represents an opportunity to better protect and manage some of the region’s last wild lands, open spaces—including habitat for threatened

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species ranging from the mountain lion to the red-legged frog—and historic sites that will allow the National Park Service to tell the story of Los Angeles’s rich and nationally-significant history. The expanded presence of the National Park Service will also facilitate new partnerships with schools, local governments and community-based organizations to improve outreach and Park Service-led interpretive programs, better connect youth and families to the outdoors, and build a new generation of national park enthusiasts. Additionally, the adjustment respects local land use authorities, forbids the use of eminent domain and has no impact on rights of private property owners.

Thank you for considering our views. Please contact Natalie Levine at nlevine@npca.org or (202)454-3326 with any questions.

Sincerely,

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