



IDAHO BUSINESS FOR  
THE OUTDOORS

June 2, 2020

U.S. Senator James E. Risch  
350 N. 9th St., Suite 302  
Boise, Idaho 83702

Dear Senator Risch,

Idaho Business for the Outdoors and the members we represent support the passage and enactment of the Great American Outdoors Act (S. 3422). As a nonpartisan, business-member based organization, Idaho Business for the Outdoors supports and advocates for the valuable role our outdoors and public lands play in sustaining Idaho's state economy, our public health, and a strong and diverse business community. We urge you to vote in favor of this important legislation that directs critical funds and resources to our public lands and outdoors.

By fully funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), our nation's most important conservation program, and by directing up to \$9.5 billion over five years to address priority repairs within the National Park System and other public lands, this bill helps ensure the continuance of our great public land legacy nation-wide, and right here in Idaho. The beneficiaries of our outdoors and public lands are many: businesses that depend on our working forests, ranchers that use our public lands for grazing, businesses and entrepreneurs that rely on Idaho's outdoors as a marketing and hiring tool, individuals and families that love the unrivaled recreation opportunities, and our health care systems that support the health benefits of time outside more than ever during this public health emergency. Our business members believe a healthy long-term economy goes hand in hand with access to preserved public lands and outdoors.

Our national, state and local parks, trails, forests and waters are a significant economic driver for our urban and rural communities across America. The outdoor recreation economy in America supports over 5 million jobs and contributes \$778 billion in economic output. The latest report from the Bureau of Economic Analysis shows the outdoor recreation economy grew by 3.9 percent in 2017, faster than the economy as a whole. As Congress considers how best to address the economic crisis that has come alongside the pandemic, investment in our parks, public lands and outdoor recreation infrastructure is critical to the recovery.

Over 60% of Idaho is public land – granting us significant opportunities to benefit from investments in clean water conservation, as well as maintenance and infrastructure improvements by our public land managers. Our Idaho outdoor recreation economy alone supports:

- \$7.8 billion in consumer spending
- 78,000 in direct jobs
- \$447 million in state and local tax revenue
- 3.2% of our state GDP

In addition to the value investment in our outdoors provides for Idaho's outdoor recreation economy, businesses in Idaho are able to recruit and retain workers because of our tremendous quality of life and access to public lands in Idaho. As outdoor amenities become both increasingly desirable for quality of life, Idaho Business for the Outdoors sees tremendous value in safeguarding our outdoor assets with investments in infrastructure and conservation work prioritized through the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act.

Idaho has received nearly \$300 million of non-taxpayer dollars to protect Idaho's public lands and outdoor heritage through the LWCF since its inception. The Great American Outdoors Act includes full funding of LWCF, along with the addition of funds directed to address maintenance needs on public lands managed by public land agencies and the Bureau of Indian Education Schools is a win for our nation, wildlife, as well as the businesses and people of our great state.

This bill has strong bipartisan and majority support in the Senate. It is consistent with legislation supported by a bipartisan majority in the House, and the President has shown support for this bill. Your support and leadership in supporting the passage of this bill offers a unique opportunity to unite Americans, and the people and businesses of Idaho around the magnificent lands and waters they care about.

Idaho Business for the Outdoors requests that you support our outdoors and public lands by voting for the Great American Outdoors Act (S. 3422) as a clean bill with no amendments. Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Heather Dermott  
Executive Director, Idaho Business for the Outdoors  
(Business Members are attached on the following page)



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### **Business Members**

Agnew Beck	Idaho National Laboratory
Allied Orthopaedic	Idaho Urologic Institute
Auric Solar	Idaho Wildlife and Water Quality, LLC
Axus International	Lisa Hecht & Associates
Beckwith Lodge	Little Buddy Farms
Beyeler Ranches	MESA Media
Biomark	Mariposa Labs
Boise Cascade	Midas Gold
Center for Colorectal Care	Modern Hotel & Bar
Christensen Consulting LLC	Poole Joint Replacement
Coyle Family Foundation	RedBuilt
Direct Orthopedic Care	Republic Services
Ecosystem Investment Partners	Shandro Group
Figure 8 Investment Strategies	Steven's Historical Associates
Graphica Design	St. Luke's Health System
Habitat Veterinary Hospital	Sun Valley Institute
Hayden Beverage Company	Techstars
Idaho Mountain Guides	Treefort