15C. OTHER ITEMS – FEDERAL AGENCIES REPORT

Today's Item **Information** ☒ **Action** ☐

This is a standing agenda item to receive reports on any recent federal agency activities of interest not otherwise addressed under other agenda items.

Summary of Previous/Future Actions (N/A)

Background

NOAA: Charlotte Ambrose provides an update on a NOAA initiative for eight listed species, with five in California's freshwater and marine environments. In Exhibit C1 she provides a summary of the recovery actions for salmon and on June 10 will highlight the species in the spotlight, criteria used to identify these species, some of the actions that have advanced this cause (such as changes to fishing regulations FGC made last year for central California coast Coho) and other actions NOAA intends to pursue with co-managers and stakeholders. Exhibit C2 is a news release regarding all-time lows for overfishing and overfished species in U.S. fisheries.

USFWS: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service announced an additional suite of actions they will take to improve the effectiveness of the federal Endangered Species Act and demonstrate its flexibility. One of the proposed changes would require petitioners to solicit information from relevant state wildlife agencies prior to submitting a petition and to include any such information provided by the states in the petition. See Exhibit C3. In addition, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell announced that the bi-state population of greater sage-grouse does not require protection under the federal Endangered Species Act as a result of a public-private conservation partnership (Exhibit C4).

Significant Public Comments

1. FGC received a request to support a 2% increase in outdoor economy programs in the Interior and Environment Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2016 (Exhibit C5).

Recommendation (N/A)

Exhibits

C1. Charlotte Ambrose report: *NOAA's "Species in the Spotlight" Campaign*

C2. NOAA Fisheries news release: *U.S. fisheries continue to rebuild; overfishing and overfished numbers at all-time lows*, Apr 15, 2015

C3. USFW news release: *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA Propose Actions to Build on Success of Endangered Species Act*, May 18, 2015

C4. USFW news release: *Successful Conservation Partnership Keeps Bi-State Sage-Grouse Off Endangered Species List*, Apr 21, 2015

C5. Email from Colin Cochran with America's Voice for Conservation, Recreation and Preservation, received Apr 20, 2015.

Motion/Direction (N/A)

NOAA's "Species in the Spotlight" Campaign

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) provides a critical safety net for species facing extinction. It has prevented hundreds of imperiled species from going extinct, promoted the recovery of many others, and conserved the habitats upon which these animals depend. We are beginning to see the success of our efforts. However, recovery of imperiled species is a long-term challenge. While the United States has made significant progress in the last 40 years, we need help, locally and globally, to reverse declining populations and place them on a path to recovery.

As we enter the 5th decade of the ESA, we are re-dedicating ourselves to ensure we do not lose any species on our watch. Our continued enjoyment of all the benefits these vulnerable animals and their habitats provide depends on our collective efforts to understand and conserve these valuable resources.

The latest version of the annual NOAA Fisheries report to Congress - Recovering Threatened and Endangered Species FY 2012-2013 – is now available. We are also announcing a focused effort for eight species, which are at imminent risk of extinction. NOAA Fisheries is undertaking a focused strategy to marshal the resources available to us within the agency, as well as reaching out to our vital partners, to stabilize these species. We believe that focused effort can significantly reduce, stabilize, or reverse their rate of decline by 2020. These eight species include:

- Sacramento River Winter-run Chinook Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU)
- Atlantic Salmon Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment (DPS)
- Central California Coast Coho ESU
- Cook Inlet Beluga Whale DPS
- Hawaiian Monk Seal
- Pacific Leatherback Sea Turtle
- Southern Resident Killer Whale DPS
- White Abalone

For more information on Species in the Spotlight effort, please visit:
http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2015/05/05_14_15species_in_the_spotlight.html

This effort presents a unique opportunity to advance Central California Coast coho salmon and Winter-Run Chinook salmon recovery.

Key actions from the Central Coast Coho Salmon recovery plan:

- Conserve California's water! Go to www.saveourwater.com to find out what you can do to make conservation a part of your daily life.
- Secure dedicated funds and staff to improve, expand, or relocate conservation hatchery programs and facilities.
- Work with partners to focus restoration in key areas to restore impaired conditions, reduce threats, and improve the freshwater survival of coho salmon.
- Pursue protection and preservation in key coho landscapes.

- Invest in interdisciplinary science to gain more understanding on how the loss of habitat diversity and variable ocean conditions may be influencing coho salmon productivity and genetic diversity.
- Expand and support California's Salmonid Monitoring Program.

Key actions from the winter-run Chinook salmon recovery plan include:

- Completing the Battle Creek Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Project to provide habitat that will support winter-run Chinook salmon;
- Reintroducing winter-run Chinook salmon into Battle Creek and the McCloud River;
- Expanding Livingston Stone National Fish Hatchery facilities to support both the captive broodstock and conservation hatchery programs;
- Improving access to historical floodplain habitat along the lower Sacramento River to provide juveniles with ample food and refuge from predators;
- Minimizing the loss of adults in agricultural ditches within the Colusa Basin;
- Conducting landscape-scale restoration throughout the Delta to improve the ecosystem's health and support native species; and
- Managing Shasta Reservoir water supplies in order to provide cold water for spawning adults, eggs, and fry, stable summer flows to avoid dewatering redds, and winter/spring pulse flows to improve smolt survival through the Delta.

NOAA Fisheries will continue to collaborate with our stakeholders and partners to protect and recover all ESA species for which we are responsible and will not divert resources away from the important and continued efforts to support all listed species under our authority.

This nationally-led initiative, "*Species in the Spotlight: Survive to Thrive*", will marshal resources around these spotlight species and recruit parters, old and new, to join us in this campaign. If you have ideas on how to connect locally in a way that highlights some of your good work, please let us know. We would like to feature your coho story in our year-long campaign, and 5-year plan, to raise awareness and support of our collective efforts to save California's iconic freshwater and marine resources.

If you have any questions regarding this initiative, please contact Charlotte Ambrose.

NOAA Leadership Message:
http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/aboutus/leadership/may_2015_leadership_message_species_inthespotlight.html

NOAA's Report to Congress:
http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2015/05/docs/noaa_recoveringspecies_report_web.pdf

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NOAA Fisheries: U.S. fisheries continue to rebuild; overfishing and overfished numbers at all-time lows

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
April 15, 2015

The number of domestic fish stocks listed as overfished or subject to overfishing has dropped to an all-time low since 1997, when NOAA began tracking stock status, according to the 2014 *Status of U.S. Fisheries* report to Congress.

The report, produced annually since 1997, highlights the United States' continued progress towards sustainably managing fish stocks. This progress is a result of the combined efforts of NOAA Fisheries, the regional fishery management councils, the fishing industry, and other partners.

Six stocks--snowy grouper on the southern Atlantic coast; North Atlantic albacore; haddock in the Gulf of Maine; gag grouper in the South Atlantic; the Jacks complex in the Gulf of Mexico; and, Bluefin tuna in the western Atlantic--were removed from the overfishing list. Two stocks were no longer listed as overfished--gag grouper in the Gulf of Mexico, and North Atlantic albacore, which was removed from both lists.

A stock is on the overfishing list when the annual catch rate is too high. A stock is on the overfished list when the population size of a stock is too low, whether because of fishing or other causes.

"This report illustrates that the science-based management process under the Magnuson-Stevens Act is working to end overfishing and rebuild stocks," said Eileen Sobeck, assistant NOAA administrator for fisheries. "While we have made tremendous progress, we know there's more work to be done -- especially as we continue to document changes to our world's oceans and ecosystems. We will continue to strive toward sustainable management of our nation's fisheries in order to preserve our oceans for future generations."

The report also finds that three more fish stocks: Gulf of Maine/Cape Hatteras butterfish; Gulf of Mexico gag grouper; and, Mid-Atlantic Coast golden tilefish were rebuilt to target levels in 2014, bringing the total number of rebuilt U.S. marine fish stocks to 37 since 2000.

"Our agency wants to let consumers know that the United States' global leadership in responsible fisheries and sustainable seafood is paying off," Sobeck said. "We are moving forward more than ever with efforts to replicate and export stewardship practices internationally. As a result of the combined efforts of NOAA Fisheries, the regional fishery management councils, and all of our partners, the number of stocks listed as subject to overfishing or overfished continues to decline and is at an all-time low."

To read the full *2014 Status of U.S. Fisheries* report, find fish stock status information, and learn more about U.S. fisheries management, go to the NOAA Fisheries website:
http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/news/2015/status_of_stocks_2014.html

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Join us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and our other social media channels.

News Release

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA Propose Actions to Build on Successes of Endangered Species Act

Initiatives will increase regulatory predictability, increase stakeholder engagement, and improve science and transparency

May 18, 2015

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Building on the success of the Obama Administration in implementing the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in new and innovative ways, today the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service (the Services) announced an additional suite of actions the Administration will take to improve the effectiveness of the Act and demonstrate its flexibility. The actions will engage the states, promote the use of the best available science and transparency in the scientific process, incentivize voluntary conservation efforts, and focus resources in ways that will generate even more successes under the ESA.

The Endangered Species Act is an essential tool for conserving the nation's most at-risk wildlife, as well as the land and water on which they depend for habitat. The Act has prevented more than 99 percent of the species listed from going extinct, serving as the critical safety net for wildlife that Congress intended when it passed the law 40 years ago. In addition, the Act has helped move many species from the brink of extinction to the path to recovery, including California condors, Florida panthers and whooping cranes. The Obama Administration has delisted more species due to recovery than any prior administration, including the Oregon Chub, the Virginia northern flying squirrel, and the brown pelican.

"The protection and restoration of America's proud natural heritage would not be possible without the Endangered Species Act and the close collaboration among states, landowners and federal agencies that the Act promotes," said Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell. "These actions will make an effective and robust law even more successful, and will also reinforce the importance of states, landowners and sound science in that effort."

"For decades, the Endangered Species Act has helped protect threatened species and their habitats," said Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker. "The changes announced today by the Services amount to an improved way of doing business, one that advances the likelihood of conservation gains across the nation while reducing burdens and promoting certainty."

In furtherance of ESA improvements first outlined in 2011, the Services took steps today to ensure that states are partners in the process by which imperiled species are considered for listing under the Act. The proposed change – open for public comment today – would require petitioners to solicit information from relevant state wildlife agencies prior to submitting a petition to the Services, to include any such information provided by the states in the petition.

Larry Voyles, President of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, notes, "Consistent with the intent of the ESA that listing decisions be based on the best available science, we appreciate the Service's due recognition of, and requirement to, incorporate the data and information of state fish and wildlife agencies for the formulation of listing petitions."

The changes would provide greater clarity to the public and states on what information would best inform the evaluation of a species' status and result in better coordination with state wildlife agencies, which often have unique information and insights on imperiled species.

As part of the Administration's ongoing efforts, the Services will also be unveiling additional proposals over the coming year to achieve four broad goals:

1. **Improving science and increasing transparency.** To improve public understanding of and engagement in ESA listing processes, the Services will:
    - Strengthen procedures to ensure that all information that can be publicly disclosed related to proposed listing and critical habitat rule notices will be posted online; and
    - Adopt more rigorous procedures to ensure consistent, transparent, and objective peer-review of proposed decisions.

2. **Incentivizing voluntary conservation efforts.** Voluntary conservation programs, such as Safe Harbor agreements and Candidate Conservation Agreements, can improve conditions for listed and at-risk species, and conservation banking can make listed species and their habitats assets for landowners. The Services will:
    - Update guidance on the use of these proactive tools to establish consistent standards; and
    - Adopt a policy promoting the expanded use of conservation banking and other advance mitigation tools.

3. **Focusing resources to achieve more successes.** The Services will work to focus limited resources on activities that will be most impactful. These actions include:
    - NOAA's launch of a new initiative to focus resources on eight of the nation's most vulnerable marine species with the goal of reducing, stabilizing, or reversing their rate of decline by 2020;
    - Proposed revisions to interagency consultation procedures to streamline the process for projects, such as habitat restoration activities, that result in a net conservation benefit for the species;
    - Updates to the Habitat Conservation Planning Handbook to make developing and permitting plans more efficient and timely.

4. **Engaging the States.** State fish and wildlife agencies, by virtue of their responsibilities and expertise, are essential partners in efforts to conserve threatened and endangered species. The Services will:
    - Implement the aforementioned revised petition regulations to give states an opportunity to provide input prior to submission; and
    - Update policy regarding the role of state agencies to reflect advancements in collaboration between the Services and the States.

These proposals add to other actions already in progress, such as finalizing a policy on prelisting conservation credits and on critical habitat exclusions. Efforts to make the ESA work better will also include additional future review and update of regulations and policy, consistent with President Obama's

Executive Order 13563, *Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review*, and is outlined in the Department of Interior's *Preliminary Plan for Retrospective Regulatory Review*.

"The proposed policies would result in a more nimble, transparent and ultimately more effective Endangered Species Act," said Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service Dan Ashe. "By improving and streamlining our processes, we are ensuring the limited resources of state and federal agencies are best spent actually protecting and restoring imperiled species."

"The ESA has prevented the extinction of many imperiled species, promotes the recovery of many others, and conserves the habitats upon which they depend," said Eileen Sobeck, assistant administrator for NOAA Fisheries. "But more work needs to be done on all levels. We need everyone's help locally and globally to reverse declining populations and lift species out of danger. "

In the last six years, almost two dozen species have either been recovered and delisted, or are now proposed for delisting. There have also been more than a dozen imperiled species that were candidates for listing under the Act that have been conserved through proactive efforts and no longer require consideration for listing. They include the Bi-State population of the greater sage-grouse, the Montana population of arctic grayling, and the Coral Pink Sand Dunes tiger beetle.

The effort will focus on recovering species and strive to make administrative and regulatory improvements. The Services are not seeking any legislative changes to the Act, because the agencies believe that implementation can be significantly improved through rulemaking and policy formulation.

The Endangered Species Act was enacted in 1973 to protect plants and animal species threatened with extinction. Many of the regulations implementing provisions of the ESA were promulgated in the 1980s and do not reflect advances in conservation biology and genetics, as well as recent court decisions interpreting the Act's provisions.

For more information on the proposed ESA petition regulations, go to http://www.fws.gov/home/feature/2015/proposed-revised-petition-regulations.pdf. Public comments on the proposed rule will be accepted on or before 60 days following its publication in the *Federal Register*. The rule is expected to publish in the *Federal Register* later this week.

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The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.

For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit http://www.fws.gov/. Connect with our Facebook page, follow our tweets, watch our YouTube Channel and download photos from our Flickr page.

Press Release

Successful Conservation Partnership Keeps Bi-State Sage-Grouse Off Endangered Species List

Partnership among California, Nevada, Federal Agencies, & Landowners Helped Conserve Key Habitat, Reduce Threats to Bird

April 21, 2015

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RENO, NV – U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell announced that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has determined that the Bi-State population of greater sage-grouse does not require the protection of the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Secretary Jewell joined with USDA Under Secretary Robert Bonnie, Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval, California Natural Resources Agency Secretary John Laird and other state and local partners to celebrate an extensive and long-term conservation partnership on behalf of the bi-state greater sage-grouse population. Federal, state and private partners have come together to proactively conserve key habitat and significantly reduce long-term threats to this distinct population segment of greater sage-grouse.

A key factor in the decision not to list the bird was the development of The Bi-State Action Plan, a conservation plan developed by partners in the Bi-State Local Area Working Group over the past 15 years and secured with $45 million in funding. This adds to nearly $30 million worth of conservation work USDA and other partners have already completed to implement this plan.

“Thanks in large part to the extraordinary efforts of all the partners in the working group to address threats to greater sage-grouse and its habitat in the Bi-State area, our biologists have determined that this population no longer needs ESA protection,” said Jewell. “What’s more, the collaborative, science-based efforts in Nevada and California are proof that we can conserve sagebrush habitat across the West while we encourage sustainable economic development.”

“This is welcome news for all Nevadans. I applaud the local area working group, private citizens, Tribes, the Nevada Department of Wildlife and our federal partners for their tremendous efforts to develop conservation actions that preclude the need to list the species while still allowing for sustainable economic development,” said Sandoval. “Today’s announcement highlights the critical partnerships that must exist for our conservation strategies to be effective and demonstrate that sage grouse and economic development can coexist in both the bi-state area and across the range of the greater sage grouse.”

“Together, we’ve worked with ranchers, conservation groups, local governments in Nevada and California to take proactive steps to restore and enhance sage-grouse habitat while also helping them improve their ranching operations,” Bonnie said. “The decision to not list the bi-state sage-grouse proves this work has paid off.”

“The efforts of the local working group and the partnerships they’ve built over the past decade are truly unprecedented,” said Dan Ashe, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director. “They have set the stage for the next generation of conservation and convinced us that the sage-grouse population has a bright future in the Bi-State region.”

“California is committed to continue working with our public and private partners in implementing this strong, science-based conservation plan into the future,” said Laird. “This partnership between California and Nevada serves as a model for effective conservation of the Greater sage-grouse in other Western states.”

As its name suggests, the Bi-State Distinct Population Segment straddles the California-Nevada border, where biologists estimate that between 2,500 and 9,000 of these ground-dwelling birds inhabit about 4.5 million acres of high-desert sagebrush. Greater sage-grouse are known for the males’ flamboyant springtime mating displays on traditional dancing grounds, also known as leks. The birds use a variety of sagebrush habitats throughout the year on private, state and federal lands.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service declared the Bi-State population of greater sage-grouse a Distinct Population Segment (DPS) under the ESA in 2010 because genetic analysis shows it has been separated from other greater sage-grouse for thousands of years and the genetic differences are significant.

In October 2013, the Service proposed listing the Bi-State DPS as threatened under the ESA based on significant population declines due to the loss and fragmentation of its sagebrush habitat from urbanization and associated infrastructure development, encroachment of sagebrush by conifers, and a vicious cycle of wildfire and fire-adapted invasive grasses. These threats, combined with the relatively limited number of birds, the small population size and their isolation, were determined to pose a significant threat to the species.

The Service is withdrawing this proposal in large part because of the success of the Bi-State Action Plan. The plan is the product of the Bi-State Area Local Working Group, comprising federal, state and local agencies and landowners from Nevada and California, which has been pursuing sage-grouse conservation since the early 2000s. Since then, the working group’s technical advisory committee has finalized plans on nearly 80 science-driven conservation projects specifically designed to reduce identified threats and protect the sagebrush-steppe habitat.

The working group’s executive oversight committee has raised more than $45 million in federal and state funding to ensure the projects are implemented and completed over the next 10 years. Long-term projects implemented under the Bi-State Action Plan include population monitoring, urbanization abatement measures, livestock management, wild horse management, pinyon and juniper removal, disease and predation studies and other habitat improvement and restoration projects.

Each of the projects is tied to a specific population management unit within the region, led and funded by a specific agency or partnership, and ranked by the immediacy of the threat to the species.

The comprehensive plan and funding commitments give the Service confidence that effective conservation measures needed to address threats to the species are highly likely to be implemented.

The working group members include private landowners in California and Nevada, Nevada Department of Wildlife, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Nevada Division of Forestry, California State Parks, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, nongovernmental organizations such as Nevada Wildlife Federation, Washoe Tribe of California and Nevada, Los Angeles Department of Water and

Power, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Geological Survey, Department of Defense and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Conservation work on private lands – through easements and habitat restoration – has played an important role in connecting national forests and other public lands, working to keep habitat intact. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service has already invested nearly $20 million in conservation assistance to ranchers through this effort. This has helped ranchers protect 7,300 acres of key summer habitat through easements, with an additional 4,500 acres in process. This investment has also helped them remove invading juniper and pinyon trees, enhancing nearly 4,000 acres of important sagebrush-steppe habitat.

This summer, the Forest Service will begin treatments to improve sagebrush ecosystem health on 29,000 acres of key habitat for the sage grouse.

The USGS has been a key partner in monitoring the Bi-State population and interpreting data collected to assure the Bi-State partners are using the best science in their conservation efforts.

Along with withdrawing the listing proposal, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is also withdrawing proposed rules under section 4(d) of the ESA and the proposed designation of critical habitat.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is concurrently conducting a separate status review for the greater sage-grouse across its 11-state range. In 2010, it determined the greater sage-grouse was warranted for protection but that action was precluded by higher priorities. A determination on whether the species still requires protection is due Sept. 30, 2015.

The deteriorating health of the greater sage-grouse and western sagebrush landscapes has sparked an unprecedented and proactive partnership across eleven states to conserve the uniquely American habitat that supports diverse wildlife, outdoor recreation, and ranching and other traditional land uses that form the cornerstone of the Western way of life.

For more detailed information on the Bi-State DPS of the greater sage-grouse and its habitat, along with more information about conservation projects that are being done to help protect this unique species, visit www.fws.gov/greatersagegrouse.

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The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.

For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit http://www.fws.gov/. Connect with our Facebook page, follow our tweets, watch our YouTube Channel and download photos from our Flickr page.

From:	Colin Cochran
To:	FGC
Subject:	Help Support Funding for Conservation, Recreation and Preservation
Date:	Monday, April 20, 2015 11:41:54 AM
Importance:	High

Hello Executive Director Mastrup:

My name is Colin Cochran and I am contacting you in regard to a critical issue facing regional, state and national conservation efforts along with outdoor tourism and recreational economy.

I am working with leaders in California's conservation world along with members of the outdoor tourism industry to encourage Senator Diane Feinstein and Congressman Ken Calvert to work with their congressional colleagues to provide the necessary support for programs that will ensure a successful future for the outdoor recreation industry and a sustainable future for the fisheries, beaches, rivers, forests, and parks upon which this industry relies.

Economic Impact

The outdoor recreation and tourism industry is an economic driver for our country and for California. These are well-paying jobs in cities, towns and rural counties across the state that can't be exported or outsourced.

- America's outdoor economy:
  - **Supports approximately 6 million jobs**
  - **Generates nearly $80 billion in federal, state and local tax revenue annually**

- California's outdoor economy is responsible for:
  - **$85.4 billion in consumer spending**
  - **732,100 direct California jobs**
  - **$27 billion in salaries and wages**
  - **$6.7 billion in state and local tax revenue**

Issue Background

Without the preservation and maintenance of our outdoor recreational attractions, the future of this economic sector is dark.

California's natural beauty is a huge tourist draw and economic engine so this issue hits close to home. Shrinking funding for conservation, recreation and historic preservation the parks, waterways, public lands and forests are putting the future of this industry at risk.

Since the late 1970s, federal funding in conservation, outdoors and historic preservation has fallen from roughly 2 percent of the federal budget to 1 percent.

In budgets being considered for FY 2016, natural resource conservation, outdoor recreation and historic preservation programs could be subject to disproportionate cuts and program eliminations.

Congress must secure funding for a successful economy and healthy, sustainable outdoor areas. The best people to deliver that message are industry leaders like yourself.

Take Action

We hope that the Commission and/or individual Commissioners will please join us in asking Senator Feinstein and Congressman Calvert to support a modest 2% increase to outdoor economy programs in the Interior and Environment Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2016.

Senator Feinstein sits on Senate Appropriations; Congressman Calvert sits on the House Committee on Appropriations and is Chairman of Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies. They are powerful voices on this issue, particularly given the importance of the outdoor economy to California.

We hope you will consider writing a letter, calling or meeting in person with Senator Feinstein; Congressman Calvert and/or their senior staff to encourage them to fight for critical funding for our outdoor economy. As a leading California voice for the tourism industry, your voice will carry particular weight with their offices.

Please let us know if you are interested in working with us and we will get you a sample letter and/or talking points for your consideration.

If you would like some more information on the economic impact of the outdoor industry, please follow this link.

You can also find more information on our effort here: http://www.avcrp.org/welcome/

With budget negotiations ongoing in Congress, it is important that we move quickly and that the Senator and Congressman begin hearing from voices like yours as soon as possible. Please let us know if there is any help we can offer and/or any questions we can answer.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working with you.

All the best,

Colin Cochran
503.464.6011