



October 23, 2021

Senator Angus King, Chairman  
National Parks Subcommittee  
133 Hart Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Steve Daines, Ranking Member  
National Parks Subcommittee  
320 Hart Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman King and Ranking Member Daines:

On behalf of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Coalition, we are writing to request a hearing for the Montana Headwaters Legacy Act (S. 2254). The Wild and Scenic Rivers Coalition represents nearly 50 local, state, and national organizations from across the country that support Wild and Scenic River protection and stewardship. Our coalition supports expediting a hearing that would allow for possible inclusion of this bill in the National Defense Authorization Act or another public lands package that may come together this Congress.

We appreciate that the National Parks Subcommittee already held a hearing for the River Democracy Act (S. 192) and York River Wild and Scenic River Act (S. 491) earlier this Congress, and we support efforts to further expand the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System by scheduling a hearing for the Montana Headwaters Legacy Act. Wild and Scenic River designations under consideration by your subcommittee offer outstanding opportunities for outdoor recreation (fishing, boating, hiking, camping, mountain biking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, etc.); protect important fish and wildlife habitats; and safeguard clean water supplies for local communities and farmers and ranchers.

**Montana Headwaters Legacy Act (S. 2254).** This bill would designate 385 miles of 20 rivers and streams in the upper Missouri and Yellowstone river systems, ensuring that some of the most prized waterways in Montana remain clean and free-flowing for generations to come. These iconic waterways, which include the Gallatin, Madison, Yellowstone and Smith rivers, provide clean drinking water to cities and towns, irrigation for agriculture, and unmatched recreational opportunities that contribute to the state's flourishing \$7.1 billion outdoor recreation economy.

The Montana Headwaters Legacy Act was crafted by Montanans and is the product of over a decade of extensive public outreach. This legislation has been endorsed by over 3,000 individual Montanans, 1,300

Montana businesses, several local chambers of commerce, the Fishing Outfitters Association of Montana (FOAM), Montana Outfitters and Guides Association (MOGA), Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission, numerous local governments and local elected officials, Sibanye Stillwater Mining Company, and the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council, among others. A recent poll commissioned by the University of Montana found that 79 percent of Montanans support the Montana Headwaters Legacy Act, making it the most popular public lands legislation in the state.

We thank you for considering our request to schedule a hearing on the Montana Headwaters Legacy Act at the earliest practicable date.

Sincerely,



Lisa Ronald, Coordinator, Wild and Scenic Rivers Coalition

**On behalf of the following Wild and Scenic River Coalition member organizations:**

Joshua Theurer, Senior Manager of Project Design, Adventure Scientists, Livingston, MT

David Moryc, Senior Director of Wild and Scenic Rivers and Public Lands Policy, American Rivers, Washington, D.C.

Kevin Colburn, National Stewardship Director, American Whitewater, Sylva, NC

Steven L. Evans, Rivers Director, California Wilderness Coalition, Sacramento, CA

Anthony Irving, Chair, Eightmile River Wild and Scenic Coordinating Committee, Haddam, CT

Sheena Pate, Watershed Coordinator, Flathead Rivers Alliance, Whitefish, MT

Fred Akers, River Administrator, Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association, Marquette, MI

Charles Wolf Drimal, Waters Conservation Coordinator, Greater Yellowstone Coalition, Bozeman, MT

Richard Dodds, Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic River Management Council, Stockton, NJ

Dr. Denielle Perry, Director Free-flowing Rivers Lab, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ

Alison Field-Juma, Executive Director, OARS, Concord, MA

Grant Werschkull + Patty McCleary, Executive Director Team, Smith River Alliance, Crescent City, CA

Anne Slugg, Chair and Sudbury Representative, The Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord Wild and Scenic River Stewardship Council, Sudbury, MA

Joe Callahan, President, Taunton River Watershed Alliance, Taunton, MA

Shane Morgan, Manager, White Clay Wild and Scenic River Program, DE/PA

Maggie Johnston, Executive Director, Wild Alabama, Moulton, AL