



November 11, 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 M.H. Dutch Salmon Greater Gila Wild and Scenic River Act (S. 3129). The Wild and Scenic Rivers Coalition represents more than 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 a public lands package that may transpire in 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 M.H. Dutch Salmon Greater Gila Wild and Scenic River 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.

M.H. Dutch Salmon Greater Gila Wild and Scenic River Act (S. 3129). This bill would designate almost 450 miles of the Gila and San Francisco Rivers and their tributaries and protect 144,000 acres of riverside lands. The Gila remains one of the longest rivers in the West and is the last free-flowing river in New Mexico. It is foundational to the state's outdoor recreation economy, which employs nearly 100,000 people and generates more than \$623 million in taxes annually. This bill was developed by partnering with Indigenous Nations, faith leaders, local governments, civic organizations, sportsmen, private property owners, and small businesses in Grant County and the surrounding area to ensure that its benefits to local communities are far-reaching.

We thank you for considering our request to schedule a hearing on the M.H. Dutch Salmon Greater Gila Wild and Scenic River Act at the earliest practicable date.

Sincerely,

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

Michael Fiebig, Director of River Protection for the Southwest U.S., American Rivers, Durango, CO.

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

Kestrel Kunz, Southern Rockies Associate Stewardship Director, American Whitewater Crested Butte, CO

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

Jack West, Policy and Advocacy Director, Alabama Rivers Alliance, Birmingham, AL

Fred Akers, River Administrator, Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River, Newtonville, NJ

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

Lucy B. Wallace, Chair, Nashua, Squannacook, and Nissitissit Rivers Wild & Scenic Stewardship Council, Groton, MA

Dr. Denielle Perry, Director Free-flowing Rivers Lab, School of Earth and Sustainability, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ

Katherine Baer, Vice President River Programs, River Network, Carrboro, NC

Alison Field-Juma, OARS: Sudbury, Assabet and Concord Rivers, Concord, MA

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