

2020 Outdoor Recreation Community Vision for Public Lands and Waters

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Active outdoor recreation is the most common way in which Americans come to know their public lands and waters. Activities like hiking, climbing, paddling, skiing, mountain biking, coastal recreation, camping, and hunting and angling are the basis for the thriving outdoor recreation economy, which accounts for 2.2 percent of U.S. GDP and employs nearly 5.2 million Americans. Outdoor recreation provides personal, social, and health benefits and helps to support vibrant communities. According to the most recent data, nearly half of all Americans participated in outdoor recreation activities in the previous year.

All of the benefits of outdoor recreation depend on healthy, protected, and accessible public lands and waters. Right now, these values are under threat, and too many Americans feel disconnected from their public lands and waters. Elected officials must ensure sustainable access to recreation opportunities for everyone, regardless of background, geography, or identity.

Over the next four years, the President's administration must make public lands and waters a part of our economic recovery and climate solutions, ensure equitable access, and protect public lands and waters for their intrinsic, ecological, and social values.

Make public lands and waters a cornerstone of economic recovery

The COVID-19 pandemic and associated shelter-in-place orders have underscored for millions of Americans the crucial importance of recreating outside but at the same time revealed the inadequacy and inequitable distribution of existing recreation infrastructure, like trails and access points. Investing in these resources, as well as in green infrastructure and ecosystem health, will put people to work and increase quality of life and economic benefits for local communities. Over the next four years, the President must:

- Support significant new investment in recreation and green infrastructure by funding land, water, and recreation management agencies, and expanding coordinated capacity among federal agencies, states, NGOs, conservation corps, and businesses;
- Protect environmental and public-process values and align investment with climate and environmental goals;
- Promote equitable access and greater diversity in outdoor recreation participation and the public lands workforce.

Make public lands and waters a part of climate solutions

The environments that support outdoor recreation experiences are currently under existential threat from climate change. At the same time, public lands and waters are the

source of much of the greenhouse gas emissions that are further exacerbating the crisis. The United States must:

- Aggressively reduce greenhouse-gas-emitting development on public lands and waters;
- Support planning activities to facilitate climate adaptation and thoughtfully plan for increased renewable energy development;
- Protect remaining wild landscapes, both because of the added stresses they face and to ensure their viability for carbon sequestration; and
- Recognize that outdoor recreation and its economic benefits play an important role in helping communities adapt to a changing economy.

Conserve public lands and waters, and provide recreation opportunities for all Americans

Public lands and waters are worth protecting for their intrinsic, ecological, and social value. Over the next four years, the President's administration must build on our country's long-standing bipartisan tradition of protecting priority landscapes. The President must:

- Protect public lands and waters through conservation and recreation-focused designations;
- Ensure that landscapes—particularly those in the frontcountry—with high recreational value are also protected and given appropriate, sustainable recreation focused management;
- Work to make sure all Americans, regardless of geography, background, or identity, see themselves in the stories told by our country's protected landscapes and have meaningful opportunities to connect with them.

Protect core conservation laws and reverse regulatory rollbacks

In recent years, lawmakers and agencies have considered or implemented policies that threaten public lands and waters. The President must:

- Keep public lands public, rejecting calls to turn public lands over to states or less accountable entities;
- Protect the Antiquities Act and make whole the National Monuments currently subject to unlawful rollbacks, including Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante;
- Reverse regulatory rollbacks that imperil public lands and waters, including decisions to undercut the USDA Forest Service Roadless Rule; drastically scale back the efficacy of the Clean Water Act and National Environmental Policy Act; and rollbacks reversing progress on addressing climate change.



About Outdoor Alliance

Outdoor Alliance is a coalition of ten member-based organizations representing the human powered outdoor recreation community. The coalition includes Access Fund, American Canoe Association, American Whitewater, International Mountain Bicycling Association, Winter Wildlands Alliance, The Mountaineers, the American Alpine Club, the Mazamas, Colorado Mountain Club, and Surfrider Foundation and represents the interests of the millions of Americans who climb, paddle, mountain bike, backcountry ski and snowshoe, and enjoy coastal recreation on our nation's public lands, waters, and snowscapes.

Contacts:

Louis Geltman
Policy Director
301.928.7789

louis@outdooralliance.org

Tania Lown-Hecht
Communications Director
510.301.8758

tania@outdooralliance.org

Adam Cramer
Executive Director
202.409.4155

adam@outdooralliance.org

About The Conservation Alliance

The Conservation Alliance is a coalition of businesses whose collective contributions support grassroots environmental organizations and their efforts to protect wild places where outdoor enthusiasts recreate. Conservation Alliance funds have played a key role in protecting rivers, trails, wildlands and climbing areas. Membership in the Alliance is open to all companies who care about protecting our most threatened wild places for habitat and outdoor recreation. Since its inception in 1989, The Conservation Alliance has helped to protect more than 73 million acres of wildlands; protect 3,575 miles of rivers; stop or remove 35 dams; designate five marine reserves; and purchase 17 climbing areas. Visit conservationalliance.com for more information.

Contacts:

Brady Robinson
Executive Director
303.408.6316

brady@conservationalliance.com

Kirsten Blackburn
Advocacy Manager
971.258.7899

kirsten@conservationalliance.com

Outdoor Alliance and The Conservation Alliance do not support or oppose any candidate for elected office.