



March 26, 2020

The Honorable Steve Bullock  
Governor of Montana  
State Capitol  
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Governor Bullock,

On behalf of the outdoor recreation industry, we commend you for your leadership in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As you look to take further actions to safeguard community health and safety during this unprecedented crisis, the outdoor industry stands ready to be a resource and we ask that you keep outdoor recreation in mind.

The physical and mental health benefits of outdoor recreation are well known. Studies have shown that healthy, active outdoor recreation helps combat anxiety, depression, obesity and more. As people grapple with the effects of COVID-19, outdoor recreation can be invaluable to maintaining physical and mental health. Hiking, biking, paddling, hunting, boating, running, fishing, camping, SCUBA diving, ATVing, RVing, horseback riding and more are all activities that can be engaged in while adhering to CDC guidelines for social distancing. Now, more than ever, it is critical for communities to have access to opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Access is an important component for our communities when participating in outdoor recreation. Regardless of what outdoor activity they enjoy, the public needs access. In addition to the benefits recreation brings to mental and physical wellbeing, it's also important to note the role recreation can play in revitalizing state and local economies in the wake of the economic crisis our nation faces. As you look to take further action to navigate your state through the pandemic, we encourage you to consider the health and economic benefits access to recreation provides.

Additionally, we encourage you to consider outdoor recreation repair, manufacturing and service providers as "essential" if you choose to move forward with any additional orders for employers. Outdoor recreation companies provide vital services for all Americans and often are a critical partner to law enforcement and public health agencies. For example – many marinas offer slips to law enforcement to ensure quick response for water safety; dealerships offer critical repair services for outdoor recreation products; and campgrounds might offer space for housing for traveling nurses and those in RVs. Gear manufacturers provide headlamps and gloves to workers and are adapting their facilities to the changing needs of our nation.

We understand the measures needed to protect health and safety and stand ready to work with the state to fully open public access to the outdoors once practical. We hope to work with you and your team in the months to come to bolster the health of your citizens and the outdoor economy that will ensure revitalized communities and economies for years to come.

The outdoor recreation industry applauds your leadership during this pandemic and stands ready to assist your efforts to lead residents through this difficult time.

Sincerely,

America Outdoors  
American Sportfishing Association  
Archery Trade Association  
Association of Marina Industries  
CHM Government Services  
Diving Equipment and Marketing Association  
International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association  
Marine Retailers Association of the Americas  
National Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds  
National Forest Recreation Association  
National Marine Manufacturers Association  
National Park Hospitality Association  
Outdoor Industry Association  
RV Dealers Association  
RV Industry Association  
Snowsports Industries America  
Specialty Equipment Market Association