



October 18, 2021

The Honorable Joe Manchin
Chairman
Energy and Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Barrasso
Ranking Member
Energy and Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Manchin and Ranking Member Barrasso,

On behalf of the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (ORR), we would like to express our strong support for the nomination of Charles Sams to be the next Director of the National Park Service (NPS). We are hopeful that the Senate will confirm Mr. Sams in a timely manner to ensure that the Department can move forward with supporting the \$788 billion outdoor recreation economy and the public lands and waters that are the backbone of this growing industry.

ORR is the nation's leading coalition of outdoor recreation trade associations — made up of 34 national members — as well as other nonprofit organizations and business entities — serving more than 110,000 businesses. According to the most recent data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis released last year, the recreation industry generated \$788 billion in economic output, accounted for 2.1 percent of GDP and 5.2 million American jobs, and was growing faster than the economy in every indicator.

Mr. Sams' many years of experience in the conservation field, his personal passion for outdoor recreation, and his esteemed career working with and supporting Conservation Corps make him the right leader for the National Park Service. We were lucky enough to spend some time with Mr. Sams, and after our conversation we are confident he will be integral to improving recreation infrastructure, finding solutions to the overcrowding issues, mitigating the impact of climate change on park sites and the visitor experience, expanding inclusivity and so much more as NPS confronts the issues and opportunities of the 21st century.

Mr. Sams will play a key role in implementation of the Great American Outdoors Act, which provides much-needed investments in the deferred maintenance backlog on public lands and waters, as well as full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Industry leaders who strongly supported these policies throughout the legislative process look forward to partnering with your committee and Department leadership on these important initiatives.

ORR is encouraged by the Biden Administration's goal to grow diversity, increase access and combat climate change through the America the Beautiful initiative. As Director, Mr. Sams will play a key role in conserving some of our nation's most iconic public lands and waters, while ensuring all Americans have access to recreation experiences for generations to come. NPS is well positioned to ensure outdoor recreation supports the Build Back Better

plan, revitalizes our economy and provides equitable access to all forms of recreation for every American. We are hopeful that the National Park Service will also work with the outdoor recreation industry to continue to make important contributions to healthy people, places, communities and economies.

As the nomination process continues, we appreciate you considering ORR's support for Mr. Sams and hope that questions regarding outdoor recreation and its critical role in the wellbeing of America's families and economy are incorporated in the upcoming hearing.

We look forward to working with the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in the 117th Congress on important issues for outdoor recreation that will help grow our industry and the nation's economy as a whole.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Turner", is written over a horizontal line.

Jessica Turner
Executive Director