



April 27, 2022

Chairwoman Maria Cantwell (D-WA)  
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and  
Transportation  
254 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Ranking Member Roger Wicker (R-MS)  
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and  
Transportation  
512 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Cantwell and Ranking Member Wicker,

The Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (ORR) and our members thank you for convening today's hearing on the Department of Commerce's budget priorities for Fiscal Year 2023. Many are not aware that this agency is critically important to the outdoor recreation industry – which generates \$689 billion in economic output, comprises 1.8% of the nation's GDP, and creates 4.3 million jobs according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis. Prior to the pandemic, our sector was growing faster than the economy as a whole and is experiencing a tremendous rebound as people re-evaluate what's important to them in a post-pandemic world.

ORR is the nation's leading coalition of outdoor recreation trade associations representing the outdoor recreation economy. Our membership includes national outdoor trade association members, business entities, nonprofit organizations, and universities — serving more than 110,000 businesses and representing America's boating, fishing, RVing, biking, hiking, camping, hunting, ATVing, diving, horseback, and skiing communities among many more. We advocate for full funding to support recreation opportunities across the country, and seek to engage the full range of agencies that are involved in this process across the federal government. While the Department of Commerce is too often left out of conversations related to major federal recreation legislation and funding measures, the agency is an integral part of our nation's system of public lands and waters.

Funding for the Department of Commerce is integral to advancing opportunities for outdoor recreation across the country, as the agency is home to: the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Travel and Tourism Office, the Bureau of Economic Analysis, and the National Weather Service. We are writing to you today specifically to discuss the Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, which is the first-ever statistical analysis measuring the profound impact of the outdoor recreation economy. This effort is critical to ensuring that the public understands the value of our treasured outdoor resources, and to informing policymakers and public land managers in their decision-making processes.

With this notable impact in mind, we are writing to you today to continue the funding that was included in the recently enacted FY 2022 omnibus legislation, which allocated \$1.5 million for the Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account (ORSA). This funding is vital to measuring the outdoor recreation economy, and to providing the Bureau of Economic Analysis with the necessary tools and services that they need to compile this essential information. While the Biden administration's FY2023 budget request detailed a total budget request of over \$140 million for the entire Bureau of Economic Analysis, the request did not seem to specify this fiscal year's ORSA allocation. Thus, we encourage you to support continued investment in this account for the next fiscal year.

Recent bipartisan legislation, such as the Great American Outdoors Act and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, have boosted funding for recreation at land and water management agencies across the federal government. Furthermore, the outdoor recreation economy is experiencing unprecedented activity at a time when the U.S. is working to bounce back from the COVID-19 pandemic, and Americans are increasingly looking to spend their time outdoors. Thus, it is essential that the federal government retain the necessary resources to measure the impact of the recreation economy, in order to allow elected officials, businesses, and the public to continue to understand the benefits of recreation and quality of life for all Americans.

We look forward to working with you on this important issue as you continue to conduct oversight of the Department of Commerce's FY 2023 funding measure, and appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jessica Turner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Jessica Turner  
President