

June 6, 2025

The Honorable John Thune
Senate Republican Leader
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Democratic Leader
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Thune and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of America's millions of hunters, anglers, wildlife professionals, conservationists and outdoor enthusiasts, we write to encourage you to keep federal public land sales out of the budget reconciliation bill. While we appreciate the desire to address federal land management challenges and respond to local community needs, we ask that any public land disposal be considered within transparent, public channels and that funding from sales be reinvested back into habitat and access. The reconciliation process does not provide the appropriate venue for these considerations.

Our concerns are threefold. First, selling public lands through the reconciliation process bypasses critical public engagement opportunities provided under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and limits opportunities for hunters, anglers, recreationists and other stakeholders to engage in decisions affecting lands that belong to all Americans. Public participation is a cornerstone of FLPMA, ensuring transparency and accountability. We fear that curtailing FLPMA sets a troubling precedent for future land management decisions, and any approved land sales could be made that do not serve the public interest.

Second, land sales through reconciliation would likely direct proceeds from sales to the general fund of the Treasury, rather than reinvesting funds in conservation programs that sustain our nation's wildlife, habitats and recreational opportunities. Federal lands have historically been a public trust investment, not a resource for general budgetary offsets, and the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA) was permanently reauthorized in 2018 to collect receipts from appropriate BLM land sales and reinvest those dollars into projects that expand access and conserve habitat. Diverting sale proceeds away from conservation deviates from the deal struck by a broad spectrum of interest groups, and it would likely lower the ecological and recreational value of our public lands.

Third, and perhaps most critically, sales could include lands that are vital to hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation, particularly in rural areas. Hunting, fishing, camping, hiking and other outdoor recreation pursuits are deeply ingrained in our cultural heritage and provide a significant driver for rural economies. The outdoor recreation industry has demonstrated a \$1.2 trillion economic output nationally. Loss of access to valuable public land could impact hunters, anglers,

and other recreationists who rely on public lands for their traditions, and could adversely affect outdoor businesses, guides and outfitters, local retailers, lodging companies and many others who rely on outdoor recreation for their livelihoods.

We recognize the need and desire for increased efficiency in federal land management, and for communities to respond to local needs and demands, but budget reconciliation legislation is not an appropriate place for land sales. We urge you to prevent the inclusion of these provisions in the Senate bill.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration. We stand ready to work with you to ensure that our public lands continue to serve as a legacy for all Americans.

Sincerely,

American Fisheries Society
American Fly Fishing Trade Association
American Sportfishing Association
American Woodcock Society
Angler Action Foundation
Archery Trade Association
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
Boone and Crockett Club
Bonefish & Tarpon Trust
California Waterfowl Association
Camp Fire Club of America
Captains for Clean Water
Delta Waterfowl
Izaak Walton League of America
Land Trust Alliance
National Association of Forest Service
Retirees
National Bobwhite & Grassland Initiative
Foundation
National Deer Association
National Wild Turkey Federation
National Wildlife Federation
National Wildlife Refuge Association

New York State Conservation Council
North American Falconers Association
North American Grouse Partnership
Orion: The Hunter's Institute
Outdoor Industry Association
Pheasants Forever
Pope and Young Club
Public Lands Foundation
Quail Forever
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Ruffed Grouse Society
Tall Timbers
The Conservation Fund
The Nature Conservancy
The Wildlife Society
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation
Partnership
Trout Unlimited
Trust for Public Land
Whitetails Unlimited
Wildlife Management Institute
Wild Sheep Foundation
Wildlife Mississippi