



June 29, 2021

Congresswoman Lauren Boebert  
1609 Longworth Building  
Washington DC 20515

RE: The Active Forest Management, Wildfire Prevention and Community  
Protection Act

Dear Congresswoman Boebert:

Please accept this correspondence as the vigorous support of the above Organizations for The Active Forest Management, Wildfire Prevention and Community Protection Act ("The Act"). Prior to addressing the specific concerns the Organizations have regarding the Act, we believe a brief summary of each Organization is needed. The Colorado Off-Highway Vehicle Coalition ("COHVCO") is a grassroots advocacy organization of approximately 250,000 registered OHV users in Colorado seeking to represent, assist, educate, and empower all OHV recreationists in the protection and promotion of off-highway motorized recreation throughout Colorado. COHVCO is an environmental organization that advocates and promotes the responsible use and conservation of our public lands and natural resources to preserve their aesthetic and recreational qualities for future generations. The Trail Preservation Alliance ("TPA") is a 100 percent volunteer organization whose intention is to be a viable partner, working with the United States Forest Service (USFS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to preserve the sport of trail riding. The TPA acts as an advocate of the sport and takes the necessary action to ensure that the USFS and BLM allocate to trail riding a fair and equitable percentage of access to public lands. Colorado Snowmobile Association ("CSA") was founded in 1970 to unite the more than 30,000 winter motorized recreationists across the state to enjoy their passion. CSA has also become the voice of organized snowmobiling seeking to advance, promote and preserve the sport of snowmobiling through work with Federal and state land management agencies and local, state and federal legislators telling the truth about our sport.

The Organizations vigorously support the Act as wildfires and burn scars are a massive barrier to all recreational activity in and around these areas and often for times that extend far beyond the fire being extinguished. Many burn scars are closed to recreational usage for decades after fires are extinguished due to the long-term impacts of these catastrophically intense fires. In this situation, funding and hard work is the only way to mitigate impacts from catastrophic wildfire. We believe allowing a more streamlined process for treatment analysis,

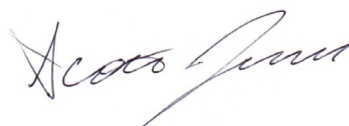
such as the expanded use of Categorical Exclusions for larger treatments is a significant step in avoiding these types of impacts.

We also welcome the flexibility of the Act in locations that can be managed for wildfires and treatments. We have participated in numerous public forums with land managers discussing fire behavior and successful mitigation efforts. Historically prevention has targeted the WUI, but in the last several years, fires have started in remote areas and then waited for perfect conditions to burn out of these areas with huge intensity. This is exemplified by the Mullen Fire in southern Wyoming on the Medicine Bow/Rout NF, which was lightning started in the Savage Run Wilderness and the Cameron Peak Fire in northern Colorado on the Arapahoe/Roosevelt NF, which was ignited in the Rawah Wilderness. Both fires were of somewhat small size for extended periods of time and then exited the Wilderness when conditions were ripe for rapid intense expansion. Both fires expanded at rates exceeding 5,000 acres of burn per hour and both topped 200,000 in areas severely impacted. Unfortunately, this model is becoming all too common throughout the western US.

The USFS has recently released post fire analysis efforts and recommendations included analysis of many other fires. Their recommendation is these types of ignitions and subsequent explosive growth can be managed and planned for, which is a significant change from previous efforts that only focused on the WUI. We believe the Act is a major step in this direction, as §501 of the Act specifically states Wilderness designations are prohibited from becoming a barrier to treatments. This is in stark contrast to other proposals that would have added further restrictions to treatments such as prohibiting them in Roadless areas. Such restrictions simply make no sense to us.

The Organizations also submit that while wildfires gain almost all press coverage for removal of beetle kill from large tracts, wildfires only are impacting small portions of a massive landscape every year. Damage to these landscapes can only be mitigated with preventative treatment to remove thousands of acres of beetle kill spiderwebs that are unhealthy for wildlife and unsafe for most users. Preventing wildfire before it happens also improves wildlife habitat. We have been actively participating in post fire analysis of the West Fork Complex fire on the Rio Grande NF and researchers have found many species will use burn scar areas, but many also will not. The Canadian lynx has shown a high level of avoidance to these burn scars. Please feel free to contact Scott Jones at 518-281-5810 if you should wish to discuss these matters further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Scott Jones", with a stylized, cursive script.

Scott Jones, Esq.  
Authorized Representative  
CSA, COHVCO and TPA