

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 24, 2021

The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Interior,  
Environment and Related Agencies  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Interior,  
Environment and Related Agencies  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Merkley and Ranking Member Murkowski:


As the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies considers priorities for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Appropriations bill, we write to request that you include at least \$21.131 million for the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) cultural resources account and at least \$67.674 million for the National Conservation Lands.

The BLM manages the largest and most diverse body of cultural, historical, and paleontological resources of any federal land management agency. However, BLM has surveyed only about 10 percent of the lands it manages. An increase in funding for BLM's cultural resources management account of \$1.5 million over the FY2021 level will help the BLM fulfill its statutory requirements to inventory and protect important cultural and paleontological resources, as well as improve government-to-government relations with Native American Tribes. This modest increase will also support good paying jobs in Western states and rural communities, giving the BLM resources to hire additional cultural resource managers, increasing their capacity to work collaboratively with state historic preservation officers and maintain the National Cultural Resources Information Management System (NCRIMS).

We also ask that you provide BLM with \$67.674 million to manage the system of National Conservation Lands, which encompasses more than 37 million acres of National Monuments, National Conservation Areas (NCAs) and similar designations, as well as Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs). Since its inception in 2000, the National Conservation Lands have nearly doubled in size, adding over 100 units and 11 million acres of lands to be managed for conservation, largely the result of acts of Congress. Funding to manage the National Conservation Lands, however, has not kept pace with the growth of the system. This increase in funding will permit increased inventory, monitoring and protection of cultural resources, enhance proper management of all resources, and provide a quality visitor experience. Furthermore, additional funding will ensure that units in the National Conservation Lands system are adequately staffed with land managers, law enforcement officers, and cultural resources experts. This requested increase for FY2022 brings funding in line with the growth of the National Conservation Lands system, with the opportunity to increase funding in subsequent fiscal years as the additional designations are signed into law.

Our nation's public lands contain remarkable and irreplaceable ecological, historical, and cultural resources that reflect thousands of years of human connection to our lands. We look forward to working with your staff on the FY2022 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,




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Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator



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Alex Padilla  
United States Senator




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Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator




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Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator




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Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator



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Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



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Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator