

**American Woodcock Society \* Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies \* Archery Trade Association \* Boone and Crockett Club \* Camp Fire Club of America \* Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation \* Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports \* Houston Safari Club \* Mule Deer Foundation \* National Association of Forest Service Retirees \* National Deer Association \* National Shooting Sports Foundation \* North American Grouse Partnership \* Pheasants Forever \* Quail Forever \* Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation \* Ruffed Grouse Society \* Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership \* Wildlife Forever \* Wildlife Management Institute \* Wildlife Mississippi \* Wild Sheep Foundation \***

July 23, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Senate Majority Leader  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Minority Leader  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

**Re: Sportsman Support for Conservation Measures in Infrastructure Negotiations; Forest Management, Wildlife Crossings, Orphaned Oil/Gas Well Cleanup, and Abandoned Mine Land Program Renewal**

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell:

The undersigned organizations, representing millions of hunters, anglers, wildlife professionals, and outdoor enthusiasts, support the inclusion of critical conservation measures in the Senate’s bipartisan infrastructure proposal. Specifically, we support the inclusion of funds for active forest management and wildlife crossings, as well as support inclusion of the REGROW Act and reauthorization of the Abandoned Mine Land (AML) program with additional appropriated funding. This will facilitate and grow necessary investments in wildlife habitat, migration corridors, clean water and air, and provide employment opportunities in rural communities.

***Active Forest Management***

Our community appreciates the Energy & Natural Resources Committee’s attention to active vegetation and fuels management in the energy section of the broader infrastructure package. More than \$5 billion in funding is included in the package for several Forest Service programs that harvest, thin, restore, and replant vegetation in strategic locations within National Forests to reduce the risk of wildfires. This legislation will benefit wildlife habitat, provide economic support for rural communities, and the ongoing resilience of the domestic forest products industry. For these reasons, our community strongly supports the inclusion of these provisions.

***Wildlife Crossings***

Our organizations support the inclusion of provisions to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions and enhance fish and wildlife habitat connectivity. Wildlife roadway collisions are a tragic reality,

especially for those living in rural areas, with over one million accidents reported annually. In addition to threats to human safety, each year these events result in millions of dollars in damages and lost wildlife value. This infrastructure package represents an opportunity to invest in America's roadways to minimize these costly events and improve road and highway safety for motorists and wildlife alike, while supporting jobs and local economies.

### ***Orphaned Wells & Abandoned Mines***

When left unchecked, orphaned wells and coal mines leak methane, release toxic air pollutants, threaten wildlife habitat, pollute water, degrade soil, and damage localized ecosystems. Addressing these issues will benefit fish and wildlife, as well as the hunters and anglers who depend on these species. Without action, these abandoned sites will continue to pollute our air and water, endanger our communities, and indefinitely contribute to climate change.

Inclusion of the REGROW Act will protect air, water, wildlife habitat, and our climate, while simultaneously creating tens of thousands of jobs by providing funding to states to plug and remediate all orphan wells across the country. This legislation will also help furnish the necessary tools and incentives for states to find and prioritize the remediation of "undocumented wells."

Reauthorization of the AML program will facilitate the restoration and reclamation of tens of thousands of abandoned mine lands across the country. Many reclaimed mine sites provide early successional habitat utilized by upland birds, and large ungulates like elk, especially in Appalachia. Additional funding for this program will provide essential investment in mine land reclamation throughout the country, stimulating rural economies while supporting habitat for important wildlife species.

We support inclusion of these important provisions in the final infrastructure package and look forward to working with you to ensure passage of this legislation. Thank you for your leadership and continued service on behalf of America's outdoor heritage.

Sincerely,

American Woodcock Society  
Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies  
Archery Trade Association  
Boone & Crockett Club  
Camp Fire Club of America  
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation  
Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports  
Houston Safari Club  
Mule Deer Foundation  
National Association of Forest Service Retirees  
National Deer Association  
National Shooting Sports Foundation  
North American Grouse Partnership  
Pheasants Forever

Quail Forever  
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation  
Ruffed Grouse Society  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership  
Wildlife Forever  
Wildlife Management Institute  
Wildlife Mississippi  
Wild Sheep Foundation

**CC:**

*Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin*  
*Senate Minority Whip John Thune*  
*Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources Chair Joe Manchin III*  
*Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources Ranking Member John Barrasso*  
*Senate Committee on Environment & Public Works Chair Thomas Carper*  
*Senate Committee on Environment & Public Works Ranking Member Shelley Moore Capito*

*Senator Lindsey Graham*  
*Senator Jerry Moran*  
*Senator Bill Cassidy*  
*Senator Susan Collins*  
*Senator Rob Portman*  
*Senator Lisa Murkowski*  
*Senator Mitt Romney*  
*Senator Richard Burr*  
*Senator Mike Rounds*  
*Senator Thom Tillis*  
*Senator Todd Young*

*Senator Kyrsten Sinema*  
*Senator Mark Warner*  
*Senator Jon Tester*  
*Senator Angus King*  
*Senator Chris Coons*  
*Senator Maggie Hassan*  
*Senator John Hickenlooper*  
*Senator Mark Kelly*  
*Senator Jackie Rosen*  
*Senator Jeanne Shaheen*