

Alaska Wilderness League * American Bird Conservancy * American Rivers * Amigos Bravos * Appalachian Voices * Bark * California Native Plant Society * California Wilderness Coalition * Cascadia Wildlands * Center For Biodiversity * Center for Sierra Nevada Conservation * Chattooga Conservancy * Clean Water Action * Conservation Lands Foundation * Conservation Northwest * Defenders of Wildlife * Earthjustice * Environmental Law & Policy Center * Environmental Protection Information Center * Friends of Bell Meadow * Friends of Bell Smith Springs * Friends of Georgia * Friends of the Earth * Friends of the Inyo * Georgia ForestWatch * Great Old Broads for Wilderness * Greater Hells Canyon Council * Greater Yellowstone Coalition * Heartwood * Hip Hop Caucus * Idaho Conservation League * Kentucky Conservation Committee * Kentucky Environmental Foundation * Kentucky Heartwood * Klamath Forest Alliance * KS Wild * Lassen Forest Preservation Group * League of Conservation Voters * Los Padres ForestWatch * Montana Wilderness Association * National Audubon Society * National Parks Conservation Association * Natural Resources Defense Council * New Mexico Sportsmen * New Mexico Wilderness Alliance * Northcoast Environmental Center * Oregon Wild * Pilchuck Audubon Society * SAFE * Safe Alternatives for our Forest Environment * Santa Fe Forest Coalition * Save Nevada's Water:Ban Fracking In Nevada * Selberg Institute * Shawnee Forest Sentinels * Sierra Club * Sierra Forest Legacy * Sitka Conservation Society * Soda Mountain Wilderness Council * South Umpqua Rural Community Partnership * Southeast Alaska Conservation Council * Southern Environmental Law Center * The Lands Council * The Wilderness Society * Trout Unlimited * Washington Wild * Waterkeeper Alliance * Western Environmental Law Center * White River Waterkeeper * Wild Virginia * WildEarth Guardians * Wilderness Workshop

OPPOSE the so-called “Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2017” (H.R. 2936)

October 31, 2017

Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of our millions of our members and supporters, we urge you to OPPOSE the Resilient Federal Forest Act of 2017 (H.R. 2936). This bill is extreme and unfortunately, instead of protecting and restoring our public forests, H.R. 2936 puts our forests, communities and wildlife at risk. The provisions offered in response to the wildfire funding crisis, even in this most recent version of the bill, are completely inadequate, leaving unaddressed the largest part of the problem: the growing impact of wildfire suppression on the Forest Service’s annual budget. Further, this bill:

THREATENS COMMUNITIES AND WILDLIFE. The bill promotes irresponsible logging on a massive scale. Science shows that such large-scale logging and roadbuilding without environmental safeguards can increase the risk of uncharacteristic wildfires while also causing erosion, water contamination from herbicide use and runoff; fragmentation of pristine areas; and clear-cuts of old growth destroying habitat for sensitive and commercially important fish and

wildlife from elk to salmon. It threatens communities, recreational businesses and wildlife in the process.

PUTS ENDANGERED SPECIES AT RISK. Our national forests are home to over 400 threatened or endangered species, including one third of the nation's listed bird species and two thirds of our imperiled fish. Yet this bill completely eliminates consultation under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and compromises protection for some of America's most iconic wildlife like the Florida panther, native wild trout and black footed ferret. This attack on the ESA is extreme and unwarranted.

EXEMPTS MASSIVE LOGGING PROJECTS FROM SAFEGUARDS. One of the bill's many waivers would allow timber projects to log as much as 47 square miles of national forest without reviewing the potential harmful impacts on the environment, or notifying the public of those impacts as would currently occur under the National Environmental Policy Act.

REVOKES MONUMENT PROTECTION AND PUTS PROTECTED WILDLANDS ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK. The bill promotes harmful logging in otherwise protected roadless areas and wilderness study areas. It revokes protection for a national monument in Oregon and allows the Forest Service to waive stream buffer protections critical to safeguarding waterways and water quality across the National Forest System.

BLOCKS CITIZEN OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY. H.R. 2936 prevents the public from going to court to enforce environmental laws and hold the government accountable when it violates the law.

FAILS TO FIX WILDFIRE FUNDING. The cost of fighting fires is consuming over half of the Forest Service's budget, starving the agency's ability to do preventative forest work that could impact fire behavior to the benefit of communities, wildlife and watersheds. The wildfire funding language presented in this bill will not effectively fix the problem. It would leave the Forest Service spending over half of its budget (and up to two thirds of its budget by 2021) on wildfire suppression which is unsustainable and starves all national forests of resources for basic functions.

Not all forest management is detrimental to our forests. Indeed, responsible management can help restore forests degraded from decades of fire suppression and historical management, while producing significant social and economic benefits. Logging without laws, however, is a different story. H.R. 2936 guts environmental safeguards, excludes the public from participation in decision-making and blocks legal review of projects, undermining legitimate science-based collaborative forest restoration activities that balance the interests of loggers, local communities and conservation organizations. Everyone, including those who support responsible management of federal forests, should reject this legislation.

PLEASE OPPOSE H.R. 2936!

Sincerely,

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Appalachian Voices
Bark
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California Wilderness Coalition
Cascadia Wildlands
Center For Biodiversity
Center for Sierra Nevada Conservation
Chattooga Conservancy
Clean Water Action
Conservation Lands Foundation
Conservation Northwest
Defenders of Wildlife
Earthjustice
Environmental Law & Policy Center
Environmental Protection Information Center
Friends of Bell Meadow
Friends of Bell Smith Springs
Friends of Georgia
Friends of the Earth
Friends of the Inyo
Georgia ForestWatch
Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Greater Hells Canyon Council
Greater Yellowstone Coalition
Heartwood
Hip Hop Caucus
Idaho Conservation League
Kentucky Conservation Committee
Kentucky Environmental Foundation
Kentucky Heartwood
Klamath Forest Alliance
KS Wild
Lassen Forest Preservation Group
League of Conservation Voters
Los Padres ForestWatch
Montana Wilderness Association
National Audubon Society
National Parks Conservation Association
Natural Resources Defense Council
New Mexico Sportsmen
New Mexico Wilderness Alliance
Northcoast Environmental Center

Oregon Wild
Pilchuck Audubon Society
SAFE
Safe Alternatives for our Forest Environment
Santa Fe Forest Coalition
Save Nevada's Water:Ban Fracking In Nevada
Selberg Institute
Shawnee Forest Sentinels
Sierra Club
Sierra Forest Legacy
Sitka Conservation Society
Soda Mountain Wilderness Council
South Umpqua Rural Community Partnership
Southeast Alaska Conservation Council
Southern Environmental Law Center
The Lands Council
The Wilderness Society
Trout Unlimited
Washington Wild
Waterkeeper Alliance
Western Environmental Law Center
White River Waterkeeper
Wild Virginia
WildEarth Guardians
Wilderness Workshop