



What They Are Saying: MT Conservation, Public Lands Leaders Statements of Support for Daines' Leadership on the Great American Outdoors Act

“Montanans love our outdoor heritage, public lands and open spaces. The Great American Outdoors Act is an important investment in conservation, it secures resources needed to care for our public lands and helps us seize future opportunities to enhance the places where we work and play. The Senate’s overwhelming vote to fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund and invest in our national parks and public lands reflects the importance of these places to our economy, our communities and our well-being. Though we still need a positive vote in the House, we’re grateful to Senator Daines for his leadership and dedication in guiding the Great American Outdoors act through the Senate.”—**Mark Aagenes, Director of External Affairs, Montana Chapter of The Nature Conservancy**

“Western Energy Alliance strongly supports taking funding from oil and natural gas production on non-park federal lands and directing it into fixing our national parks. For too long our parks have suffered from eroded trails, crumbling roads and bridges, and other maintenance shortfalls. Offshore oil and natural gas production already provides 100% of the funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and this bill would enable onshore oil and natural gas royalty and lease revenues to go directly into our beloved national parks.” **Kathleen Sgamma, President of Western Energy Alliance**

"The Great American Outdoor Act is landmark conservation to protect our public lands. The full funding of the LWCF is a benefit to our parks and forests at the local and state level. Mystery Ranch appreciates Senator Daines leadership in support of this Bill not only for the state of Montana but also for the nation's public lands and National Parks." – **Alex Kutches, Mystery Ranch**

“Outdoor recreation experience providers from all across the country are thrilled to see the Senate pass the Great American Outdoors Act,” **said Aaron Bannon, Executive Director of America Outdoors.** “The backlog in maintenance and infrastructure on public lands has led to access issues and to subpar infrastructure, and the problem has only worsened over years. Better-maintained roads, trails, boatramps, campgrounds, and more will ensure that operators can worry less about getting to the places they need to get to, and instead focus on providing world-class outdoor experiences to those seeking authentic connection with the crown jewels and hidden gems that make up America’s awe-inspiring landscape.”

"This is good news for all sportsmen and sportswomen concerned about access to places to hunt, fish, target shoot and recreate on public lands. Hunters and recreational shooters need access to public lands, and the Land and Water Conservation Fund projects are opening up access across the country." - **Tim Brady, President, Boone and Crockett Club**

"The Senate's passage advances one of the most significant conservation bills in 50 years a tremendous step closer to enactment. The Great American Outdoors Act includes full and permanent funding for the LWCF, which will be an essential tool for America's economic recovery through the improvement of access to our beloved public lands. LWCF can also play an important role in helping to revive and grow local outdoor recreation economies. We commend Senators Daines, Tester, Manchin, Gardner and all of the bipartisan leaders in the U.S. Senate for championing this critical conservation program." - **Larry Selzer, President and CEO, The Conservation Fund**

"Senator Daines today asked for 'overwhelming affirmation' of the Great American Outdoors Act in the Senate, and thanks to his leadership the Senate delivered exactly that with a 73-25 vote," **said Glenn Marx of the Montana Association of Land Trusts.** "Senate passage of the GAOA is a significant accomplishment, but two more major steps are needed: House passage and the President's signature. When those actions are taken, the Congress and America will have achieved a generational conservation accomplishment, and LWCF champions like Steve Daines will be a major reason why."

"The passage of the Great American Outdoors Act is a truly historic conservation victory that will ensure that America's public lands and treasured landscapes endure for future generations. It will also accelerate our economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis by creating hundreds of thousands of good jobs, while expanding outdoor recreational opportunities for every community in the country. We are grateful for the bipartisan leadership of Senators Cory Gardner (R-Colo.), Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.), Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.), Steve Daines (R-Mont.) and Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) to pass this legislation. We urge the House to act swiftly to pass the bill and send it to the President's desk." - **Collin O'Mara, president and CEO, National Wildlife Federation**

"This is a truly incredible day for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the communities in Montana and across America who depend on it for access to the outdoors. The Senate vote to assure permanent, dedicated, full funding — a first in the 55-year history of the program — sends the clearest possible signal that these funds should and will be used to provide access for all, protect the places Montanans love, and sustain our nation's vital outdoor economy. The Trust for Public Land is especially grateful to Senator Daines for all his work with Senate colleagues and the White House to advance the bill, and we urge quick action in the House so the LWCF promise to the American people can at long last be honored." - **Dick Dolan, Northern Rockies Director, The Trust for Public Land**

"Finally a public lands conservation and access enhancement bill that will receive the federal funding and attention it desperately needs." - **Derek Aspinwall, Owner and Founder, Aspinwall Mountain Wear**

“The Senate's bipartisan vote reflects what we all know -- protecting and enhancing our public lands is an essential part of the American ethos,” said **Environment America’s Senior Conservation Program Director Steve Blackledge**. “By locking in \$900 million a year for outdoor projects, plus providing a short-term infusion of money to address maintenance issues, the Senate has acted to enhance America’s beautiful public lands. We thank them and we urge the House to follow suit.”

“Tourism is a leading industry in Montana and by supporting national parks and public lands, Senator Daines has secured the permanent funding in the Great American Outdoors Act to plan for Montana’s future with more certainty. Our lodging members rely on visitors to support growing more jobs and when we invest in our public lands, we ensure a better guest experience, unleashing more job opportunities with industry growth. We appreciate Senator Daines’ leadership with the entire Montana delegation to push this bipartisan legislation to the forefront to finally become law.”—**Karen Baker, Chair, MT Lodging & Hospitality Assoc. & GM, Grouse Mountain Lodge in Whitefish, MT**

“The Great American Outdoors Act will boost local economies, create jobs, and ensure universal access to outdoor recreation. It will also ensure there is clean drinking water, habitat protection, disaster risk reduction, and carbon removal activities. Thank you Senator Daines for leading on this important issue. We applaud the Senate for approving consistent funding of conservation and public land infrastructure and hope it continues moving through Congress.” – **Fred Humphries, Corporate Vice President of U.S. Government Affairs at Microsoft**

“Southwest Montana is in great support of Senator Daines’s Conservation Bill the “Great American Outdoors act. Both Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks, our national treasures, are in great need of repairs and upgrades and ongoing plans to keep them well-maintained. They are top outdoor attractions in the country and they are great economic drivers for the whole state. The Land and Water Conservation will big a big boost for outdoor recreational enthusiasts everywhere as Montana is one of the top states for unspoiled scenery and access. This bill will help enhance, preserve, sustain, and allow spectacular enjoyment of the natural outdoors for us now and for the generations of children yet to come.” - **Sarah Bannon, Southwest Montana Executive Director.**

"Today's U.S. Senate passage of the Great American Outdoors Act can be celebrated by all those who enjoy our public lands," said **Alec Underwood, Federal Conservation Campaigns Director with the Montana Wildlife Federation**. "Fully funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund and investing in our public lands will benefit Montana's hunters and anglers, and protect our fish, wildlife, and outdoor recreation opportunities for future generations to come. We commend Senator Daines on his commitment to passing this critical bipartisan legislation."

“I applaud Senator Daines and the rest of the Senate for passing the bipartisan Great American Outdoors Act, which will address the National Park Service’s nearly \$12 billion deferred maintenance backlog and permanently fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund – two ASCE priorities,” said **K.N. Gunalan “Guna”, Ph.D., PE, President, American Society of Civil Engineers**. “This legislative victory is one step closer to raising the grade on our parks

infrastructure, which currently sits at a D+, and will help get the economy moving and improve the quality of life for all citizens.”

“On top of cuts to funding and staffing, our national parks are dealing with a growing backlog of repair needs, totaling nearly \$12 billion,” said **Theresa Pierno, President and CEO of the National Parks Conservation Association**. “In Montana alone, national parks are facing more than \$187 million in needed repairs to crumbling trails, roads and buildings from Yellowstone to Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area. Today, with Senator Daines’ help to pass the Great American Outdoors Act, we are one step closer to ensuring our parks can continue to provide safe and enjoyable conditions for millions of visitors, support local communities and protect the resources that help tell our nation’s stories.”

“The Great American Outdoors Act is the single greatest piece of conservation and outdoor recreation legislation passed in decades,” said **Jessica Turner, executive director of Outdoor Recreation Roundtable**. “It is proof that the outdoors crosses party lines and resonates with all Americans. We applaud Senate Republicans and Democrats — particularly Senators Cory Gardner (R-CO), Joe Manchin (D-WV), Steve Daines (R-MT) and Martin Heinrich (D-NM) and the other Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and Restore our Parks Act sponsors — for working together tirelessly to get this done. The entire outdoor recreation industry thanks every Senator who supported this bill and looks forward to the House moving quickly to pass this measure so we can finally fully fund LWCF and begin the much-needed work on rebuilding infrastructure on our public lands and waters.”

“The Senate passage of the Great American Outdoors Act is a major victory for the hiking community that will expand access to the outdoors for all. With the pandemic shining a bright light on the need for equitable access to natural spaces, securing LWCF permanent funding and tackling a substantial portion of the public lands maintenance backlog will greatly increase recreation opportunities on public lands and in neighborhoods across the country, including those that have historically lacked access. The House of Representatives must quickly take up and pass this legislation and send it to the President to be signed into law.” **Kate Van Waes, Executive Director, American Hiking Society**

“Senator Daines’ diligence to preserve our parks and public lands has paid off with Senate passage of the landmark Great American Outdoors Act,” said **Marcia Argust, project director of The Pew Charitable Trusts’ Restore America’s Parks campaign**. “Our national parks and public lands are economic engines for the communities that depend on the billions of dollars that visitors spend each year in nearby cities and towns across the nation, especially in Montana.”

“Thanks to Senator Daines’ leadership as a member of the Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus, the Great American Outdoors Act will provide additional public hunting, fishing and recreational shooting access and opportunity for generations to come. The Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation salutes Senator Daines for his unwavering commitment to advancing this milestone legislation for the benefit of land, water, people, fish and wildlife habitat and our nation’s robust outdoor recreation economy.”—**Jeff Crane, President Congressional Sportsmen Foundation**

"The Great American Outdoors Act is a great victory for public lands and for our economy here in the Rocky Mountain West," said **Teresa Martinez, Executive Director of the Continental Divide Trail Coalition**. "Full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund is vital to our efforts to complete the Continental Divide Trail, and will bring investment and new recreation opportunities to communities of all sizes. The restoration fund will address critical maintenance needs on our trails and forests, and create much-needed jobs in rural areas. We are grateful to Senator Daines for his leadership on this bipartisan effort, and thrilled that we are one giant step closer to seeing that happen with the Senate's passage of the Great American Outdoors Act."

"Conservation isn't just about acquiring land; it's also about taking care of the lands we already own. This bill will help do so by establishing an innovative fund exclusively devoted to addressing the billions of dollars of unmet maintenance needs in our national parks and other public lands," commented **Brian Yablonski, PERC CEO**. "It's an exciting day for those of us who have worked for years to clean off the tarnish from our crown jewels."

"My outdoor recreational business operates on the doorstep of Glacier National Park and we depend heavily on it as well as Montana's outdoor economy for our livelihoods. The Great American Outdoors Act is a tremendous win and will allow billions of dollars in funding for recreation, conservation and National Park enhancements that would help sustain businesses like mine. I thank Senator Daines for all his hard work to get this done."—**Jeff Baldelli, Co-owner Glacier Raft Company**

I wanted to reach out to express the gratitude of Business for Montana's Outdoors, and the 225 businesses and 4500 jobs we represent - for all of the good work that Senator Daines has done, and continues to do, to try and get the Great American Outdoors Act across the finish line in Congress. At a time when our outdoors have become a pivotal piece of how we will heal and regain our economic strength in Montana, we are even more charged with encouraging the support of good legislation like this, to ensure that our outdoors, public lands, access, community parks and federal parks are funded, and taken care of for future generations. BFMO will continue to applaud and support the Senator's good work with respect to Montana's public lands, and moving forward we are happy to be considered for adding our voice and our name to the supportive statements that show the wide spectrum of support for this work." - **Marne Hayes, Business for Montana's Outdoors**

"Senate passage of the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) is a remarkable achievement in advancing historic bipartisan legislation for our national parks. The National Park Foundation thanks Senator Daines for his longtime support of Montana's majestic national parks, and his leadership on behalf of our special places as Chairman of the Senate Energy & Natural Resources' Subcommittee on National Parks. GAOA will ensure that national parks receive the funding required to address deferred maintenance needs, that parks remain accessible to all Americans, and continue to serve as economic engines for local communities in Montana and across the country." -- **Will Shafroth, President & CEO, National Park Foundation**

"At a time when Americans are more eager than ever to get outside, overdue maintenance at our national campgrounds and parks remains a threat to the entire RV and outdoor industry. The historic Great American Outdoors Act will address years of deferred maintenance backlog and

create sustainable funding for our public lands and national parks into the future. Thanks to Senator Daines' leadership, our cherished national lands will continue to serve as a place of relaxation and refuge for generations of Montanans and visitors alike." - **Russell Pierce, President MMH & RV Dealers Association**

"As a Montana-based company with a mission to connect people to the outdoors and each other, we at Kampgrounds of America, Inc. recognize the need for investment in our public lands and waters and stand in support of the Great American Outdoors Act. We applaud the efforts of Senator Daines and Senator Tester in working to advance this landmark legislation which will support the outdoor recreation economy and make the outdoors more accessible," says **Toby O'Rourke, president and CEO of Kampgrounds of America, Inc.** "Our campgrounds in Montana and across the country serve millions of camping guests who embrace the benefits of being outside. Further, we know from our research that people are prioritizing the outdoors more than ever as the nation emerges from months of stay at home orders, and we believe that outdoor recreation can play a vital role in our nation's recovery both from a health and economic standpoint. Passage of the Great American Outdoors Act will help enable that recovery through ensuring necessary improvements are made to outdoor recreation infrastructure, vital jobs are created and that America's outdoor spaces can be enjoyed for years to come."

"In Montana, our parks and public lands are the heart of our communities. The Senate passage of the Great American Outdoors Act gets us a step closer to Congress keeping a promise to Montanans to invest in the natural, cultural and recreational resources that anchor our communities. We thank Sen. Daines for his work to get us to this point, and look forward to getting the Great American Outdoors Act signed into law and full, permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund over the finish line." – **Scott Brennan, Montana State Director at The Wilderness Society**

"NRPA applauds the Senate for passing the Great American Outdoors Act. The Land and Water Conservation Fund is a program that is incredibly important for communities across America. This marks a huge win for our more than 60,000 members and advocates, who work tirelessly to serve the public with parks and trails in urban and rural communities throughout the country. The Great American Outdoors Act enjoys strong bipartisan support for providing critical resources to local communities for conservation, parks and recreation. Now, we urge the House to pass the Great American Outdoors Act and ensure that LWCF becomes fully funded and therefore can effectively serve communities through parks, outdoor recreation, conservation, and health and wellness. It's time for the House to finish the job."—**Kristine Stratton, President and CEO of the National Recreation and Park Association**

"Montana's Outdoor Legacy Foundation strongly supports the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act and appreciates the role that Senator Daines has taken in building the bipartisan support needed to move this iconic conservation legislation to the floor of the Senate for final consideration. Public recreational access is a long-standing priority of Montana's Outdoor Legacy Foundation and this single piece of legislation represents the boldest step forward in decades towards advancing opportunities for public access for hunting, angling and just getting outdoors. While the conservation community has seen numerous attempts to implement full and permanent funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (a \$900 million annual

commitment), the Great American Outdoors Act and the bipartisan coalition built by Montana's own Senator Daines has now positioned this legislation for final passage out of the Senate. In addition, the Great American Outdoors Act recognizes the importance of maintaining recreation-based infrastructure on federal lands by including a \$9.5 billion commitment (over 5 years) to our Federal land management agencies to repair and restore this crumbling infrastructure. Montana's Outdoor Legacy Foundation looks forward to the next steps towards moving this legislation for final signature.” - **Mitch King, Montana Outdoor Legacy Foundation**

“We are thankful for the leadership of Senator Daines to secure permanent, dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and encourage Congress to act. Its five decades of success and potential to make additional lasting impact are why we wholeheartedly make this endorsement. The Fund, and ultimately the ranching, conservation, recreation and most importantly the vitality of our rural communities in all our states, deserves the full support of all Americans.” – **Gary Burnett, Executive Director, Heart of the Rockies Initiative**

“On behalf of the SWMMBA Board I want to extend our thanks to Senator Daines for his championing of the Great American Outdoors Act by both co-signing and working across the aisle to ensure it's swift passage through the US Senate. As you and the Senator are aware, this act will do a great deal to improve federal public lands access for our membership, as well as all trails users who experience our federal public lands. The Senator's hard work on this bill is very much appreciated. Thank you Senator Daines, and thank you Dan for all the work getting us to this point.” –**Ian, SWMMBA**

“Pairing Montanan’s love for public lands with funding infrastructure is win-win. We are very pleased that Sen. Daines was able to help push the Great American Outdoors Act forward. Let’s Build Montana.” -**David Smith, Executive Director Montana Contractors Association**

“Weyerhaeuser appreciates the leadership of Senator Daines on the introduction and passage of the Great American Outdoors Act. This act will provide vital long-term stability and consistent funding for the Forest Legacy Program, which has been the key federal program that allows private forest landowners to put important working forests under conservation easements. This federal program complements strong investment from states in forest conservation, and it provides critical support for keeping working forests on a continuous cycle of growing, harvesting and replanting. Senator Daines is a champion of conservation, forests and forest products, and his leadership on the Great American Outdoors Act will provide for sustainable stewardship of forestland for the long-term benefit of the state and country.”– **Kristen Sawin, Weyerhaeuser**

We commend Sen. Daines for his role in passing the Great American Outdoor Act in the Senate, which includes full, permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This achievement shows how much we can get done for public land protection in Montana when our Congressional delegation is working together on behalf of public land legislation that Montanans overwhelmingly support. We look forward to more of these same achievements in the near future.—**Montana Wilderness Association, Ben Gabriel**

“Dear Senator Daines, As the President CEO I am writing on behalf of Glacier Country Regional Tourism Commission, to support you as a co-sponsor of the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) (S.3422). We are the officially recognized destination marketing organization for the eight Northwest Montana counties known as Glacier Country. Our region is home to Glacier National Park, National Bison Range, four national forests, five wilderness areas and millions of acres of public lands that benefit the most intact ecosystem in the lower 48 states and a vibrant travel economy that brings \$1.2 billion nonresident and \$351 million resident spending (new revenue) to our 75 communities in-region each year - \$3.7 billion nonresident and \$1.2 billion statewide. Outdoor recreation drives our industry with Glacier and Yellowstone National Park visitation averaging well over 7 million visitors in the last two years. As great as our public lands are, they have been overwhelmed with stalled efforts and too little funding to create better access for people of all abilities, allow for healthy stewardship and catch up on a mountain of maintenance backlog. These investments are critical to reigniting local economies not only in Montana but across the nation, creating jobs, helping small businesses get back on their feet, and providing urgently needed stimulus to the outdoor recreation and greater tourism industry that generates more than 5.2 million American jobs and contributes \$778 billion in national economic output each year. Thank you. We support you and our Montana delegation in passing the bipartisan Great American Outdoors Act.”—**Glacier Country Tourism, Racene Friede**

“Montana Trout Unlimited thanks Senator Daines for his commitment to supporting Montana’s public lands heritage and his tireless efforts to secure permanent, dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund through the Great American Outdoors Act. Today’s vote gets us one step closer to closing the deal for our state’s coldwater fisheries and public access. As the Senate takes up the legislation this week, we are also excited to see progress on addressing decades of maintenance backlogs on our public lands that benefit our wild and native fish and their habitat.” - **David Brooks, Executive Director, Montana Trout Unlimited**

“I am very proud of the work Senator Daines has done on behalf of Montana sportsmen and outdoor recreation... MOGA has supported this bipartisan effort from the beginning. Thank you Senator Daines for your leadership on this important effort and thank you for your insistence that it be bipartisan.” – **Mac Minard, Executive Director, Montana Outfitters and Guides Association**

“The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation is proud to stand with Senator Daines as we recognize his leadership in securing Senate approval of critical legislation benefitting the multiple uses of our treasured public lands, securing public access and improving infrastructure for outdoor recreation and habitat management. This is a significant and tremendous step forward in benefitting conservation work nationwide, but we’re not there yet. We strongly encourage the House of Representatives to pass this bill and send it to President Trump without delay,” said **Kyle Weaver, RMEF President and CEO**.

Dear Senator Daines: **Russell County Sportsmen’s Association of Central Montana** strongly supports the Great American Outdoors Act and specifically FULL funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. As you are aware, Montanans are only second to Vermont in the amount of time we spend outdoors. All aspects of S. 3422 will provide, into the future, the quality of outdoor experience that our grandparents and explorers observed.

Dear Senator Daines: Thank you for the great work on getting the LCW permanently funded. Our community has benefited from this fund and I know a great deal of smaller rural communities could benefit as well from the opportunities afforded by this fund. If you need any further help or information on this matter, I would be honored to get involved. Thank you Senator and hope to see you on the Mountain Front soon! - **Chris Hindoien, Mayor of Choteau**

“The Great American Outdoors Act is smart conservation that is long overdue. This bipartisan bill will make it easier for hunters and anglers to access natural resources while also improving our trails and recreation sites. It also makes lasting investments in our outdoor recreation economy at a time when we need to get Americans back to work. We want to thank all the co-sponsors for working across the aisle and advancing this legislation.” - **Whit Fosburgh, president and CEO of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership**

“Sportsmen and women have been leading voices in the effort to fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund, as well as providing maintenance funding to agencies that manage places critical to public access and fish and wildlife. Our public lands and waters have traditionally been places of refuge, of solace and of adventure. Never has this been truer than right now, when we need to recenter and get our minds right. Now is the moment to strategically invest in these places of refuge by funding shovel-ready projects that sustain important habitat, increase public access opportunities, and get people back to work. Backcountry Hunters & Anglers thanks Sen. Daines for recognizing the importance of these strategic investments and we look forward to seeing the Great American Outdoors Act enacted into law.” - **Land Tawney, Backcountry Hunters & Anglers president and CEO**

"There's a good reason the Land and Water Conservation Fund has enjoyed bipartisan support since the 1960's: it's just good policy. For more than 55 years, LWCF has supported and funded the open spaces and public land that we in Montana rely on for work, for play, and for our way of life. Thank you to Senator Daines for helping to guarantee full and permanent funding for this essential piece of legislation." - **Ben Horan, Executive Director of Mountain Bike Missoula**

“The City of Great Falls appreciates Senator Daines’ support for the Land Water Conservation Fund. For many years, the City has utilized the LWCF appropriations to complete a wide variety of projects. These projects help support and develop park land and recreational facilities for Great Falls residents and visitors.” – **Greg Doyon, City Manager of Great Falls**

"Over the years Billings has received almost \$2 million to fund construction and repairs in our parks. The GAOA will be a great help as we plan future projects and address a backlog of maintenance needs. Parks and trails are critical to our Western quality of life. They attract visitors and support our economy. Senator Daines has fought long and hard to get this football over the goal line, and we appreciate his efforts." – **Bill Cole, Mayor of Billings**

“Senator Daines has my trust on any conservation plans. In the past, he has always kept Montana and the public’s best interest in mind. Whether it be using natural resources or saving access and land for Montanans and their children to use responsibly- he always comes through. He really

cares and acts responsibly when it comes to conservation.” – **Brad Butler, Owner of Sweetwater Trucking**

“As one of the country’s largest national parks concessionaires, employing more than 1,800 people each year at the national parks, Delaware North is grateful for Senator Daines’ leadership in working to address the longstanding parks maintenance backlog. America’s national parks are treasures that should be protected, preserved and maintained, and this bipartisan bill will help ensure they are for generations to come.” - **Scott Socha, President, Delaware North’s parks and resorts division**