April 14, 2015

Dear State and National Decision Makers:

America is known for its wide open spaces, seemingly endless mountain ranges, famous rivers and abundant fish and wildlife. Fundamental to this celebrated legacy is our national system of public lands, which is available to all Americans for hunting, fishing, camping and other forms of recreation.

As sportsmen-based organizations, we are alarmed that some decision makers are promoting the idea that federal public lands should be transferred to individual states or sold to private interests. We write to you today to strongly oppose this misguided approach.

America’s public lands – managed by agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management – provide important fish and wildlife habitat and public access for hunting and fishing. Millions of American sportsmen use these lands each year to spend time with their families, challenge themselves physically and put food on their tables. Public lands and the activities they support benefit local businesses and contribute to America’s $646 billion annual outdoor recreation economy.

Sportsmen know firsthand that criticizing the management of federal public lands is easy, but the transfer of these lands to individual states is not a legitimate option for addressing management challenges. States are simply not equipped to support the enormous costs associated with fighting wildfires, maintaining roads and trails, treating noxious weeds and conducting habitat restoration. The likely result of state ownership would be the sale of public lands to private interests, where millions of acres would be closed to public access and an American birthright would be lost.

We ask that you take steps to voice your support for America’s public lands legacy and reject efforts to dispose of, sell or transfer federal public lands.

Sincerely,

Regional and National Organizations
American Fly Fishing Trade Association
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
Bear Trust International
Berkley Conservation Institute/Pure Fishing
Dallas Safari Club
International Federation of Fly Fishers
International Women Fly Fishers
Izaak Walton League of America
Muley Fanatic Foundation
National Wildlife Federation
National Wild Turkey Federation
Native Fish Society
North American Grouse Partnership
Northwest Guides and Anglers Association
Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association
Orion the Hunters Institute
Pheasants Forever
Pope & Young Club
Public Lands Foundation
Quail Forever
Quality Deer Management Association
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Trout Unlimited
Wildlife Management Institute
Wild Sheep Foundation

Arizona
Anglers United
Arizona Antelope Foundation
Arizona Big Game Super Raffle
Arizona Bowhunters Association
Arizona Chapter Safari Club International
Arizona Council of Trout Unlimited
Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society
Arizona Elk Society
Arizona Flycasters Club
Arizona Houndsmen
Arizona Outdoor Sports
Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation
Arizona Wildlife Federation
Coconino Sportsmen
Mohave Sportsman Club
Outdoor Experience 4 All
Xtreme Predator Callers
1.2.3. Go...

California
California Deer Association
California Waterfowl Association

Colorado
Colorado Bowhunters Association
Colorado Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
Colorado Council of Trout Unlimited
Colorado Wildlife Federation
Muley Fanatic Foundation of Colorado
Rocky Mountain Bighorn Society

Idaho
Ada County Fish & Game League
Blackfoot River Bowmen
Idaho Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
Idaho Chapter of Safari Club International
Idaho Chapter Wild Sheep Foundation
Idaho Chukar Foundation
Idaho Conservation Officers Association
Idaho Council of Trout Unlimited  
Idaho Poachers Club  
Idaho State Bowhunters  
Idaho Traditional Bowhunters  
Idaho Wildlife Federation  

Montana  
Anaconda Sportsmen Club  
Big Sky Upland Bird Association  
Gallatin Wildlife Association  
Helena Hunters and Anglers  
Hellgate Hunters and Anglers  
Laurel Rod and Gun Club  
Montana Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers  
Montana Bowhunters Association  
Montana Sportsmen Alliance  
Montana Chapter Wild Sheep Foundation  
Montana Wildlife Federation  
Park County Rod and Gun Club  
Public Land/Water Access Association  
Ravalli County Fish & Wildlife Association  
Traditional Bowhunters of Montana  

Nevada  
Coalition for Nevada’s Wildlife  
Nevada Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers  

New Mexico  
Dona Ana Consolidated Sportsmen  
Enchanted Circle Chapter of Trout Unlimited  
Gila-Rio Grande Chapter of Trout Unlimited  
Bosque Chapter of Trout Unlimited  
New Mexico Chapter of Trout Unlimited  
New Mexico Wildlife Federation  
Southwest Consolidated Sportsmen  
Truchas Chapter of Trout Unlimited  

Oregon  
Association of Northwest Steelheaders  
Central Oregon Flyfishers  
Clackamas River Basin Council  
Izaak Walton League, Oregon Division  
Oregon Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers  
Oregon Chapter Foundation for North American Wild Sheep  
Oregon Chapter Mule Deer Foundation  
Oregon Council of Trout Unlimited  
Oregon Hunters Association  
Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation
Steamboaters
Traditional Archers of Oregon

Utah
United Wildlife Cooperative
Utah Airboat Association
Utah Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
Utah Chukar and Wildlife Foundation
Utah Waterfowl Association

Washington
Inland Northwest Wildlife Council
Washington Chapter Wild Sheep Foundation
Washington Council of Trout Unlimited
Wild Steelhead Coalition

Wyoming
Bowhunters of Wyoming
Wyoming Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
Wyoming Federation of Union Sportsmen
Wyoming Wildlife Federation
Yellowstone Country Bear Hunters Association