



The Conservation Alliance

Outdoor Business Giving Back to the Outdoors

October 25, 2018

The Honorable Senator Jon Tester
311 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Senator Steve Daines
320 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Representative Greg Gianforte
1419 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Endorsement for the Yellowstone Gateway Protection Act

Dear Senator Tester, Senator Daines, and Representative Gianforte,

The Conservation Alliance is the only coalition of businesses that fund grassroots conservation organizations working to protect North America's wild places. Our membership is comprised of 230 outdoor-inspired businesses, who contribute to the \$887 billion outdoor recreation industry, which supports more than 7.6 million American jobs and contributes toward healthy communities and healthy economies across the United States. On behalf of The Conservation Alliance and our member companies, we are writing to formally support and endorse the Yellowstone Gateway Protection Act, which recently passed with strong bipartisan out of the House Natural Resources Committee (H.R.4644) and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee (S.941).

This bill permanently withdraws 30,370 acres of public lands from hard rock mineral development in Park County, Montana along the northern gateway to Yellowstone National Park. Our business members ask that the entire Montana delegation continue working together to inform your party leadership that passage of an unencumbered Yellowstone Gateway Protection Act is a priority before the end of the 115th Congress.

This is a Montana-made bill for all Americans. Over 420 members of the local Yellowstone Gateway Business Coalition have been asking for this protection since 2015. Representing a wide diversity of business leaders from mom-and-pop shops to the largest employers in the county; from the fishing industry to high-tech; from the recreation and service industry to agriculture; they confirm what we all know, "Yellowstone is more valuable than gold." Over the past three years, there have been no fewer than six public processes resulting in

hundreds of thousands of comments in favor of protecting the border of the world's first national park and the integrity of the river that bears its name.

On October 8, 2018, Secretary of Interior Ryan Zinke signed Public Land Order #7875 to install a 20-year administrative mineral withdrawal - the maximum allowed by law. This remarkable act was first introduced by then Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell in November 2016. Over the past two elections, protecting Montana's Paradise Valley from expanded hard rock mining has garnered the support of every local elected official and candidate. The Yellowstone Gateway Protection Act has unanimous support from the Park County Commission and Gardiner Chamber of Commerce.

The agricultural heritage, clean flowing waters, migration corridors, property values, abundant wildlife, recreational opportunities and quality of life around Yellowstone National Park supports a growing local recreation economy that contributes to the quality of life in the area and recruitment and retention for local businesses.

Together we can protect those things we all value most - healthy communities, healthy economies and healthy public lands and waters - for future generations.

Thank you for your hard work on this important issue. The outdoor industry looks forward to engaging with your staff to get this bill to the President's desk as soon as possible.

Respectfully Submitted,

John Sterling

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Sterling', written over a light gray rectangular background.

Executive Director
The Conservation Alliance