



The Honorable Jon Tester  
311 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
United States of America

Dear Senator Tester,

The Conservation Alliance is a coalition of businesses that fund grassroots organizations working to protect North America's wild places for their recreation, conservation, and habitat values. For nearly a decade, our members from across the country and in-state - like Bozeman's Oboz Footwear and Whitefish's ZaneRay Group - have been pooling financial resources to support the effort to protect the watershed of Montana's iconic Blackfoot River. On behalf of The Conservation Alliance's 240 business members, please accept our endorsement of the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Act (S.1765).

The Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Act balances forest health, recreation, and conservation - all key ingredients to our sustainable, outdoor recreation economy. Our businesses make and sell products and experiences for use in the outdoors. By protecting and creating access to Montana's public lands, The Blackfoot Clearwater Act is an investment in our economic future. In Montana, the outdoor recreation economy is significant. The Montana Office of Outdoor Recreation reports that Montana's outdoor recreation economy generates \$7.1 billion in consumer spending and sustains 71,000 jobs. In addition to enhancing the state and national outdoor recreation economy, the bill will help sustain thousands of forest restoration jobs that improve fish and wildlife habitat.

In 2017, both Montanan and visiting anglers spent \$919.3 million on fishing. The bill will protect the health of the Blackfoot River and its native trout populations by protecting key tributaries including the North Fork, Monture Creek, Morrell Creek, and West Fork Clearwater. The bill both preserves these important trout habitats and supports Montana's vibrant angling industry. This initiative protects wildlife habitat and wildlife corridors - important to game, like elk, and sensitive species like grizzlies, wolverines, and lynx - by adding nearly 80,000 acres to the Bob Marshall, Scapegoat and Mission Mountains wilderness areas.

Eighty percent of Montanans and millions of annual Montana visitors recreate on Montana's public lands. The Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Act protects existing recreation opportunities like hiking, fishing the world-renowned Blackfoot River, and hunting in the famous Bob Marshall Wilderness, and identifies areas for new mountain bike and snowmobile access. Creating new opportunities for mixed use outdoor recreation is good for business.

The Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Act is a grassroots, Montana-made effort to protect some of the state's most treasured headwaters. Because it balances the varied ways in which the state's public lands are used, it enjoys broad support from the timber, recreation, business, ranching, and conservation communities. We fully support the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Act, and look forward to working with you and the entire Montana delegation to move it across the finish line this Congress. Thank you for your leadership ensuring Montana's wild lands and rivers remain protected for future generations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'KB' with a stylized flourish.

Kirsten Blackburn  
Advocacy Manager  
The Conservation Alliance