

OUTDOOR ALLIANCE

June 14, 2016

Rep. Rob Bishop
Chair, Committee on Natural Resources
123 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. Raul Grijalva
Ranking Member, Committee on Natural Resources
1511 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Natural Resources Committee Markup, H.R. 2316 and H.R. 3650

Outdoor Alliance is a coalition of seven member-based organizations representing the human powered outdoor recreation community. The coalition includes Access Fund, American Canoe Association, American Whitewater, International Mountain Bicycling Association, Winter Wildlands Alliance, the Mountaineers, and the American Alpine Club and represents the interests of the millions of Americans who climb, paddle, mountain bike, and backcountry ski and snowshoe on our nation's public lands, waters, and snowscapes.

We write to express our strong opposition to two bills scheduled for committee markup this week, H.R. 2316, the "Self-Sufficient Community Lands Act," and H.R. 3650, the "State National Forest Management Act of 2015."

H.R. 2316 and H.R. 3650 both propose to turn over wide swaths of National Forest System land to management by advisory committees appointed by state governors (H.R. 2316) or to the states (H.R. 3650). These proposals would undermine collaborative Forest Planning efforts, circumvent established processes for public input and review like the National Environmental Policy Act and the Administrative Procedure Act, and take lands, in practice, out of multiple-use management in favor of timber development to the detriment of recreational and ecological values, as well as science-based management.

More fundamentally, however, these bills would take lands owned in common by all Americans and turn them over to appointed bodies representing a limited range of stakeholders, or to the states with a mandate to prioritize timber development. National Forests are owned in common by all Americans, not just residents of the states in which they are located, and have a wide range of stakeholders beyond timber interests, many of whom may be more geographically dispersed than the states in which they are



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located. These lands provide wildlife habitat and ecosystem services, as well as support for outdoor recreation and the \$646 billion outdoor recreation economy.

Outdoor Alliance does not oppose timber harvest on public lands. The outdoor recreation community does, however, strongly oppose efforts to turn over public lands wholesale to private interests or to states, and we have serious concerns about proposals that are intended to upset procedures aimed at ensuring balance among sometimes-competing uses. These proposals, in a very real way, undercut the ability of national public lands to support outdoor recreation and the outdoor recreation economy by circumventing procedures like Forest Planning that ensure that uses like timber harvest occur in a manner that is cognizant of the other benefits that our National Forests provide.

Best regards,



Adam Cramer
Executive Director
Outdoor Alliance

cc:

Brady Robinson, Executive Director, Access Fund
Wade Blackwood, Executive Director, American Canoe Association
Mark Singleton, Executive Director, American Whitewater
Michael Van Abel, Executive Director, International Mountain Bicycling Association
Mark Menlove, Executive Director, Winter Wildlands Alliance
Tom Vogl, Chief Executive Officer, The Mountaineers
Phil Powers, Executive Director, American Alpine Club

