

April 11, 2022

President Joseph R. Biden Jr.
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

On behalf of many of the country's leading philanthropic institutions, we thank the Biden-Harris Administration for its leadership in setting an ambitious and inclusive conservation vision through the America the Beautiful initiative. We applaud the launch of the \$1 billion America the Beautiful Challenge as a means to leverage federal conservation and restoration investments with private and philanthropic contributions to accelerate land, water, and wildlife conservation efforts across the country. We stand ready to help realize the Administration's vision.

The initial commitment of \$440 million of federal resources over the next five years to the new America the Beautiful Challenge — a public-private grant program, administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) — will provide much needed resources to states, Tribes, territories, local groups, and non-governmental organizations. It will facilitate the coordination of public and private funding for projects across the country to achieve even greater and more lasting positive impacts for communities on the ground. This new mechanism will also deploy funds through a streamlined application process and without cumbersome requirements, which allows for more resources to be spent directly on conservation activities in a timeframe that more closely matches both the challenge and opportunity. We commend the Administration for working to more efficiently to align resources and eliminate unnecessary red tape.

As philanthropic organizations, we are currently investing \$250 million annually to address our country's biodiversity and climate crises by accelerating conservation and stewardship of US lands, ocean, and waters. While we are located in different parts of the United States and have may have different geographic and conservation priorities, we are united by a common understanding that reversing the decline of biodiversity in the U.S. and meeting our climate commitments requires an ambitious national mission

to expand the network of conserved lands, ocean, and waters. By supporting community-led and community-supporting efforts across the U.S., we are ensuring the most resilient landscapes and seascapes, threatened species and habitats, and critical wildlife corridors are linked together.

Together with these protections of our treasured Federal public lands and waters, improved stewardship and restoration on state, Tribal and private lands, farms, forests, grasslands, and wetlands can secure carbon in natural systems and turn carbon sources into sinks that can supply 20% of the climate mitigation needed for the country to achieve carbon neutrality by mid-century. This will have tremendous benefits for the health and wellbeing of our planet and our diverse communities across the U.S.

Between now and 2030, the signatories will continue to support efforts that propel the country toward achieving this vision and the six goals established under America the Beautiful:

1. Creating more parks and safe outdoor opportunities in nature-deprived communities.
2. Supporting Tribal and Indigenous-led conservation and restoration priorities.
3. Expanding collaborative conservation of fish and wildlife habitats and corridors.
4. Increasing access for outdoor recreation.
5. Incentivizing and rewarding the voluntary conservation efforts of fishers, ranchers, farmers, and forest owners.
6. Creating jobs by investing in restoration and resilience projects and initiatives.

We thank the Biden-Harris Administration for its commitment to keeping our communities strong, healthy, and prosperous by tackling biodiversity loss, the climate crisis, and addressing the inequitable access to nature. We stand ready to support these efforts and to work together towards making these ambitious plans a reality.

Sincerely,

444S Foundation

Harold K.L. Castle Foundation

The Christensen Fund

Conservation Alliance

Doris Duke Charitable Foundation

Edgerton Foundation

William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

The Holocene Foundation

The J.M. Kaplan Fund

Lazar Foundation

Merck Family Fund

Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation

Liz Claiborne & Art Ortenberg Foundation

David & Lucile Packard Foundation

Patagonia

William Penn Foundation

The Pew Charitable Trusts

REI Co-op

Resources Legacy Fund

Volgenau Foundation

Walton Family Foundation

Water Foundation

Wilburforce Foundation

The Wyss Foundation