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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC.

NONDEPARTMENTAL WITNESSES

[CLERK'S NOTE.—The subcommittee was unable to hold hearings on nondepartmental witnesses. The statements and letters of those submitting written testimony are as follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ALASKA NATIVE HEALTH BOARD (ANHB)

This testimony is submitted on behalf of the Alaska Native Health Board (ANHB). Thank you Chairperson Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to share our funding priorities for the FY 2022 federal budget, particularly our request for $12.759 billion for the Indian Health Service (IHS). ANHB is the statewide voice on Alaska Native health issues and is the advocacy organization for the Alaska Tribal Health System, which is comprised of Tribal health programs that serve all of the 229 Tribes and over 177,000 Alaska Native and American Indian (AN/AI) people throughout the state. As the statewide Tribal health advocacy organization, ANHB helps Alaska's Tribes and Tribal programs (T/THOs) achieve effective consultation and communication with state and federal agencies on matters of concern.

The historic funding provided to the IHS in the last year has saved countless lives. We are thankful to have been able to work with Congress and the IHS, recognizing the important trust and treaty obligations to our Tribes and their citizens, to implement the response to this deadly pandemic. Those dollars have been critical to ensuring that our providers and communities have had the means to serve our People and fight this pandemic. It is critical that we use this crisis as an opportunity to make real, sustained investments in the Indian health system. As we have seen with the remarkable distribution of the COVID–19 vaccine in Indian Country, when given adequate resources and when Tribal sovereignty is honored, Tribal communities can rise to the challenge. It is now time to take the lessons learned from the COVID–19 pandemic—both positive and negative—to renew the Indian health system. The annual appropriations process is essential to consolidating and sustaining the gains and progress mad over the last year. We must continue to ensure the federal government's trust and treaty obligations by funding critical programs and services receive adequately to fulfill their intended purpose, therefore ANHB provides recommendations below for your consideration for FY 2022 appropriations for the IHS.

Provide Full Funding for the Indian Health Service. As we consider how to ensure the Indian health system can meet the need of health care in Indian Country going forward, the IHS and its Tribal partners under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) must have full funding to deliver critical and adequate care. The COVID–19 pandemic bore open the decades of underfunding our system has received, and Congress recognized this through its increased funding to IHS and Tribes during the pandemic. The FY 2022 Federal Budget must continue to recognize this need by working toward full funding of the IHS and Tribal programs.

The IHS Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup has calculated this need at $48 billion for full funding. While this represents a dramatic increase in funding, it is

imperative that Congress address the true needs of the Indian health system. In FY 2022, the Workgroup requests $12.759 billion for IHS. ANHB supports their full request and reiterates the top 5 priorities for program expansion as follows:

1) Hospitals and Clinics: $4.2 billion
2) Purchased/Referred Care: $2 billion
3) Mental Health: $715 million
4) Alcohol and substance Abuse: $778.5 million
5) Dental Services: $649.7 million

Support for Advance Appropriations for IHS. For many years, Tribes have requested that IHS receive advance appropriations, similar to the Veterans Health Administration. In recent years, it has unfortunately become the norm that IHS does not receive its full annual appropriation until several months (sometimes longer) after the start of the fiscal year, and this has been exacerbated by government shutdowns, when no funding was provided for weeks on end. AN/AI patients should not have to delay their health care due to unrelated political disagreements in Washington, D.C. Funding delays make it impossible for IHS and Tribal health programs to plan and manage their annual budgets. As you know, health systems cannot practically operate on a day to day or week to week basis without knowing the future financial situation of programs. Full advance appropriations for the IHS would promote greater stability in services, medical personnel recruitment and retention, and facilities management. We thank the leadership of this Subcommittee for supporting this important change in previous Congresses. We were also grateful to see President Biden support IHS advance appropriations in his FY 2022 budget request to Congress which was released on May 28, 2021. ANHB urges the Committee to take the necessary steps in the FY 2022 appropriations bill to move IHS to an advance appropriation for FY 2023 and beyond.

Mandatory Funding for Contract Support Costs and 105(l) Lease Payments. We appreciate the Subcommittee's commitment to ensuring that Contract Support Costs (CSC) and 105(l) lease costs are fully funded by including an indefinite discretionary appropriation in FY 2021 for both of these accounts. However, these line items continue to take up a larger and larger percentage of the IHS discretionary budget, thereby leaving little room to expand other services given tight discretionary appropriations caps. We strongly agree with the Subcommittee conclusion in the explanatory statement for the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 regarding 105(l) costs which stated, in part: "that payments for 105(1) leases [. . .] appear to create an entitlement to compensation for 105(1) leases that is typically not funded through discretionary appropriations . . . "

Therefore, we support the President's proposal and ask you to enact mandatory appropriations for CSC and 105(l) lease costs. Doing so, will ensure that other areas of the IHS budget are held harmless by these costs and true increases in critical services line items can move forward. This will enhance care for AN/AI patients and reduce health disparities.

Sanitation Facilities Construction.—During the pandemic, we were told to socially distance and wash our hands to keep COVID–19 from spreading, but for thousands of homes in Alaska Native villages, without access to clean running water or sewer, this was impossible. Roughly 20 percent of rural Alaska Native homes still lack in-home piped water, across 32 communities. This creates significant health risks for our communities. With a backlog of almost $3 billion (approximately $1.7 billion of that in Alaska), the IHS Sanitation Deficiency list cannot keep pace with need. We urge Congress to prioritize Sanitation Facilities Construction funding in FY 2022 and any infrastructure packaging moving through Congress. Furthermore, cost caps and ineligible cost contributions imposed by the IHS decrease project priority and limit the amount of funding going to those projects or eliminate them from funding all together. IHS should eliminate cost caps that would prevent piped water and sewer for these communities. We recommend the Subcommittee review our recent testimony to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on Water Infrastructure Needs for Native Communities.

Fully Fund the Village Built Clinic Lease Program.—Village health clinics supported by the IHS Village Built Clinic (VBC) Lease Program have a long and unique history in Alaska, and provide the only local source of health care in many rural areas. VBC leases, which are vital to the provision of services by Community Health Aides/Practitioners, who provide primary health care services and coordinate patient care through referral relationships with midlevel providers, physicians, and regional hospitals, remain severely underfunded. We ask that Congress fully fund all VBC leases in FY 2022 and thereafter.

Support Expansion of the IHS Joint Venture Program.—The IHS Joint Venture (JV) program provides Tribes with a critical opportunity to build new facilities and

enhance health services. The program is a joint venture where T/THOs build or acquire a facility with their own or other non-IHS funds, and IHS commits to fund the additional staffing and operations costs associated with the new or expanded facility. It has been a cost-effective mechanism to address facilities shortages, because the IHS Facilities Construction Priority List continues to have limited funds. However, in the recent round of JV applications which typically funds finalist applicants, half of top 10 scoring applicants went unfunded. Three of these unfunded projects were in Alaska. We request that the Committee direct IHS to fund all the remaining high-scoring applicants for JV construction projects.

There also remains a significant flaw in the program that leaves Tribal facilities without necessary maintenance and replacement funds. The Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA) requires the Tribe lease the facility to IHS for 20 years at no cost. The JV facility is only eligible to receive a share of IHS's perennially insufficient Maintenance and Improvement (M&I) funding, but is not eligible for a lease under section 105(l) of ISDEAA.[1] This leads to the anomaly that non-JV facilities can be fully funded under 105(l), receiving either fair market rental or the cost elements set out in the regulations, while JV facilities are stuck with only insufficient M&I funds. We request that Congress amend the IHCIA to correct this issue.

Tribal IT Modernization.—Just as IHS has begun its health information technology (HIT) modernization, T/THOs are well underway implementing their own HIT modernization. While this Committee has supported the IHS efforts by appropriating funds for its modernization, T/THOs have had to absorb these costs with their own resources. The process that IHS has begun is simply not working for those T/THOs that have initiated their own HIT modernization. The current state of IHS HIT modernization is where T/THOs were three to five years ago, when these programs implemented their own commercial electronic health record (EHR) solutions. The state of the IHS HIT modernization has been inefficient and slow. Tribes cannot afford to wait for the IHS HIT modernization process to catch up to where Tribal programs are currently. This issue has been exacerbated in the wake of the COVID–19 pandemic when EHRs and telehealth services have become critical to continued health care delivery. Just as IHS is working on its HIT modernization, T/THOs are working to improve their systems as well to meet the changing and growing demands of HIT.

This Congressional investment in IHS modernization could potentially result in recurring Tribal shares and become contractible through ISDEAA agreements. This is inherently unfair to T/THOs that have already invested their own funding to modernize HIT. This is compounded by the fact that IHS has retained all of the funding provided by Congress for its HIT modernization at IHS–HQ to cover the costs of their process to replace RPMS.

We recommend that the Committee direct IHS to consult with Tribes on how funding provided by Congress can support T/THO modernization efforts and how Tribal shares related to HIT will be defined and funded under IHS' modernization efforts. Further, we recommend the committee include language which would allow IHS to reimburse T/THOs for costs previously incurred to implement their own HIT modernizations.

Extend Self-Governance Options to Other Health and Human Services Agencies and Programs.—We have long advocated for extension of Tribal self-determination and self-governance for programs outside of the IHS. T/THOs have demonstrated how successful programs can be run when they are responsive and culturally attentive under the administration of Tribes. We urge the Subcommittee to work with other relevant committees to support and fund pilot programs to allow Tribes to self-determine other Health and Human Services programs which serve their communities.

The success of these self-governance initiatives is never truer than when the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) is considered. Consistent with this aim, Congress should authorize SDPI participants the option of receiving their federal funds through either a grant (as currently used) or self-governance funding mechanisms under ISDEAA. SDPI has also not had a funding increase since FY 2004 and recent short-term reauthorizations have shown how destabilizing funding uncertainty can be. Therefore, we recommend permanent reauthorization for SDPI at a minimum base of $250 million per year with annual inflationary increases. We urge you to work with your Congressional colleagues to ensure that SDPI receives a funding increase of at least $250 million per year.

Increase Funds to Behavioral Health and Reduce Dependence on Competitive Grants. Over the last year, in response to the incredible behavioral health needs seen due to the COVID–19 pandemic, Congress has made historic investments in

[1] 25 U.S.C. § 5324(l); 25 C.F.R. Part 900, Subpart H.

behavioral and mental health funding for Indian Country. The increases we have seen must continue not only to address the increased need from the pandemic era, but to address the existing need which was underfunded in previous appropriations. As part of this, we encourage the Committee to fund the above Mental Health budget request of $715 million and the Alcohol and Substance Abuse request for $778.15 million. We also urge the Committee to direct the IHS to move any behavioral or mental health funding being deliver via grants to Tribal compacts and contracts, such as the Substance Abuse and Suicide Prevention program (SASP), Domestic Violence Prevention Program (DVPP), and Zero Suicide Initiative.

In addition to the critical funding needs for behavioral health outlined above, we also support moving away from competitive grants for federal funding mechanisms more generally. The federal trust responsibility does not require that we jump through hoops and onerous applications to see that services are provided to our People. Grants unfairly pit Tribes against Tribes, when all are deserving of critical resources. Therefore, we agree with other Tribal leaders and continue to support broad based funding for our health systems across all federal agencies.

Plan for the Future with Dedicated Funding for Preventative Health Services.—COVID–19 has highlighted the tremendous need and tremendous gap in public health funding that currently exists. Like other governments, Tribes have the responsibility to provide public health services for their people. Yet the federal government provides few resources to Tribal communities for this purpose. AN/AIs experience health disparities for a variety of health conditions such as such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancer and other largely preventable chronic conditions. Treating these chronic health conditions imposes unnecessary challenges on Tribal health systems and IHS. We support long-term, sustained, full investment in Tribal public health infrastructure so that Tribal communities have the resources available to respond quickly when the next crisis hits.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ALLIANCE FOR THE GREAT LAKES

The Alliance for the Great Lakes is a nonpartisan nonprofit working across the Great Lakes region to protect and restore the Great Lakes. Founded in 1970, we have worked for 50 years on programs to ensure public access to clean, safe and affordable drinking water; protect water quality; stop the establishment and spread of harmful invasive aquatic species, including invasive carp; reduce plastic pollution; and advocate for increased drinking and wastewater infrastructure funding and programs to ensure that water remains affordable for all Americans. Our membership and supporters are located throughout the eight states in the Great Lakes region and each year we mobilize more than 15,000 volunteers to take action to ensure that our shorelines and beaches are healthy, safe and clean.

The Great Lakes are not only a national treasure but are a globally significant resource containing 20 percent of the world's available freshwater supply. The Lakes provide some 30 million Americans with drinking water and are vital to communities in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. The Great Lakes not only provide water, but they also support jobs, commerce, agriculture, transportation, and tourism for millions of Americans. Protecting the health of the Great Lakes is integral to the environmental and economic health of the region.

But the Great Lakes face continued threats from the harmful legacy of decades of pollution that threaten our communities with cancer-—causing contaminants, drinking water restrictions, and fish consumption advisories. Action is needed at all levels of government to address these threats, as well as emerging issues associated with climate change.

The FY 2022 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations bill under this Subcommittee's jurisdiction funds an array of programs and projects in the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of the Interior that are critical to the restoration and protection of the Great Lakes. As a member of the Healing Our Waters Coalition we have previously provided the Subcommittee with funding recommendations for several programs and we reiterate the need for robust funding for these programs. Our written testimony, however, will highlight just two of the programs under your consideration that are funded within the Environmental Protection Agency: the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and water infrastructure funding.

GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) is an Environmental Protection Agency funded grant program that supports state, federal, tribal and local efforts

to protect and restore the Great Lakes. GLRI funding is allocated by a 16-member federal interagency task force and regional working group to address water quality issues associated with pollution and legacy contaminants; habitat loss/degradation and invasive species consistent with a five-year action plan containing measurable goals and objectives.

Since its inception in 2010, $2.7 billion has been provided to fund more than 5,400 projects. These projects are benefiting Great Lakes communities throughout the region, and we are seeing impressive results:

—Four Areas of Concern—essentially areas with toxic legacy pollution—have been cleaned up and delisted since the GLRI began and the management actions necessary to delist 10 additional Area of Concerns have also been completed. This is striking as in the previous two decades before the GLRI funding began, only one Area of Concern had been cleaned up. Areas of Concern threaten coastal communities around the Lakes and a recent estimate is that there remains nearly $1 billion in work associated with cleaning up this toxic legacy pollution in the remaining sites where it is located. Additional GLRI funding is needed to continue tackling this legacy pollution issue.

—91 beneficial use impairments (BUIs) were addressed in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, more than nine times the total number of BUIs removed in the preceding 22 years.

—Farmers have implemented nutrient management actions on nearly 2 million acres of rural lands through 2017 to reduce erosion and farm runoff that contributes to detrimental water quality impacts, including harmful algal blooms.

For every $1 the GLRI invested through 2016 to clean up toxic hot spots in Areas of Concern, control invasive species, restore wildlife habitat, protect wetlands, and reduce harmful algae it is estimated that the investment will produce more than $3 in additional economic activity regionwide through 2036. Accordingly, the GLRI is revitalizing our waterfronts and leading a resurgence in water—based outdoor recreation and increasing tourism across the region. Still, as noted above, much more work needs to be done. Toxic pollutants, invasive species, deteriorating habitats, and unsafe waters threaten the region, endangering human and wildlife health, lowering property values, and hurting the region's economy.

The FY 2022 President's Budget proposes to fund GLRI at $340 million, an increase of $10 million over last year's enacted level. We are pleased to see this proposed increase as it supports the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes and recognizes the strong track record of program success. However, the proposed funding level in the President's Budget falls short of the authorized level for this program and we request that the Subcommittee appropriate $375 million, an increase of $35 million over the budget request, for this effort. This funding level is consistent with the congressional project reauthorization in the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act (P.L. 116–294, Jan. 5, 2021) which authorizes $375 million in funding for FY 2022. In addition to supporting states, tribes and local communities, GLRI funding also supports US Treaty obligations under the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 between the US and Canada and its Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. The additional funding in FY 2022 will allow the GLRI program to accelerate the ability to clean up the most polluted sites and delist more Areas of Concern, reduce phosphorus loads entering the lakes, and control and prevent the spread of invasive species such as invasive carp.

INVESTING IN WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Another important area under the Subcommittee's jurisdiction is funding for water infrastructure. We are pleased that the President's Budget includes a $589 million increase for several water infrastructure programs funded within the Environmental Protection Agency, including the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and several other programs that support water infrastructure repair and replacement and build climate resilience.

The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that nationwide approximately $743 billion is needed over the next twenty years to repair, replace and upgrade water infrastructure. In the Great Lakes alone it is estimated that the eight states need $188 billion to upgrade aging water infrastructure. Furthermore, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that federal funding for water and wastewater utilities has decreased fourfold since 1980, leaving state and local governments to pick up the tab. These costs are becoming increasingly difficult for communities to afford and the passing on of infrastructure repair costs to consumers has created an affordability crisis for many across the country, with wastewater prices more than doubling over the last twenty years.

Based upon the need for water infrastructure repairs, replacements and upgrades nationally and in the Great Lakes region, the Alliance believes that we need at least $10 billion annually for each of the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds. Although this need far outstrips available annual funding, we are encouraged and pleased to see the FY 2022 President's Budget propose increases for these programs which are a necessary first step toward addressing the myriad of issues plaguing water infrastructure utilities and local communities. Accordingly, we encourage you to appropriate funds for these programs at least at the President's Budget request if not more for FY 2022. We also encourage the Congress to set aside funds for grants to low-income communities and communities of color which continue to experience disproportionate impacts of degraded water infrastructure.

We appreciate the Subcommittee's consideration of our views and its work and funding support over many years for programs that protect and restore the Great Lakes. As the source of drinking water for 30 million Americans and as a significant driver in the regional economy of eight states, investments in programs that protect and restore the Great Lakes are critical to ensure the economic and environmental health of this important resource.

[This statement was submitted by Don Jodrey, Director of Federal Relations.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ALLIANCE TO SAVE ENERGY AND PARTNERS

We the undersigned write to request an increase in the Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR budget to at least $80 million annually. ENERGY STAR is a highly successful public—private partnership that delivers tremendous impact in addressing climate change and generating consumer energy savings on a shoestring budget of under $40 million. Despite its bipartisan reputation as a cost-effective and high-impact program, it has nonetheless seen declining funding in recent years.

Our request to effectively double ENERGY STAR's funding to $80 million reflects the urgency to address climate change to avoid far bigger public costs, and to help consumers and businesses save money. In 2019 alone, the program saved American consumers and businesses more than $39 billion in avoided energy costs. Additionally, thousands of businesses, utilities, states, and local governments depend on ENERGY STAR as a national framework for energy efficiency progress, relying on it in their product designs, energy management programs, building efficiency initiatives, and manufacturing practices. Moreover, the production of ENERGY STAR products supports 800,000 jobs in our economy, aligning with President Biden's American Jobs Plan.

Meanwhile, doubling down on ENERGY STAR will help the nation collectively achieve proposed greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction goals of 50% by 2030. The emissions impact cannot be overstated: In 2019, ENERGY STAR accounted for nearly 390 million metric tons of emissions reductions—equivalent to roughly 5% of U.S. GHG emissions. Since the program began in 1992, it has accounted for more than 4 billion metric tons of GHG reductions, equivalent to removing 870 million cars from the road.

ENERGY STAR is a substantive tool in reducing carbon emissions, achieving energy savings for consumers, and in creating jobs. If we are to meet the current challenges before us and increase our efforts to mitigate climate change, increasing the ENERGY STAR budget is essential. We look forward to discussing this proposal further.

Sincerely,

2G Energy Inc.
A.O. Smith
Acuity Brands, Inc.
Advanced Energy Economy
Alliance to Save Energy
Alturus
American Association of Blacks in Energy
American Institute of Architects
American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE)
American Society of Interior Designers
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
Association of Energy Engineers
Baker Hughes
Building Performance Association
California Energy Commission
Carrier Corporation
Chelan Public Utility District
Combined Heat and Power Alliance
Copper Development Association
Covestro LLC
Curtis Power Solutions
DBS Power and Energy
DT Energy Consultants
DuPont
Dynamic Energy Strategies

E4TheFuture
Efficiency Canada
Enginuity Power Systems
Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI)
Flex Energy Solutions
Google
Hannon Armstrong Sustainable Infrastructure Capital
Heat is Power Association
HFT Inc.
Illuminating Engineering Society
Institute for Market Transformation (IMT)
Intel
International Code Council
International Copper Association
Johnson Controls
Kanin Energy
Kelly Generator & Equipment Inc.
Knauf Insulation
Kraft Energy Systems
Lima Company
Lutron
Martin Energy Group
Metrus Energy
Midwest Cogeneration Association
Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of Energy Service Companies
National Association of State Energy Officials
National Council for Workforce Education
National Grid
Natural Resources Defense Council
New York Power Authority
North American Insulation Manufacturers Association
Northeast-Western Energy Systems
PG&E Corporation
Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Association
Puget Sound Energy
Schneider Electric
Seattle City Light
Sheet Metal & Air Conditioning Contractors National Association
Siemens
Signify North America Corporation
Snohomish County Public Utility District
Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance
Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP)
Sterling Energy Group LLC
Trane Technologies
U.S. Green Building Council
Uplight
Willdan
Window and Door Manufacturers Association (WMDA)

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN ALLIANCE OF MUSEUMS

Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for allowing me to submit this testimony. My name is Laura L. Lott and I am the President and CEO of the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). We urge your support for $201 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), $201 million in funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), as well as sufficient funding for the Smithsonian Institution. We also request your support for the Historic Preservation Fund, including at least $60 million for State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs), $24 million for Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPOs), and $26 million for competitive grants to preserve the sites and stories of the Civil Rights Movement. We request funding of $20 million for the Save America's Treasures program and $9 million for Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization grants. We support funding for the Semiquincentennial competitive grant program.

Before detailing these funding priorities for the museum field, I want to express my appreciation for the increases enacted in FY 2021. The additional funds for the NEH, NEA, and historic preservation activities will enhance museums' work to enrich their communities and preserve our many heritages. The Subcommittee's choice to make these investments in FY 2021 speaks volumes about its commitment to our nation's cultural institutions. We also are grateful for the supplemental grant funding of $75 million (CARES Act) and $135 million (American Rescue Plan) for each endowment to help cultural organizations, including museums, cope with and respond to the devastating impact of the COVID–19 pandemic.

Representing more than 35,000 museum professionals and volunteers, institutions—including aquariums, art museums, botanic gardens, children's museums, cultural museums, historic sites, history museums, maritime museums, military museums, natural history museums, planetariums, presidential libraries, railway museums, science and technology centers, and zoos—and corporate partners serving the museum field, AAM stands for the broad range of the museum community.

Museums are essential in their communities for many reasons:

—Museums are economic engines and job creators. According to Museums as Economic Engines: A National Report, U.S. museums (pre-pandemic) support more

than 726,000 jobs and contribute $50 billion to the U.S. economy per year. The economic activity of museums generates more than $12 billion in tax revenue, one-third of which goes to state and local governments. For example, the total financial impact that museums have on the economy in the state of Oregon is $585 million, including supporting 9,740 jobs. For Alaska it is a $280 million impact supporting 3,240 jobs. This impact is not limited to cities: more than 25% of museums are in rural areas. The import of these data is not the numbers alone—but the larger point that museums give back tremendously to their communities in numerous ways—including economically. The federal funding for NEA, NEH, and the other programs does not stay in Washington, DC, it goes back to communities across the nation. And it is leveraged many times over by private philanthropy and state and local investments.

—Museums are key education providers. Museums spend more than $2 billion yearly on education activities; the typical museum devotes 75% of its education budget to K–12 students, and museums receive approximately 55 million visits each year from students in school groups. Museums help teach the state and local curriculum in subjects ranging from art and science to history, civics, and government. Museums have long served as a vital resource to homeschool learners. It is not surprising that in a public opinion survey, 97% of respondents agreed that museums were educational assets in their communities. The results were statistically identical regardless of political persuasion or community size.

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) is an independent federal agency created by Congress in 1965. Grants are awarded to nonprofit educational institutions, including museums, for educational programming, infrastructure and the care of collections. NEH supports museums as institutions of lifelong learning and exploration, and as keepers of our cultural, historical, and scientific heritages that can foster critical dialogues on challenging issues.

In March 2020, NEH received $75 million in supplemental grant funding through the $2.2 trillion CARES Act. The agency immediately distributed $30 million to the 56 state and jurisdictional humanities councils to support local cultural nonprofits and educational programming. In June 2020, NEH awarded $40.3 million in CARES Act economic stabilization grants to more than three hundred institutions, including museums, spanning all 50 states. NEH received more than 2,300 eligible applications from cultural organizations, requesting more than $370 million in funding. Approximately 14 percent of the applicants received grants.

In FY 2020, in addition to the money distributed through NEH CARES Grants, the NEH awarded 650 grants totaling more than $56.1 million to institutions across the U.S., including museums. All of NEH's divisions and offices support museums:

—The Office of Challenge Grants offers matching grants to support much needed capacity building and infrastructure projects at museums.

—The Division of Public Programs offers grants that bring the ideas and insights of the humanities to life in museums and other spaces by supporting exhibitions, community conversations, and place-based history. Additionally, Positions in the Public Humanities supplements provide professional development opportunities for new museum professionals.

—The Division of Preservation and Access provides funding to museums for efforts to preserve and provide access to our nation's rich cultural heritage. For more than a decade, NEH has supported important sustainability work on energy efficiency projects in collections care.

—The Division of Education Programs supports programs that bring educators to museums for intensive summer training programs on humanities topics.

—The Office of Digital Humanities offers grants to support innovations in technology at museums, universities, and other institutions.

—The Division of Research supports scholarly research that many museums use to inform exhibitions and public programming.

Humanities councils in every state and U.S. territory sponsor family literacy programs, speakers' bureaus, cultural heritage tourism, exhibitions, and live performances. Many councils also offer grants to local cultural organizations, including museums.

In preparation for the U.S. Semiquincentennial in 2026, NEH's new "A More Perfect Union" initiative provides funding opportunities across the agency's seven grantmaking divisions for humanities projects that promote a deeper understanding of American history and culture and that advance civic education and knowledge of our core principles of government.

Here are just two examples of how NEH funding was used to support museums' work in your communities:

—The High Desert Museum in Bend, Oregon, in 2020 received a $191,920 Sustaining Humanities and Connecting Community grant to retain staff and enable the museum's core humanities team to create new virtual programming that will expand public access to the Museum's significant humanities resources, expertise, and collection and deepen understanding of the diverse experiences and perspectives that make up the history of the High Desert region with a particular focus on Indigenous cultures and perspectives.

—The Sheldon Museum and Cultural Center in Haines, Alaska, in 2020 received a $350,000 grant for sustainable environmental controls throughout the museum critical for the museum's collection preservation.

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) makes art accessible to all and provides leadership in arts education. Established in 1965, NEA supports great art in every congressional district. Its grants to museums help them exhibit, preserve, and interpret visual material through exhibitions, residencies, publications, commissions, public art works, conservation, documentation, services to the field, and public programs.

Congress appropriated $75 million to the NEA through the CARES Act to preserve jobs and help support organizations forced to close operations due to the spread of COVID–19. Forty percent of this funding was awarded directly to state and regional arts agencies to distribute through their funding programs. On July 1, the NEA announced that 855 organizations, including museums—and organizations located in every state—would receive a total of $44.5 million in nonmatching funds to support staff salaries, fees for artists or contractual personnel, and facilities costs.

Since 2010, the NEA has collaborated with Blue Star Families and the U.S. Department of Defense on Blue Star Museums, which provides free museum admission to active duty military and their families all summer long. In 2019, more than 2,000 museums in all 50 states participated, reaching on average more than 900,000 military members and their families.

The federal role of the NEA is uniquely valuable; receiving a grant from the NEA confers prestige on supported projects, strengthening museums' ability to attract matching funds from other public and private funders. On average, each dollar awarded by the NEA leverages up to nine dollars from other sources. No other funder—public or private—funds the arts in every state and the U.S. territories. Forty percent of NEA's grant funds are distributed to state arts agencies for regranting.

Here are two examples of how NEA funding was used to support museums' work in your communities:

—The Four Rivers Cultural Center and Museum in Ontario, Oregon, in 2020 was awarded a $55,000 grant to support folklife fieldwork and public programs in eastern Oregon and western Idaho. A folklorist will coordinate fieldwork, presentations, and podcasts exploring the cultural heritage of the Columbia River Basin, which stretches from eastern Oregon to western Idaho. Working in partnership with the Oregon Folklife Network, Oregon Arts Commission, Idaho Commission on the Arts, and the Western Folklife Center, the folklorist will produce local programs, exhibits, and an annual tri-state folklife festival.

—The Anchorage Museum in Alaska in 2021 was awarded a $100,000 grant to support public art installations, architectural design fees, and creation of a new Indigenous font. The project will increase visual representation of Dena'ina culture in the built environment of Anchorage. In partnership with the Municipality of Anchorage, Indigenous-Led design firm SALT, and Alaska Pacific University's Office of Research and Community Engagement, local artists and designers will collaborate with residents to develop temporary and permanent public art installations that utilize local materials and establish a more culturally inclusive and representative architectural identity in downtown Anchorage.

In addition to these direct grants, NEA's Arts and Artifacts Indemnity program also allows museums to apply for federal indemnity on major exhibitions, saving them as much as $30 million in insurance costs every year and making many more exhibitions available to the public—all at virtually no cost to the American taxpayer.

The Smithsonian Institution comprises some of the most visited museums in the world. The National Museum of African American History and Culture has captivated audiences from around the globe, underscoring the power of our national museums to educate and inspire. We support funding increases that would allow these world-class museums to undertake critical collections care, make needed tech-

nology upgrades, conduct cutting edge research of every type, and increase access for all.

The Historic Preservation Fund is the funding source of preservation awards to states, tribes, local governments, and nonprofits. State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices carry out the historic preservation work of the federal government on state and tribal lands. Historic preservation programs are not only essential to protecting our many heritages; they also serve as economic development engines and job creators. We urge you to provide $60 million for SHPOs and $24 million for THPOs. We applaud recent funding increases for the Save America's Treasures program, and urge you to provide $20 million in FY 2022 funding. Since 1999, there have been more than 4,000 requests for funding totaling more than $1.54 billion. More than $315,700,000 has been awarded to 1,300-plus projects. These projects protected some of America's most iconic and endangered artifacts, including the American flag that inspired the Star Spangled Banner. We also applaud the investment in competitive grants to preserve the sites and stories of the Civil Rights Movement and support FY 2022 funding of $26 million for these grants. In addition, we support funding for the Semiquincentennial competitive grant program.

I hope that my testimony helped make it clear why these priorities are of critical importance to the nation and how they provide a worthwhile return on investment to the American taxpayer.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION (ABA)

Dear Chair Shaheen, Ranking Member Moran, Chair Cartwright, and Ranking Member Aderholt:

On behalf of the American Bar Association (ABA), the largest voluntary association of lawyers and legal professionals in the world, I write to express our concerns over inadequate funding of tribal criminal justice that has contributed to staggering rates of violent crime and victimization on many Indian reservations. This is not a new problem.

The underfunding of the tribal justice systems has been well-documented in report after report for over two decades.[1] Most recently, in 2020, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) submitted a Report to Congress on Spending, Staffing, and Estimated Funding Costs for Public Safety and Justice Programs in Indian Country estimating that $1.2 billion was needed for tribal courts to provide a minimum base level of service to all federally recognized tribal nations in 2018. A recent Supreme Court decision leaves no doubt that even this level of funding, which was never achieved, will not be sufficient to meet current needs.

In July 2020, the United States Supreme Court recognized the inherent tribal jurisdiction over Native American sovereign lands in Oklahoma. In its decision in McGirt v Oklahoma, the Court recognized that simply because a State encroaches onto sovereign Indian Lands, that does not give the State authority to exercise jurisdiction to prosecute state law crimes in contravention of treaty provisions.

As a result, tribal and federal courts and law enforcement must now devote substantial resources to criminal cases that had been heard in state court prior to the decision in McGirt. On March 11, 2021, the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals confirmed that both the Cherokee Nation and Chickasaw Nation reservations are intact based on McGirt, and the state courts within each of the reservation counties have started releasing defendants to be retried before tribal and or federal courts. (The Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals has not yet ruled on cases involving the Seminole Nation and the Choctaw Nation.) Consequently, several thousand cases will now be redirected to tribal courts in Oklahoma, creating an even greater need for funding to ensure adequate numbers of judges, support staff, facilities, and equipment to address these long overdue proceedings. The need will, of course, be much greater if McGirt impacts treaties outside of Oklahoma.

The American Bar Association has long affirmed that tribal justice systems are the primary and most appropriate institutions for maintaining order in tribal communities. We have repeatedly urged the United States government "to support qual-

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[1] U.S. Civil Rights Commission 1991 Report The Indian Civil Rights Act: A Report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights; the U. S. Civil Rights Commission 2003 Report A Quiet Crisis: Federal Funding and Unmet Needs in Indian Country; the Indian Law and Order Commission 2013 report A Roadmap for Making Native America Safer: Report to the President & Congress of the United States; the U.S. Department of Justice, Attorney General's Advisory Committee on American Indian/Alaska Native Children Exposed to Violence 2014 Report Ending Violence So Children Can Thrive; and the U. S. Civil Rights Commission 2018 report Broken Promises: Continuing Federal Funding Shortfall for Native Americans.

ity and accessible justice by ensuring adequate, stable, long-term funding for tribal justice systems".[2] Despite urgent pleas by tribes, tribal courts, and concerned organizations representing myriad disciplines for the U.S. government to appropriate the funds that are needed to provide the more than 350 tribal justice systems with the resources they need to do this important work, there is a critical funding shortfall that needs to be recognized and rectified as we enter the FY 2022 budget cycle.

We appreciate the recent attention given to the needs of Native Americans in the COVID 19 relief bill. However, the funds included in that legislation do not begin to address the funding needed to support the specific responsibilities of Tribal Courts. The funding of Tribal Courts is an area of long-standing neglect and requires immediate attention.

Therefore, we urge you to address this important funding priority this year and we stand ready to assist you in whatever way we can.

Sincerely,

Patricia Lee Refo, President

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION (ABA)

Dear Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, Chair Pingree, and Ranking Member Joyce:

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Therefore, we urge you to address this important funding priority this year and we stand ready to assist you in whatever way we can.

Sincerely,

Patricia Lee Refo, President

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN GEOPHYSICAL UNION

The American Geophysical Union (AGU), a non-profit, non-partisan scientific society, appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony regarding the fiscal year 2022 (FY22) budget request for the United States Geological Survey (USGS). AGU, on behalf of its worldwide community of 130,000 in the Earth and space sciences, respectfully requests that the 117th Congress appropriate $1.75 billion for the USGS. We understand this is a substantial increase and firmly believe the agency needs to reach this funding level to be ready to respond to twenty first -century challenges with twenty first-century science and technology.

The USGS is uniquely positioned to provide informed responses to many of our nation's greatest challenges. For example, the USGS plays a crucial role in assessing water quality and quantity, reducing risks from natural hazards, assessing mineral and energy resources, and managing our nation's ecosystems. Through its offices across the country, the USGS provides high-quality research and data to policymakers, emergency responders, natural resource managers, civil and environmental engineers, educators and the public. A few examples of the USGS's valuable work are provided below, as well as obstacles to its success.

PREDICTING AND OBSERVING NATURAL HAZARDS

The USGS works to reduce risks from floods, wildfires, earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, landslides, and other natural hazards that jeopardize human lives and cost billions of dollars in damages each year—earthquakes alone are estimated to cost the U.S. $6.1 billion annually.[1] For example, the USGS conducts hazard analyses, using seismic networks, to formulate earthquake probabilities that are used by local officials to establish building codes. The USGS also monitors volcanoes and provides warnings about impending eruptions that are used by aviation officials to prevent planes from flying into volcanic ash clouds. Data from the USGS network of stream gages are used by the National Weather Service to issue flood and drought warnings. Moreover, the USGS and its federal partners monitor seasonal wildfires and provide maps of current fire locations and the potential spread of fires that are used by local officials and firefighters. In short, in domestic and global events, emergency managers and public officials rely on the USGS to inform them of risks and hazards posed to human and natural systems.

MAPPING AND ASSESSING MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES

The USGS assessments of mineral and energy resources—including rare earth elements, coal, oil, unconventional natural gas, and geothermal sources—are essential for making decisions about the nation's energy and technology future. The USGS identifies the location and quantity of domestic mineral and energy resources and assesses the economic and environmental effects of resource extraction and use. The USGS also maps domestic supplies of rare earth elements to be used in new energy technologies, helping to reduce dependence on foreign sources of such minerals. In addition, the USGS is the sole federal source of information on mineral po-

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[2] The ABA has adopted extensive policy supporting tribal court funding, accessible at: https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/crsj/native-american-concerns.pdf.

[1] Jaiswal, K., Bausch, D., Rozelle, J., Holub, J., and McGowan, S., April 2017, Hazus Estimated Annualized Earthquake Losses for the United States: FEMA P–366, https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/132305.

tential, production and consumption of around 100 selected mineral commodities for approximately 180 countries.[2]

MAINTAINING AND EVALUATING PUBLIC HEALTH

The USGS helps to maintain public health at the local, state and national level by monitoring changes in ecosystem and environmental health and evaluating human susceptibility to contaminants, pathogens and environmental disease. The agency assesses negative health effects caused by the dispersion of contaminants after natural and man-made disasters, such as hurricanes and oil spills. For example, after Hurricane Sandy, the USGS provided soil, water and sediment information to public health agencies to help them protect citizens from toxic contaminants. This unique perspective into the intersection between the physical environment, living environment and humans allows the USGS to provide valuable insights into public health concerns.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING WATER AVAILABILITY AND QUALITY

The USGS collects information on water availability and quality to inform the public and decision makers about the status and history of freshwater resources. Around the country, the USGS operates more than 10,000 stream gages, which are fixed structures that measure the amount of water flowing through a body of water over time.[3] These stream gages produce vital data for water management, energy development, infrastructure design, flood mapping and forecasting, water quality monitoring, ecosystem management and recreational safety approaches.

DEVELOPING AND PROVIDING MAPPING FOR THE NATION

The USGS utilizes unique technologies that enable the nationwide collection of accurate terrain information used by businesses, water managers and emergency responders, among others. Leveraging funds from the private sector and other federal agencies, the agency's 3D Elevation Program (3DEP) provides modernized, high-resolution topographic maps and open—access elevation data to support cutting edge resource management and energy projects ranging from flood—inundation maps to precision farming and renewable energy project development.

COLLECTING AND ASSESSING DATA

Research and data collected by the USGS is vital to predicting the impacts of land use and climate change on water resources, wildfires and ecosystems. For nearly 50 years, Landsat satellites—co-managed by USGS and NASA—have collected the largest archive of remotely sensed land data in the world, allowing for access to current and historical images that are used to assess the impact of natural disasters on communities and the environment and monitor global agriculture production. Landsat imagery, which has been available to the public at no cost since 2008, provided an estimated $3.45 billion in benefits to its users in 2017 alone.[4] The consistency of data sets like those provided by Landsat is vital for advances in science, more efficient natural resource management and profitable applications of data in commerce and industry.

ENGAGING THE NEXT GENERATION OF SCIENTISTS

The USGS offers various programs and tools to help educate students and prepare them for careers in science. For example, the Youth and Education in Science (YES) office coordinates internal funding and internship programs, such as graduate internships, tools for the classroom for K–12 teachers and work—transition programs for young adults with cognitive disabilities. USGS programs, such as the Cooperative Research Units (CRU), also offer a career pathway to the Department of Interior for underrepresented undergraduate students in 38 states by providing them mentoring and hands-on experience. Since 2015, over 670 students have graduated through the program.

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[2] See Program History of USGS's Mineral Resources Program, https://www.usgs.gov/energy-and-minerals/mineral-resources-program/about/program-history.

[3] Eberts, S.M., Woodside, M.D., Landers, M.N., and Wagner, C.R., 2018, Monitoring the pulse of our Nation's rivers and streams—The U.S. Geological Survey stream gaging network: U.S. Geological Survey Fact Sheet 2018–3081, 2 p., https://doi.org/10.3133/fs20183081.

[4] Straub, C.L., Koontz, S.R., and Loomis, J.B., 2019, Economic valuation of Landsat imagery: U.S. Geological Survey Open-File Report 2019–1112, 13 p., https://doi.org/10.3133/ofr20191112.

SUPPORTING AND INFORMING LAND MANAGEMENT

The USGS plays a critical role in informing sound management of natural resources on federal and state lands. The USGS conducts research and monitoring of fish, wildlife, and vegetation—data that informs management decisions by other Department of Interior bureaus regarding protected species and land use. Ecosystems research is also used to control invasive species and wildlife diseases that would otherwise cause billions of dollars in economic losses. The USGS provides information for resource managers as they develop strategies for restoration and long-term use of the nation's natural resources in the face of environmental change.

SCIENCE SUPPORT

The past several fiscal years have proved extremely damaging to the underlying operations that support the work of USGS employees and without which the USGS cannot fully function. For example, USGS Science Support staff provide human resources, communications and publishing, and scientific oversight in support of the research conducted by USGS. Yet, Science Support funding has been decreased, even as funding for USGS mission areas has increased, albeit slightly. This disparity in funding has had ripple effects by aggravating backlogs in the posting of available jobs, the hiring of new scientists, and the dissemination of data and findings to stakeholders. For the USGS to effectively perform and function into the future, Science Support must see funding increases that align with those requested Survey-wide.

SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY

Strong scientific integrity policies are critical for the USGS to be able to advance national security, a strong economy, public health, food security and the many other functions the agency performs. Science that is communicated to the public improves and informs myriad aspects of everyday life, from earthquake hazard mapping to hurricane forecasting to assessments of water quality and quantity. These types of scientific information must be publicly available and free from political interference to ensure that they are best able to help farmers, industry, health workers and the public.

CONCLUSION

As we face unprecedented societal challenges, such as increasing demand for limited energy resources, vulnerability to natural hazards and the need for clean water, it is vital that USGS receive substantial funding increases so that they can continue to provide support for the nation's economic, environmental and national security.

AGU respectfully requests that Congress appropriate $1.75 billion for the USGS in FY22. We appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony to the Subcommittee and thank you for your consideration of our request.

[This statement was submitted by Michael Villafranca, Senior Specialist, Science Policy & Government Relations.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN HIKING SOCIETY

SUMMARY OF REQUESTS

Forest Service:

—Capital Improvement and Maintenance (CMTL), Trails at $29.35M, including $11.5M for National Scenic and Historic Trails;
—$56.8M to fund Recreation, Heritage & Wilderness;
—$100M to fund Legacy Roads & Trails as a separate line item

Bureau of Land Management:

—Trails Line Item, including at least $10.5M for National Scenic and Historic Trails; National Conservation Lands at $65.131M;
—$10.5M to fund National Conservation Lands-National Scenic Historic Trails, sub-activity Recreation Resources Management, including $3.15M to operate Historic Trail Interpretive Centers;
—Restore BLM FTE staffing levels, including for trail management and maintenance

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

—Refuge Visitor Services at least $79.973M

National Park Service:

—Rivers, Trails, & Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program at $15M;
—Park Service Operations for the National Trails System maintained at a minimum of $21M;
—Volunteers in Parks programs at a minimum of $8M, including dedicated funding to the National Trails System;
—Visitor Services sub-activity, Youth Partnership Programs at a minimum of $10.95M, including an acknowledgment of the benefits for trails;
—Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program, at a min $125M

US Geological Survey:

—$1.5M to fully fund the National Digital Trail Project (NDTP)

INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1976, American Hiking Society is the only national nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering all to enjoy, share, and preserve the hiking experience. We envision a world where everyone feels welcome in the American hiking community and has permanent access to meaningful hiking, including urban, frontcountry, and backcountry opportunities. Our efforts ensure funding for hiking trails, the preservation of natural areas, and expansion of access to and inclusion in outdoor recreation.

IMPORTANCE OF TRAIL FUNDING FOR PUBLIC LAND ACCESS

At a time when trail usage is at an all-time high with both new and returning users turning to the outdoors during the COVID–19 pandemic,[1] support for trails and public lands are more important than ever. Trails are the gateway to fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, camping, climbing, and more. A failure to maintain and manage our nation's trails limits access for all communities, stymies economic growth, and reduces opportunities for healthy outdoor recreation.

Access to open spaces for recreation has been shown by many studies to improve physical and mental health and to increase quality of life.[2] Additionally, outdoor access is crucial for children, impacting their physical and mental development, socialization skills, and a lifelong appreciation of nature.[3] Trails bring those health benefits to all by providing individuals of diverse backgrounds access to our public lands for all types of outdoor recreation.

Outdoor recreation has a massive positive impact on our nation's economy and trails generate much of that impact. According to the Outdoor Industry Association, trail—centered activities directly generate over $594 billion[4] and nearly 3.5 million jobs[5] annually. On federally—managed land, outdoor recreation contributes more than $64.6 billion to the national economy and supports more than 623,000 jobs annually.[6]

Citizen volunteers and nonprofit trail organizations perform a large share of the maintenance on our nation's trails, in partnership with government agencies and with the support of private donations. Since our founding in 1976, American Hiking Society has mobilized 558,708 trail volunteers to construct and maintain 41,146 miles of trails on federal and state public lands at a value of over $108 million in

[1] Rails to Trails Conservancy, Using Trails and Outdoor Spaces Safely in the Wake of COVID–19 https://www.railstotrails.org/trailblog/2020/march/24/using-trails-and-outdoor-spaces-safely-in-the-wake-of-covid-19/ (last visited April 13, 2021). See also Outdoor Industry Association, 2021 Special Report: New Outdoor Participant (Covid and Beyond), https://outdoorindustry.org/resource/2021-special-report-new-outdoor-participant-covid-beyond/ (last visited April 13, 2021).

[2] American Hiking Society, Health Benefits of Hiking, https://americanhiking.org/resources/health-benefits-of-hiking/ (last visitedApr. 9, 2021). See also Harvard Medical School, Exercising to Relax, Updated July 13, 2018, https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/exercising-to-relax.

[3] Harvard Health Publishing, 6 reasons children need to play outside, May 22, 2018, https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/6-reasons-children-need-to-play-outside-2018052213880.

[4] OUTDOOR INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION, OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY 18 (2017), available at https://outdoorindustry.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/OIA_RecEconomy_FINAL_Single.pdf. Trail centered activities generated $594,311,835,880 from retail spending, salaries, and federal and state taxes.

[5] Id. Trail centered activities create 3,476,845 jobs.

[6] OUTDOOR INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION, OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY 15 (2017), available at https://outdoorindustry.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/OIA_RecEconomy_FINAL_Single.pdf; "Forest Service Makes it Easier for Visitors to Enjoy National Forests and Grasslands." U.S. Forest Service, https://www.fs.fed.us/news/releases/forest-service-makes-it-easier-visitors-enjoy-national-forests-and-grasslands.

labor.[7] This ongoing public "sweat equity" investment has led to an increased recognition of the importance of adequate federal funding for our public lands and trails in order to maintain quality visitor experiences.

We encourage the Committee to adopt the following funding requests so the federal government can continue to leverage private contributions and benefit from volunteer labor as well as provide inexpensive, healthy outdoor recreation options for your constituents and all Americans.

Forest Service Recommendation:

National Forest trails benefit everyone and receive increasing public use each year. Collectively, the National Forests provide 157,000 miles of trails for activities ranging from hiking, biking, horseback riding, off-highway vehicle usage, groomed winter trails for cross-country skiing and snowmobiling, and access points for "river trails." Even with enactment of the Great American Outdoors Act, this trail system is increasingly stressed and annual maintenance cannot keep pace with the growing demand due to inadequate funding. Roughly 120,000 of the 159,000 miles of trails are in need of some form of maintenance or repair.[8]

Fund Capital Improvement and Maintenance (CMTL), Trails budget at $29.35M, including $11.5M for National Scenic and Historic Trails.—As trails use continues to increase along with annual maintenance needs, funding at $29.35M will restore the highest funding levels since at least 2005.

Within CMTL, Trails Increase Support for the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance Trail Stewardship Partner Funding.—Volunteer groups and non-profit partners perform a large amount of agency trail work. The Forest Service has a successful Trail Stewardship Partner Funding challenge-cost-share program that uses nonprofit partnerships to leverage federal funding by 3 to 5:1. We encourage expanded support of this program within the CMTL, Trails line item. This funding can also significantly increase conservation corps work on trail systems.

$56.8M to fund Recreation, Heritage & Wilderness.—The National Forests and Grasslands provide a great diversity of outdoor recreational opportunities, connecting the American public with nature in an unmatched variety of settings and activities. Funding at $56.8M will restore funding to 2013 levels (minus estimated cost-share amounts), the highest since at least FY2005.

$100M to fund Legacy Roads & Trails as a separate line item.—For FY2022, Legacy Roads & Trails should be reinstated as a separate line item in the USFS budget, with $100M distinctly designated for urgently—needed road and trail repair, maintenance and storm—proofing, fish passage barrier removal, and road decommissioning, especially in areas where Forest Service roads may be contributing to water quality problems in streams and water bodies that support threatened, endangered or sensitive species or community water sources.

Bureau of Land Management Recommendation:

The BLM manages 13,468 miles of trails over 245 million acres -more land than any other federal land management agency. Most of the country's BLM—managed public land is located in 12 Western States, including Alaska, and contains a diversity of landscapes that often provide the public less structured but nonetheless diverse recreational opportunities. BLM recreational resources and visitor services support strong local economies. More than 120 urban centers and thousands of rural towns (comprising 64 million people) are located within 25 miles of BLM lands.

Trails Line Item, including at least $10.5M for National Scenic and Historic Trails, with robust funding for BLM trails.—The BLM has no specific account in its budget for funding national trails or trails in general. Designating a trails line item in the BLM budget will address fragmentation of funding allocations across sub-activity accounts and create consistent, predictable, and better—managed funding for trails.

Fund National Conservation Lands at $65.131M.—National Conservation Lands funds enhance recreational access, conserve the Nation's heritage, and manage these nationally—recognized resources. We urge the committee to consider the additional demands for which BLM is responsible—and the increasing popularity of these lands—and provide a sharp increase in base funding for the National Conservation Lands,restoring program funding to its FY2006 level. Such an increase is needed to properly administer the system's expansion by 18 million acres since 2000, and will permit increased inventory, monitoring and protection of cultural resources, enhance proper management of all resources and provide a quality visitor

[7] American Hiking Society, https://americanhiking.org/ (last visited Apr. 9, 2021).

[8] https://www.fs.usda.gov/news/releases/usda-forest-service-announces-challenge-increase-focus-problems-facing-nations

experience. This should also include robust funding for National Scenic and Historic Trails, as recommended below.

$10.5M to fund National Conservation Lands-National Scenic Historic Trails, sub-activity Recreation Resources Management, including $3.15M to operate Historic Trail Interpretive Centers.—At a minimum, include language that directs the Bureau to include unit-level allocations within major sub-activities for each of the scenic and historic trails—as the Bureau has done for the national monuments, wilderness, and conservation areas. The Bureau's lack of a unified budget account for National Trails or a trails line item prevents the agency from efficiently planning, implementing, reporting, and taking advantage of cost-saving partnerships and volunteer contributions.

Restore BLM FTE staffing levels, including for trail management and maintenance.—Across the board staffing shortages have significantly negatively impacted BLM's ability to complete its mission, including management and maintenance.

Fish and Wildlife Service Recommendation:

Refuge Visitor Services provides funding for trail maintenance across FWS—managed land. Located in every U.S. state and territory, and within an hour's drive of nearly every major U.S. city, National Wildlife Refuges provide incredible opportunities for outdoor recreation, including hiking, hunting, fishing, birding, boating and nature photography across 2,500 miles of trails. More than 37,000 jobs are reliant on refugees. Funding at a level of $74.227M will provide for trail maintenance across the land and water trails, refuges, wetlands, and hatcheries, including eleven National Scenic and Historic Trails and forty-four National Recreation Trails.

Funding for Refuge Visitor Services at least $79.973M.—Funding at $79.973M will restore funding to 2010 levels, the highest since at least FY2006.

National Park Service Recommendation:

National Parks, and the world-class experiences their 18,844 miles of trails provide, are one of the most unifying forces in America. Well-maintained trails improve the quality of visitor experiences and enhance visitor safety.

Funding for the Rivers, Trails, & Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program at $15M.—The RTCA program brings the expertise of over a century of land management to the greater recreation community. When a community asks for assistance with a project, National Park Service staff provide free critical tools for success, on-location facilitation, and planning expertise, which draw from project experiences across the country and adapt best practices to a community's specific needs. Funding at $15M will ensure these trail planning services are made available to communities in all regions of the nation.

Funding for Park Service Operations for the National Trails System maintained at a minimum of $21M.—The NPS has administrative responsibility for 23 National Scenic and Historic Trails established by Congress. Funding at $21M within the Park Service Operations account for the National Trails System is essential for keeping these popular trails accessible. The request will help the work of trail organization partners of the Park Service to build, maintain, and interpret these trails.

Restore funding for Volunteers in Parks programs at a minimum of $8M, including dedicated funding to the National Trails System.—Volunteers in Parks leverages private donations with public funding to maximize trail maintenance resources. Dedicating funding to the National Trails System will obviate competition with large NPS parks for access to critical volunteer support in the form of trail maintenance crews and administrative management of individual trails.

Restore funding for Visitor Services sub-activity, Youth Partnership Programs at a minimum of $10.95M, including an acknowledgment of the benefits for trails.—The Youth Partnership Program in part funds the Public Land Corps program, which provides education and work opportunities for youth aged 16–30. The NPS utilizes non-profit youth—serving organizations to perform critical natural and cultural resource conservation projects at NPS sites, ranging from masonry apprenticeships on historic structures to Tribal land improvements; to engaging other youth through coordination of culturally—based workshops and outdoor recreation clubs.

Robust funding for Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program, at a min $125M in 2022.—Robust funding for LWCF programs reflect the nation's outdoor recreation priorities. Maintain robust funding for ORLP, which expands close-to-home access for underserved communities at a minimum maintaining the FY21 $125M appropriation.

US GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

$1.5M to fully fund the National Digital Trail Project (NDTP) of USGS.—The USGS National Digital Trails project supports the Department of Interior's vision

to "Increase access to outdoor recreation opportunities for all Americans . . . " Full funding at $1.5M will allow the USGS to provide critical information and research for our nation's trails, including a web—based interactive decision support tool (TRAILS) to improve connectivity between existing trails and trail systems, a nationwide digital trails database in the public domain, and a mobile application to provide trail maintenance information to land management agencies.

CONCLUSION

The nearly 1,000,000 square miles that comprise U.S. public lands are our most treasured natural, historic, and cultural resource. Whether you're a hiker enjoying the 193,500 miles of trail, a member of the indigenous populations for whom these lands are their ancestral homes, or one of the 145 million outdoor recreation users, our public lands are of incalculable value to hundreds of millions of Americans. As we all strive together to protect these lands and trails and make them accessible and welcoming to all communities for generations to come, Congress must do its part to ensure adequate funding.

[This statement was submitted by Kathryn Van Waes, Executive Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM (AIHEC)

REQUEST SUMMARY

On behalf of the nation's Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), which are the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), we are pleased to present our Fiscal Year 2022 (FY 2022) appropriations recommendations for the 29 colleges funded under Titles I and II of the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Assistance Act (TCU Act); the two Tribally chartered career and technical postsecondary institutions funded under Title V of the TCU Act; the two Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) postsecondary institutions; and the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA). The BIE administers these programs, with the exception of IAIA, which is funded in its own account. We respectfully recommend the following funding levels:

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

—$93,257,409 to fund institutional operations under Title I ($75,447,409) and Title II ($17,000,000), along with TCU Endowments ($109,000) and technical assistance ($701,000), of the TCU Act. This funding would provide the Congressionally authorized amount of $9,937*/Indian student for first time since the enactment of the TCU Act more than 40 years ago (*$8,000 per Indian student adjusted for inflation). This request also provides an additional $100,000 for needed technical assistance, which has been level-funded for 15 years despite growing numbers of developing TCUs and increased demands for accountability and student success.
—$15,000,000 for Title V of the TCU Act, which provides partial institutional operations funding for two Tribally chartered postsecondary career and technical institutions.
—$11,000,000 for the Institute of American Indian Arts.
—$28,000,000 for Haskell Indian Nations University and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, the BIE's two postsecondary institutions.
—$35,000,000 for TCU Construction & Facilities Improvement.

OPPORTUNITY AND INNOVATION IN INDIAN COUNTRY

The nation's 37 TCUs operate more than 75 campuses and sites in 16 states. TCU geographic boundaries encompass 80 percent of American Indian reservations and federal Indian trust lands. American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) TCU students represent more than 230 federally recognized Tribes and hail from more than 30 states. Nearly 80 percent of these students receive federal financial aid and nearly half are first generation students. In total, TCUs serve more than 160,000 AI/ANs and other rural residents each year through a wide variety of academic and community—based programs. TCUs are public institutions, chartered by federally recognized Indian Tribes or the federal government. No TCU is chartered by any other entity, and although several financially challenged institutions may desire to be Tribal colleges, the criteria and standards are unambiguous, with Tribal control being the central pillar. Further, all TCUs receiving federal funding have full and sustained accreditation by independent regional accreditation agencies and, like all

U.S. institutions of higher education, must regularly undergo stringent performance reviews to retain their accreditation status. Each TCU is directly accountable to its Tribal community/communities, and each one is committed to improving the lives of its students through higher education and to moving AI/ANs to 3. Our collective vision is strong sovereign Tribal nations through excellence in Tribal higher education. To achieve this vision, TCUs have become workforce and job creation engines, public libraries, Tribal archives, small business incubators, and community computer labs. They operate Native language learning centers and immersion programs, community gardens, economic development centers, childcare centers, and applied research hubs for everything from natural resources to food sovereignty and community behavioral health.

Despite the hope and opportunity that higher education brings to Tribal communities, as well as the trust responsibility and binding treaty obligations, the federal government has never fully funded TCU institutional operations authorized under the TCU Act (*$9,937 per Indian student = $8,000 per Indian student adjusted for inflation). But TCUs are resilient and resourceful, and we are proud to lead the nation in many areas, including preparing an AI/AN workforce of nurses, land managers, and teachers for Tribal—serving schools. For example, half of all AI/AN special education teachers in Montana are graduates of Salish Kootenai College. TCUs prepare professionals in high—demand fields, including agriculture and natural resources management, information technology, and building trades. By teaching the job skills most in demand on our reservations, TCUs are laying a foundation for Tribal economic growth, which is the only way to move Tribes and Tribal members to self-sufficiency. Yet, we know that workforce development is not enough. We must do more to accelerate the move to self-sufficiency—we must move beyond simple workforce training. We must create new industries and new businesses and build a new culture of innovation. Our job creation initiative is focusing initially on advanced manufacturing through a partnership with the U.S. Department of Energy, National Laboratories, TCUs, and industry. Already, we are seeing results with new TCU-Tribal-industry partnerships, new contracting opportunities, and new jobs for our students and graduates.

Tribal Colleges continually seek to instill a sense of hope and identity within AI/AN youth, who will one day lead our Tribal nations. Unacceptably, the high school dropout rate for AI/AN students remains around 50 percent. TCUs work with local schools to create a bridge for AI/AN students as early as elementary school, encouraging them to stay focused on achievable goals, finish high school, and go on to the local TCU. TCUs offer dual credit courses for high school students, provide math teachers for local high schools to improve course delivery, and host weekend academies, after school programs, and summer camps for middle and high school students. TCUs also offer GED/HiSET training and testing and have 2+2 partnerships to bridge programs with regional universities. All are solid steps to bolster future prospects for AI/AN youth and break the cycle of generational poverty.

COVID–19 PANDEMIC IMPACT ON TCUS

Despite facing serious financial, Internet connectivity and equipment, and faculty professional development challenges that are far worse than other schools and colleges in the U.S. and having student (and faculty) populations at greater health risk than other groups in the U.S., the nation's 37 TCUs have worked diligently to respond to the covid-19 pandemic in a comprehensive manner, addressing both the needs of students and community. As place—based, community—anchoring institutions, TCUs had no choice but to continue to serve Tribal nations to the best of their abilities. Most TCUs have not closed at any point during the pandemic, and those that ceased operations did so only for a few weeks. As TCUs work to mitigate the devastating impacts of the pandemic in Tribal communities, TCUs are also facing drastic changes in enrollment with a future impact on federal funding formulas.

Academic Year (AY) 2021–22 Challenges.—As the uncertainty and economic decline resulting from the covid-19 pandemic extend into the foreseeable future, the losses facing TCUs are growing. Most TCUs start their fiscal year on July 1. As TCUs plan for FY 2022 (AY 2021–22), they face:

—Reduction in support from chartering Tribal governments due to Tribal enterprise revenue losses and the need for Tribes to divert scarce resources to address critical covid-19 response issues (e.g. Tribal health budget increases, growing Tribal member safety net expenses). Past Tribal TCU payments in 2018–19: $33,331,078; payments in 2017–18: $31,049,542.

—Declines in enrollment as students drop out or fail to return; because they lack Internet connectivity and cannot participate in online classes, or because they need to increase work hours (if jobs are available) to help support families in

economic crisis. TCU fall 2019 enrollment: 15,114; TCU fall 2020 enrollment: 14,844.

—Inability of most TCUs to conduct summer classes in 2020, due to the need for intensive faculty development in online learning, advising, and assessment to maintain regional accreditation and need to complete extensive course and management redesign for the fall semester due to increased online teaching. Four TCUs were unable to offer classes during summer 2020, while other TCUs reduced course offering, resulting in a size able loss of revenue from tuition and fees. Typical summer tuition and fees: 2018–19: $1,692,995.

—Students facing growing financial challenges are unable to fully pay tuition and fees. This results in TCUs providing tuition waivers and writing off more tuition payments than in previous years. TCUs—as place-based, open door institutions—write off a significant amount of tuition each year because they want students to benefit from the opportunity of higher education. Annual TCU tuition write-off: 2019–20: $4,405,422; 2018–19: $4,000,595; 2017–18: $2,906,650.

TCU INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS: BROADBAND, FACILITIES, AND OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE NEGLECTED FOR 40 YEARS

For TCUs to realize our goals of strengthening our Tribes as sovereign nations and building a 21st century Native workforce, TCUs must have the facilities and infrastructure capable of educating and training students in a safe environment. It simply cannot be done on the scale needed in classrooms with leaking roofs and exposed and substandard electrical wiring; outdated computer labs; students sleeping in cars and trucks because there are no dorms; and the slowest—yet most expensive—Internet access of any institution of higher education in the country. Yet, that is what TCUs are asked to do.

We thank the House and Senate Interior Appropriations Committees for working together in FY 2021 to provide $15 million for TCU facilities—related funding. We are working with the BIE on the design and administration of these funds to strategically address the most urgent needs of the TCUs. In order to build on the committee's initial investment, we recommend further investments in the following areas:

TCU Facilities Study.—We recommend the Subcommittee provide funding for a comprehensive and unbiased TCU Facilities Study, to include all 37 TCUs, to survey the condition of existing facilities, examine facilities—related health and safety concerns, and identify current and long-term infrastructure needs (25 U.S.C. 1812). Originally authorized over 40 years ago in the TCU Act, an in-depth study will provide a thorough inventory of facilities—related needs.

TCU Construction and Facilities Improvement.—The results of the proposed TCU facilities study will likely expand on the needs identified in a 2018 AIHEC survey of 22 TCUs, which revealed a list of chronic facility—related needs, including student and faculty housing, classrooms, libraries, and laboratories. The 22 TCUs self-reported estimated needs of $332.5 million in deferred maintenance and rehabilitation costs and $558 million to complete existing master plans. Extrapolating this to all 37 TCUs, the total reported need is $500 million for deferred maintenance and rehabilitation, and $837 million for complete master plans. Again, we thank the subcommittee for providing provided $15 million for TCU construction and respectfully request $35 million ($1 million per TCU) be allocated in FY 2022 to continue addressing urgent construction and facilities related needs.

TCU Operations and Maintenance Account.—In order to properly manage, fully use, and extend the lifespan TCU facilities, AIHEC recommends the Subcommittee provide funding for a TCU Facilities Operations and Maintenance Account. Currently, BIE K–12 schools receive operations and maintenance funding to address safety and health concerns, perform routine maintenance to optimize the lifecycle of facility—related systems, and protect land and property value. As outlined throughout this document, TCUs are creatively addressing a myriad list of needs with limited, thinly stretched budgets. The creation of a dedicated TCU Operations and Maintenance Account would allow TCUs to fully use current BIE TCU operational funding for "academic, educational, and administrative purposes" as outlined in the TCU Act, while building more parity within the BIE K–20 system.

Through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA), TCUs received critical funding to address immediate needs related to the transition to distance learning and student support. TCUs were able to provide emergency grants, equipment, and tuition assistance to students to help them stay enrolled in classes. However, TCUs are unable to use relief funding to address many long-standing infrastructure related needs—such as construction. (Note: American Res-

cue Plan Act funds have not been administered). It is imperative that annual discretionary funding continue to invest in TCUs to address these longstanding needs.

CHALLENGES: INDIAN STUDENT COUNT AND GROWTH ISC FORMULA AND NON–BENEFICIARIES

As noted earlier, TCU operations funding remains insufficient, and our budgets are further disadvantaged; because, unlike other institutions of higher education, most TCUs receive operations funding based on the number of Indian students served, with "Indian student" defined as a member of a federally recognized Tribe or a biological child of an enrolled Tribal member. Yet, approximately 15 percent of TCU enrollments are non-Indian students. Many TCUs seek operating funds from their respective state legislatures for non-Indian state-resident students ("non-beneficiary students"), but success has been inconsistent. Given their locations, often hundreds of miles from another postsecondary institution, TCUs are open to all students, Indian and non-Indian, because we know that postsecondary education is the catalyst to a better economic future in rural America.

GROWTH OF TCUS

Since the enactment of the TCU Act more than 40 years ago, TCUs have never received the modest Congressionally authorized funding level ($9,937 per Indian student, $8,000 adjusted for inflation). Yet, we are so close: an increase of $17 million over the FY 2021 level is all that we need to fully fund TCUs for the first time ever. In the context of other federal programs, our request is quite modest. For example, the only other minority serving institution that receives operating funding from the federal government, Howard University, received $205,788,000 for undergraduate programs in FY 2019, or about $23,000 student, along with $3 million for its endowment. We ask only for $9,937 per student for the Title I TCUs.

Over the past 10 years, this Subcommittee has worked diligently to provide the extra resources needed to enable all TCUs to be funded on an academic year schedule. We are extremely grateful for this. The benefit to TCUs of being able to plan an annual budget and start the academic year with operating funding has been tremendous. Yet, during the time it took to provide this funding, four new TCUs became eligible to receive funding under Title I of the TCU Act: College of the Muscogee Nation (Okmulgee, OK), Red Lake Nation College (Red Lake, MN), Tohono O'odham Community College (Sells, AZ), and White Earth Tribal and Community College (Mahnomen, MN). Unfortunately, Title I funding has not kept pace with inflation, much less received increases sufficient to support new TCUs. For example, between FY 2014–2018, funding for the 28 Title I TCUs was flat despite the growing need for higher education across Indian Country. As we move forward, we are worried about TCU operating funding: at least three new TCUs could join the pool soon (Alaska Pacific University, California Tribal College, and San Carlos Apache College). The addition of these TCUs is important for Indian Country, but only if support is available to ensure that they can operate effectively.

CONCLUSION

TCUs provide quality higher education to thousands of AI/ANs and other rural residents and provide essential community programs and services to those who might otherwise not have access to such opportunities. The modest federal investment in TCUs has paid great dividends in terms of employment, education, and economic development and has significantly reduced social, health care, and law enforcement costs. The global pandemic has exacerbated existing challenges and created new challenges for TCUs as they plan for an uncertain future. More than even, TCUs need your ongoing support. We appreciate the Subcommittee's past support of the nation's TCUs and your thoughtful consideration of our FY 2022 appropriations requests.

[This statement was submitted by Carrie L. Billy, President & CEO.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

The American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of appropriations for the Smithsonian Institution, United States Geological Survey (USGS), United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for fiscal year (FY) 2022. We encourage Congress to provide additional funding to the Smithsonian Institution in FY 2022, including at least $60 million to the National Museum of Natural History to support scientific and curatorial work. We urge Congress to provide the USGS

with $1.75 billion in FY 2022, with at least $310 million for its Ecosystems Mission Area. We further request that Science Support in USFWS be provided at least $35 million in FY 2022. Lastly, we request that Congress provide EPA Science and Technology with at least $900 million in FY 2022.

The unprecedented loss of biological diversity and the associated negative impacts on human health and well-being are of significant concern. As human population grows and people increasingly come into contact with new environments and species migrating into new habitats, the risk of new diseases, such as zoonotic pandemics, is of growing concern. Biological diversity, however, offers a buffer against the spread of pathogens and contributes to environmental sustainability and increases our resilience to natural disasters. Robust federal investments in scientific research and monitoring that improves our understanding of biological diversity and ecosystem function must be a priority as we emerge from the ongoing COVID–19 pandemic. The agencies funded by this appropriations bill are centrally involved in conducting, supporting, and using this scientific research for public benefit.

AIBS is a scientific association advancing the biological sciences to promote an increased understanding of all life. Our mission is to promote the use of scientific information to inform decision making and advance biology for the benefit of science and society.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Scientific collections and the professionals and scientists who collect, care for, and study these resources are a vital component of our nation's research infrastructure and bioeconomy. Collections are a critical resource for advancing the knowledge needed to address current global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and pandemics.

The Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) is a valuable federal partner in the curation of and research on scientific specimens. Scientists at the NMNH care for 146 million scientific specimens and ensure the strategic growth of this internationally recognized scientific research institution. To increase the availability of these scientific resources to researchers, educators, other federal agencies, and the public, NMNH is working on a multi-year effort to digitize its collections and make the data available online. That effort will substantially increase the use of these collections by researchers, educators and students, and policymakers. NMNH is also working to strengthen curatorial and research staffing and to backfill positions left open by retirements and budget constraints. The current staffing level is insufficient to provide optimal care for the collections. Future curatorial and collections management staffing levels may be further jeopardized given prior funding cuts at science agencies, such as the USGS that, until recently, supported staff positions at NMNH.

The budget for NMNH has not seen adequate increases in recent years. We urge Congress to provide NMNH with at least $60 million in FY 2022 to allow the museum to undertake critical collections care, make needed technology upgrades, and conduct cutting edge research.

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

The USGS provides unbiased, independent research, data, and assessments that are needed by public and private sector decision—makers. Data generated by the USGS save taxpayers money by enabling more effective management of water and biological resources and providing essential geospatial information that is needed for commercial activity and natural resource management. The data collected by the USGS are simply not available from other sources.

The Ecosystems Mission Area is the biological research arm of USGS and is integral to the agency's other science mission areas. It provides the science needed to achieve sustainable management and conservation of natural resources and inform land and water stewardship. The USGS conducts research on and monitors fish, wildlife, and vegetation—data that informs management decisions by other Interior bureaus. Biological science programs collect and analyze long-term data not available from other agencies, universities, or the private sector. The knowledge generated by the USGS are used by federal and state natural resource managers to maintain healthy and diverse ecosystems while balancing the needs of public use.

Examples of successful USGS Ecosystem initiatives include:

—Development of comprehensive geospatial data products that characterize the risk of wildfires on all lands in the United States. These products are used to allocate firefighting resources and to plan wildfire fuel reduction projects.

—Development and evaluation of control measures and other management interventions for invasive species, such as Asian carp and sea lamprey, that cause

billions of dollars in economic losses to fisheries, hydropower, recreation, and many other industries.

—Development of the scientific understanding needed to combat the spread of avian flu, white-nose syndrome, and other diseases spread by wildlife in North America, including diseases that can jump from wild populations to livestock, agricultural systems, and humans.

The USGS also supports critical science needed to respond to a number of national and global challenges. Examples of the important work conducted by the USGS include:Q02

—*The National and Regional Climate Adaptation Science Centers.*—This program is responsible for developing the science and tools to address the effects of climate change on land, water, wildlife, fish, ecosystems, and communities. These centers play a vital role in addressing the impacts of unique weather patterns on ecosystem health across the country.

—*The National Wildlife Health Center.*—This USGS-wide program investigates national and international wildlife health issues, including the spread of zoonotic pathogens, such as the SARS-CoV–2 virus. Zoonoses-diseases that spread from wildlife to humans—can pose serious threats to human health and cause significant disruptions to the economy.

—*Cooperative Research Units (CRUs).*—CRUs are located on 40 university campuses in 38 states. These research centers are a cost-effective way for USGS to leverage research and technical expertise affiliated with these universities to conduct actionable research, provide technical assistance, and develop scientific workforces through graduate education and mentoring programs.

—*Environmental Health Research.*—The Toxic Substances Hydrology and Contaminant Biology programs work collaboratively with other USGS Mission Areas, and with many external collaborators to study environmental contaminants and pathogens in the environment and provide the critical science needed to help Federal, State, and local government agencies, the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, and other stakeholder groups protect our health.

—*Research on ecosystems of concern.*—This research is a critical component of efforts to restore important national resources, such as the Everglades and the Chesapeake Bay. The Arctic ecosystem research and monitoring program addresses the needs of Native communities, and also promotes public health throughout the U.S. by monitoring avian influenza, which can spread to humans.

In summary, the USGS is uniquely positioned to provide a scientific context for many of the nation's biological and environmental challenges, including pandemics, water quality and use, energy independence, and conservation of biodiversity. This array of research expertise not only serves the core missions of the Department of the Interior, but also contributes to management decisions made by other agencies and private sector organizations. USGS science also enables cost-effective decisions, as the agency's activities help to identify the most efficient management actions. Increased investments in these important research activities will yield dividends.

We urge Congress to provide significant increases in funding to the Ecosystems Mission Area. In recent years, the budget for USGS has stagnated. Failure to make critical investments in the research conducted by the agency will hamper long-term data collection initiatives, lead to critical data loss, and undermine the nation's ability to address national challenges.

We request Congress fund USGS at $1.75 billion in FY 2022, with at least $310 million for the Ecosystems mission area.

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Funding for the Science Support program within USFWS has remained essentially flat at $17.3 million since FY 2018. This program provides scientific information needed by USFWS, such as research on conservation of priority species prior to Endangered Species Act listing, the impacts of energy production on wildlife, and best management practices for combating invasive species, and needs to be robustly funded. We request that Science Support be provided at least $35 million in FY 2022.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Funding for EPA Science and Technology supports valuable research that identifies and mitigates environmental problems. EPA research informs decisions made by public health and safety managers, natural resource managers, businesses, and other stakeholders concerned about air and water pollution, human health, and land

management and restoration. This program provides the scientific basis upon which EPA monitoring and enforcement programs are built.

Despite the important role of EPA Science and Technology in the federal government's ability to ensure that people have clean air and water, funding for its programs in recent years has remained significantly lower than the level enacted in FY 2010. The President has proposed increasing EPA's overall budget by 21 percent in FY 2022. This much needed increase will allow the agency to provide resources for efforts to protect and restore our nation's natural resources.

Please provide at least $900 million in FY 2022 to support scientific research at the EPA.

CONCLUSION

We urge Congress to sustain its bipartisan support for science by investing in our nation's scientific capacity. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request.

[This statement was submitted by Jyotsna Pandey, Public Policy Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION

Summary of FY 2022 Appropriations Recommendations:

Clean Air Program overall—$573.2 million
Climate Protection Program—$115.9 million
Federal Support for Air Quality Management $171 million
Federal Vehicle Fuels Standards and Certifications Programs—$110.2 million
Categorical Grants: State and Local Air Quality Management—$321.5 million
Categorical Grants: Tribal Air Quality Management—$31 million
Diesel Emissions Reduction Grant Program—$150 million
Categorical Grant: Radon—$8.9 million
EPA Radon Program—$3.3 million
Compliance Monitoring—$132.4 million
Enforcement—$566.5 million
New Wildfire Smoke Protection Program—$15 million

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony to highlight the funding priorities of the American Lung Association within the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for fiscal year 2022. The American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease through education, advocacy and research. Between the toll of lung cancer, the prevalence of asthma, the harms of unhealthy air and the COVID–19 pandemic, investments in the nation's lung health are critical. We appreciate the robust increases for EPA provided in the President's FY22 Budget and have updated a number of our requests to reflect the President's request.

EPA programs save lives and improve lung health. The Agency is responsible for setting and enforcing national air pollution standards; supporting state, local and Tribal air quality monitoring and pollution reduction efforts; educating the public on air toxics and air pollution; issuing grants to retrofit dirty diesel buses and more. Air pollution poses a threat to the health of all Americans, but there is someone in every family at heightened risk of health harms from breathing polluted air. There are nearly 37 million Americans living with a chronic lung disease like asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Children, seniors, pregnant people and those who work and play outside are also more likely to suffer health harms. Additionally, people of color and those with low incomes face a greater risk of exposure to air pollution due to communities being overlooked for investment and enforcement in addition to longstanding racist practices like redlining.

The President's recently announced budget included a more than 20% increase for EPA. We strongly support this overall increase in investment and ask the Committee to ensure increased funding for programs that help promote clean air and enforce pollution cleanup. Funds under EPA's Clean Air Program are used in part to assist states, Tribes and local air pollution control agencies with implementing comprehensive air quality management programs to meet the national air quality standards. This program also includes testing and oversight to ensure vehicles are emitting lawful amounts of pollution into the air as well as efforts to reduce carbon pollution, methane, and other climate pollutants to protect public health from the impacts of climate change. Please provide $434.1 million for Environmental Programs and Management and $139.1 million for Science and Technology. Within this program area, the Lung Association specifically requests $115.9 million for the Cli-

mate Protection Program; $171 million for Federal Support for Air Quality Management; and $110.2 million for Federal Vehicle Fuels Standards and Certifications Programs.

Accurately monitoring the air we breathe is the first step to addressing air pollution. Unfortunately, state, local and Tribal air agencies—who run most of the nation's air quality monitoring system—have been perennially underfunded, and many areas are operating with out-of-date monitors. According to a recent report from the Government Accountability Office, there has actually been a 20% decrease in funds, adjusted for inflation, since 2004.[1] Grant dollars provided under Section 103 and 105 of the Clean Air Act help fund air quality monitoring work, which informs the public of risks to their health and identifies areas in need of cleanup. We were pleased to see funds included in the recently passed American Rescue Plan, but we know that more is needed so that state, local and Tribal air agencies can add, upgrade and maintain air monitors and improve engagement with the public to protect health, as part of a multi-year, sustained investment in these critical programs. Please provide $321.5 million for State and Local Air Quality Management Categorical Grants and $31 million for Tribal Air Quality Management Categorical Grants.

Additionally, EPA must be able to ensure compliance with national air standards, which mean little if they are not enforced. Continued investment in EPA's enforcement work is critical to ensure accountability when it comes to protecting the public from dangerous air pollution. EPA must have the ability and funding needed to reduce non-compliance as well as enforce penalties for violations. EPA must also be prepared to respond to civil enforcement actions authorized by the Clean Air Act. Please provide $132.4 million for EPA's Compliance Monitoring and $566.5 million for Enforcement. Enforcement funding should include dedicated funding for environmental justice enforcement. Included in enforcement funding should be dedicated funding for environmental justice enforcement.

One of the programs within EPA that continues to receive bipartisan support is the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) Program. Millions of old, dirty diesel engines are in use today that pollute communities, threaten workers and cause lung cancer. According to a 2019 EPA report, the Committee's continued investments in this program have yielded up to $30 in health benefits for every $1 spent.[2] Immense opportunities remain to reduce diesel emissions through the DERA program, and we urge the Committee to appropriate $150 million in FY22. Additionally, we urge the Committee to support the rapid transition to electric school buses. When schools safely reopen, millions of children will ride a bus to school every day, exposing them to pollution from these dirty diesel engines. Investing in the transition to electric school buses will provide a safer, healthier environment for children, who are among those most at risk of health harm from breathing in pollution.

Radon is an odorless, colorless gas that seeps through the ground as it shifts and is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. EPA's radon program and its State Indoor Radon Grants are the only nationwide tools that help prevent exposure to radon. States and Tribes depend on these programs to educate the public and fight this deadly carcinogen. We recommend $3.3 million for EPA's Radon Program (within that, $3.1 million be appropriated for Environmental Program and Management and $158,000 for Science and Technology) and $8.9 million for the State Indoor Radon Grants.

For the second year, we are requesting a new program to be housed with EPA. Wildfires are no longer a rare occurrence, making wildfire smoke an urgent and increasing threat to health. Currently there are knowledge gaps, particularly on how wildfires affect the health of those living in downwind states, and there is a lack of a focused federal response to health impacts. EPA would be well equipped to provide that federal response with additional resources. The Lung Association requests a total of $15 million in funding to address these impacts, including $5 million to establish Wildfire Smoke Health Centers in Collaboration with US Forest Service Missoula Fire Sciences Laboratory; $7 million for targeted research on wildfire smoke exposure and policy; and $3 million for EPA to coordinate interagency science, management and communication strategies for addressing wildfires.

Lastly, the American Lung Association also asks for your leadership in opposing all policy riders that would weaken key lung health protections, including those in the Clean Air Act. Policy riders have no place in appropriations bills, and the Lung Association strongly opposes attempts to include them, especially riders that would make it harder to protect Americans from air pollution.

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[1] Government Accountability Office. (2020). Air Pollution: Opportunities to Better Sustain and Modernize the National Air Quality Monitoring System (GAO–21–38)

[2] https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2019-07/documents/420r19005.pdf

Investments in EPA programs are critical to protecting public health. On behalf of the Lung Association, I thank you for your consideration of these requests.

[This statement was submitted by Harold P. Wimmer, National President and CEO.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

On behalf of our over 2 million supporters, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies. Founded in 1866, the ASPCA is the first humane organization established in the Americas and serves as the nation's leading voice for animal welfare. We respectfully request that the Subcommittee consider the following concerns when making FY2022 appropriations.

WILD HORSE AND BURRO MANAGEMENT

In the nearly 50 years since Congress charged the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) with protecting our country's wild horses and burros, Americans have witnessed the agency's Wild Horse and Burro Program deteriorate into a continuous cycle of costly roundups and removals with little regard for the prioritization of on-range management of the herds. Our wild horses and burros should be revered as historical icons, treated humanely, and managed responsibly on our public lands. Fortunately, we are starting to see the agency slowly embrace a more positive management framework, thanks to additional funding and strong congressional directives to steer the program on track over the past few years.

Implement humane, effective on-range and off-range management programs.

Recognizing that the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program is in dire need of an overhaul, the ASPCA has partnered with a diverse group of stakeholders to propose a non-lethal, humane, and long-term approach to on-range management that would implement a sweeping fertility control program on the range and eventually release the BLM from a continuous cycle of round-ups, removals, and off-range holding. The proposal contains four interdependent strategies that must be implemented simultaneously to have a meaningful effect: 1) immediate and robust application of proven safe and humane fertility control to manage the on-range population; 2) shifting horses currently in off-range BLM corrals to humane, cost-effective pasture facilities; 3) increasing wild horse and burro adoptions; and 4) removals of horses from densely populated herd management areas to reduce the population that must be managed on-range, the need for which will decrease over time as the program rebalances towards on-range management, with strict adherence to the BLM's Comprehensive Animal Welfare Program.[1] The FY2020 Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, P.L. 116–94, allocated an additional $21 million for the program and included clear language directing BLM to implement a comprehensive, on-range management program that embraces the four principles of our proposal. The FY2021 Consolidated Appropriations Act, P.L 116–260, allocated an additional $14 million for the program with similar directives. We appreciate the Committee's support for a non-lethal, science-based wild horse and burro management program which, if funded at appropriate levels, can effectively rebalance the BLM's program and ensure that wild horses and burros can be managed humanely in perpetuity.

It is evident that momentum is building in support of this comprehensive, non-lethal solution—not only on Capitol Hill, but also within the Department of Interior and the agency. We have been encouraged by recent BLM statements that fertility control is a critical component of any successful program and that such a program is possible with additional funding, and incorporation of these important technologies into Environmental Assessments used to guide management decisions. The report that the BLM submitted to Congress in May 2020[2]—which Congress instructed the agency to produce in both the FY19 and FY20 Interior Appropriations bill—details how a non-lethal management program can be achieved, including through the use of fertility control. We are also encouraged to see the agency pursue research to find longer lasting vaccines, such as the oocyte growth factor vaccine

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[1] Bureau of Land Management, Comprehensive Animal Welfare Program for Wild Horse and Burro Gathers, IM 2015–151: https://www.blm.gov/policy/im-2015-151

[2] Bureau of Land Management, Report to Congress: An Analysis of Achieving a Sustainable Wild Horse and Burro Program, May 2020: https://www.blm.gov/sites/blm.gov/files/WHB-Report-2020-NewCover-051920-508.pdf

study in Nevada.[3] These actions mark an important departure from the agency's previous requests to use lethal management tools—an unthinkable outcome for our treasured wild horses and burros.

The ASPCA requests that the Subcommittee continue its progress towards a humane, non-lethal and effective wild horse and burro management program and include the following report language in its FY2022 Appropriations Bill:

Wild Horse and Burro Management.—The bill provides $152,596,000 for the Wild Horse and Burro program. These funds are in response to the Department of Interior's Fiscal Year 2022 budget request and the Bureau's May 15, 2020 proposal to institute a vigorous, non-lethal population control strategy to address the current unsustainable trajectory of on-range wild horse and burro population growth. The Committees expect this strategy to continue and to include a robust expansion of fertility control utilizing methods that are proven, safe, effective, and humane. Such treatments and on-range gathers are to be maximized, even if appropriate management levels are not immediately achievable. As the Bureau works to substantially increase on-range gathers for removal, the Committees encourage the Bureau to continue to secure cheaper and longer-term off-range holding facilities and pastures. The Committees further expect the Bureau to demonstrate its ability to increase its capacity for gathers; procure additional short and long term holding facilities; and to ensure that adequate staffing requirements are met, both in the field and in a location that will facilitate communication with policy makers. The Bureau shall continue to abide by the Comprehensive Animal Welfare Program and the statutory restrictions on sale without restriction, and the directives contained in Fiscal Year 2020 and 2021 House and Senate Reports and Explanatory Statements. The committee is deeply concerned with recent evidence linking the Bureau of Land Management's Wild Horse and Burro Adoption Incentive Program to wild horses going to slaughter for human consumption and urges immediate suspension of the program pending a thorough investigation. Finally, the Committees believe that the full and successful implementation of the Bureau's strategy will be greatly enhanced with a traditional congressional communications policy that includes regular and timely briefings on the progress being made and the challenges ahead.

Prohibit BLM and Forest Service funding for euthanasia or sale without limitations of wild horses and burros as management methods.

Congress has repeatedly confirmed its opposition to the killing and slaughter of our nation's wild horses and burros by prohibiting BLM from spending funds to kill healthy wild horses and burros or from selling them without limitations on sales. In the FY2020 Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, Congress continued the prohibition on lethal management methods for BLM wild horses and burros and, for the very first time, extended the prohibition to cover wild horses and burros managed by the U.S. Forest Service. This language was included again in the FY2021 Consolidated Appropriations Act.

The ASPCA requests that the Subcommittee continue to include the following language from Section 419 of P.L. 116–260:

Humane Transfer and Treatment of Animals

SEC. 419. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of the Interior, with respect to land administered by the Bureau of Land Management, or the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to land administered by the Forest Service (referred to in this section as the "Secretary concerned"), may transfer excess wild horses and burros that have been removed from land administered by the Secretary concerned to other Federal, State, and local government agencies for use as work animals.

(b) The Secretary concerned may make a transfer under subsection (a) immediately on the request of a Federal, State, or local government agency.

(c) An excess wild horse or burro transferred under subsection (a) shall lose status as a wild free-roaming horse or burro (as defined in section 2 of Public Law 92–195 (commonly known as the "Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act") (16 U.S.C. 1332)).

(d) A Federal, State, or local government agency receiving an excess wild horse or burro pursuant to subsection (a) shall not-(1) destroy the horse or burro in a manner that results in the destruction of the horse or burro into a commercial product; (2) sell or otherwise transfer the horse or burro in a manner that results in the destruction of the horse or burro for processing into a commercial product; or

[3] Bureau of Land Management, Nevada State Office, Oocyte Growth Factor Vaccine Study, 2020: https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/planAndProjectSite.do?methodName=renderDefaultPlanOrProjectSite&projectId=1502949

(3) euthanize the horse or burro, except on the recommendation of a licensed veterinarian in a case of severe injury, illness, or advanced age.

(e) Amounts appropriated by this Act shall not be available for-(1) the destruction of any healthy, unadopted, and wild horse or burro under the jurisdiction of the Secretary concerned (including a contractor); or (2) the sale of a wild horse or burro that results in the destruction of the wild horse or burro for processing into a commercial product.

[This statement was submitted by Nancy Perry, Senior Vice President, Government Relations.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN UROLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

The American Urological Association (AUA) thanks the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies for the opportunity to submit the following outside witness testimony for the FY 2022 appropriations process. We respectfully request that you consider our report language focused on research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) prioritizing "Prostate Cancer Disparities" at the National Cancer Institute (NCI), and "Chronic Urologic Diseases" at the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK).

The AUA is a globally engaged organization with more than 22,000 members practicing in more than 100 countries. Our members represent the world's largest collection of expertise and insight into the treatment of urologic disease. Of the total AUA membership, more than 15,000 are based in the United States and provide invaluable support to the urologic community by fostering the highest standards of urologic care through education, research and the formulation of health policy.

PRIORITIZING RESEARCH ON PROSTATE CANCER DISPARITIES

Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer in American men and more than 10 percent of men receive a prostate cancer diagnosis during their lifetime. Moreover, prostate cancer disproportionately impacts men of color. In fact, incidence of prostate cancer is almost 80 percent higher in Black men, and prostate cancer mortality among Black men is more than double that of men in every other racial or ethnic group. Given this disparate impact, the research and treatment of prostate cancer is both an urgent health policy and health equity priority. The NCI should increase funding to address these disparities in the delivery of care and outcomes in Black men with clinically localized prostate cancer through robust funding of new research studies, as well as continued funding of ongoing research studies.

The NCI is currently supporting research to study the biological and non-biological factors associated with aggressive prostate cancer in African American men. The RESPOND (Research on Prostate Cancer in African American Men: Defining the Roles of Genetics, Tumor Markers, and Social Stress) Study aims to identify and address the underlying causes of disparities in prostate cancer incidence and mortality. To ensure this research effort will continue to expand our understanding of disparities in prostate cancer and improve health equity for Black men and their families, the NCI should provide an update on this study in the NIH FY 2023 budget justification, including whether additional funds and/or resources are needed to support this work.

FY 2022 Report Language Request
National Institutes of Health
National Cancer Institute

Prostate Cancer Disparities.—Nearly 250,000 men will be diagnosed with and 34,000 men will die from prostate cancer in 2021. Incidence of prostate cancer is almost 80% higher in non-Hispanic Black and prostate cancer mortality among Black men is more than double that of men in every other racial or ethnic group—representing a stark example of health inequity in cancer outcomes. The Committee supports the National Cancer Institute and National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities' Research on Prostate Cancer in Men of African American Ancestry: Defining the Roles of Genetics Tumor Markers, and Social Stress (RESPOND) Study, intended to identify the underlying causes of disparities in prostate cancer incidence and mortality. The Committee requests an update on the study in the National Institute of Health's 2023 budget justification, including whether additional funds are needed to speed or expand the impact of this important work.

INCREASE FUNDING FOR CHRONIC UROLOGIC DISEASE RESEARCH

There continues to be a concerning prevalence of chronic urologic disease, like prostatitis, benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), cystitis, urinary tract infection, erectile dysfunction, urinary incontinence, and overactive bladder among Americans. These conditions continue to affect millions of individuals including children, adults, men, women, all races, and all socioeconomic strata in the U.S., resulting in significant health care costs, and substantial disability and impaired quality of life for these individuals. The Urologic Diseases in America project funded by the NIDDK found that the 3 of the top 5 most costly urologic conditions to treat in the U.S. are non-cancerous functional urologic diseases including urinary tract infections ($3.5 billion), kidney stones ($2.1 billion), BPH ($1.1 billion). Because many of the chronic urologic conditions are strongly impacted by social determinants of health, resultant inequities in access, treatment and outcomes are common for these conditions. We appreciate the NIH's previous efforts to increase research funding and resources in this area. However, we are concerned about insufficient has been done to address these non-cancerous functional urologic health conditions leading to poorer health outcomes for patients, increased costs to the healthcare system and worsening inequities.

The NIDDK is equipped to support research to advance our ability to combat chronic urologic conditions and improve urologic health; however, more funding is necessary to move the needle. The NIDDK received a disproportionate increase in funding compared to other institutes at the NIH in fiscal year (FY) 2021. Congress stated in the FY 2021 Labor-HHS report the committee intended to provide a 1.5 percent increase for all NIH institutes and centers in the FY 2021 Labor-HHS appropriations bill, however, the NIDDK received an increase of less of one percent. The AUA is concerned about what this means for NIDDK's ability to continue its existing research and undergo new research initiatives, particularly as the institute supports COVID–19 related research relevant to its mission despite not receiving emergency funds. To ensure that NIDDK has the capacity to support urologic research consistent with their mission, the AUA recommends increased funding for NIDDK. This will allow the institute to coordinate research efforts to better understand these conditions and improve patient outcomes.

FY 2022 Report Language Request
National Institutes of Health
National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

Chronic Urologic Diseases.—There continues to be a concerning prevalence of chronic urologic diseases among Americans and the Committee applauds NIH efforts to increase research funding and resources. Despite its prevalence and health impact, we are concerned there is not enough research on these chronic conditions, such as prostatitis, benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), cystitis, urinary tract infection, erectile dysfunction, urinary incontinence, and overactive bladder. To make progress in prevention and treatment of all chronic urologic disease, the Committee recommends increased funding for the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases and encourages the Institute to strengthen and coordinate research efforts to better understand these conditions, improve patient outcomes and reduce healthcare inequalities.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony to you today in support of federal funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). We request that you match President Biden's FY 2022 budget request of $201 million for the NEA.

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. We have more than 60 years of service and are dedicated to representing and serving the more than 4,500 local arts agencies in every state. Together we work to ensure that every American has access to the transformative power of the arts. I appreciate the opportunity to provide public comment on the budget request for the NEA.

We were pleased to see the Administration's substantial and necessary increase for the NEA. This is a welcome change from the previous Administration's budgets—in four consecutive years—that called for the elimination of the NEA. This new approach is consistent with the recent bipartisan work from this committee, and Congress, in consistently increasing funding for the NEA, and I know that I speak

for the arts and culture community in expressing our deep appreciation to Congress in appropriating an additional $5.25 million in funds for the NEA in FY 2021 over FY 2020 enacted levels.

Receiving consecutive years of gradual funding increases, the NEA's investment in every congressional district in the country now contributes to a $919.7 billion arts and culture industry in America according to our U.S. Department of Commerce, representing 4.3 percent of the annual GDP. The nation's arts and culture industry supports 5.2 million jobs and yields a $33 billion trade surplus for our country.[1]

Further, every NEA grant dollar leverages at least $9 in private and other public funds, generating more than $500 million in matching support. This leveraging power far surpasses the required non-federal match of at least 1:1 and illustrates why federal support for the arts is uniquely valuable. The federal investment in the arts helps power the creative economy across the country.

Proportionally, the NEA's budget is just 0.0035 percent of the federal budget. That amounts to 51 cents per capita. In fact, the NEA budget has been losing its share of federal discretionary spending and failing to keep pace with inflation since 1992 when the appropriation was for $176 million, the last highwater mark for the agency. When adjusted for inflation, the NEA's 1992 budget would today be a little less than twice the current budget at $326 million.[2]

Regarding our request for FY 2022, we hope that the NEA will receive funding at $201 million, the highest funding—level ever appropriated by Congress for the agency.

We estimate that a $33.5 million increase, based on current NEA programming would provide:

—An increase in the total amount for direct endowment grants by about $18 million.
—An increase of $12 million to the NEA's state partnership agreement.
—With the NEA estimation of a 9:1 return for each direct grant dollar, this funding level increase would be expected to leverage an additional $500 million in non-federal matching support.
—$15 million in funding to advance racial equity, access, and climate justice.

NEA grants are remarkably far-reaching, and they touch many communities which have fewer opportunities to experience the arts. According to the NEA, the majority of direct grants go to small-and medium-sized organizations, which often support projects for audiences that otherwise might not have access to arts programming. In FY 2020:

—42% of NEA—supported activities take place in high-poverty neighborhoods; and
—35% of NEA grants went to organizations that reach underserved populations such as people with disabilities, people in institutions, and veterans—such as those who receive care through Creative Forces, which places creative arts therapies at the core of patient-centered care at 11 military medical facilities and a telehealth program for patients in rural and remote areas.[3]

NEA's funding to Local Arts Agencies (LAAs) is extremely vital to their ability to serve their communities. LAAs collectively are responsible for approximately $912 million in public and private grantmaking annually. They are also the largest grantmaker to individual artists. LAAs work directly for or with mayors, city managers, county supervisors, and township managers as well corporate CEOs, real estate developers, and social service providers in every size community across the country. Additionally, LAAs have taken the lead in equity—centered grantmaking in their cities, counties, and rural and suburban areas. They have been entrusted with federal, state, and local funds, including CDBG grants and CARES Act and American Rescue Plan Act state and local block grant funds to support emergency relief grants to arts and culture small businesses, nonprofit institutions, individual gig artists, and entrepreneurs.

One recent issue LAAs have been focused on is addressing cultural equity. I'd like to highlight some of those examples and would encourage the NEA to continue supporting this important work by directing additional resources to ensuring there is cultural equity in the arts.

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[1] U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, https://www.bea.gov/news/2021/arts-and-cultural-production-satellite-account-us-and-states.

[2] Americans for the Arts, https://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/NEA%202021%20FINAL_0.pdf.

[3] National Endowment for the Arts, https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Quick_Facts_February2020.pdf.

—The Belonging in Oakland Initiatives: Neighborhood Voices and the Just City Cultural Fund; Oakland, CA-Neighborhood Voices is a grant program that lifts up seldom—heard voices of Oakland's neighborhoods by supporting the expression, recognition, and understanding of the array of diverse communities that make Oakland unique, vibrant, and resilient. This program is a by-product of Belonging in Oakland—the City of Oakland's cultural development plan that aims to promote cultural equity, belonging, and well-being for all the communities of Oakland.[4]

—Unrestricted Support for Artists and Arts Organizations; Memphis, TN-ArtsMemphis has served Memphis and Shelby County, TN, since 1963, investing more than $85M in organizations and artists. Since 2016, ArtsMemphis has been advancing the redesign of their cornerstone operating support grant program. Through continual review and refinement, ArtsMemphis has shifted this program to be more accessible, more inclusive, and more representative of the community. Today, ArtsMemphis' operating support grant funds 48 organizations with budgets ranging from $30K to $15M. 41% of these organizations have a BIPOC leader and 77% have audiences who are majority people of color. Out of the 2.5 million arts experiences their grantees provided pre-pandemic, 1.3 million engaged participants who were people of color. In 2020, ArtsMemphis utilized a racial equity lens for grant awards, providing an across-the-board increase to Black-led organizations serving majority black audiences.[5]

We must continue to strongly support federal funding of the arts as it fosters investment, spurs job—related growth, expands educational opportunities, is essential to LAAs, and provides for the preservation of our heritage.

Thank you for your consideration and support of $201 million for the NEA in the FY 2022 budget, and, as always, we stand ready to assist and remain focused on pursuing an increase for the NEA for the coming fiscal year.

[This statement was submitted by General Nolen Bivens (U.S. Army Ret.), President and CEO.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ANIMAL WELFARE INSTITUTE

The Animal Welfare Institute, a national animal welfare advocacy nonprofit organization, asks the Subcommittee to provide adequate funding levels for crucial wildlife programs and to include measures to protect at—risk species.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT (BLM) AND U.S. FOREST SERVICE—WILD HORSES AND BURROS

The BLM, which oversees the vast majority of America's wild horses and burros, continues to mismanage herds, relying on an endless cycle of costly removals from public lands instead of implementing viable solutions, such as immunocontraception to control fertility rates and manage these federally protected animals on the range. In its May 2020 report to Congress, the BLM called for accelerated removals at a cost of roughly $900 million in the first five years alone. The BLM cannot continue on its current unsustainable trajectory. While the agency spends upwards of $60 million annually on removals and holding, it spends less than 1 percent of its WHB program budget on fertility control. We ask the Committee to urge the agency to implement the use of the proven and safe immunocontraceptive vaccines—specifically the widely supported porcine zona pellucida (PZP) vaccine, as per the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) recommendation. Moreover, we strongly support the continued inclusion of provisions to ensure that both BLM and U.S. Forest Service—managed wild equines cannot be destroyed for commercial purposes in order to protect these animals from slaughter, as well as language preventing the destruction of healthy, unadopted wild horses and burros.

In recent years, the BLM has aggressively pursued attempts to manage wild horses via a risky and invasive surgical procedure known as "ovariectomy via colpotomy," which involves blindly locating the ovaries and severing them using a rod—like tool while the animal remains conscious. In its report on wild horse management, the NAS explicitly warned the BLM against using this procedure due to the risks of serious complications. Numerous lawmakers in the House and Senate have criticized the BLM's plans to ovariectomize horses and national polling shows overwhelming opposition to this procedure. We ask the Committee to include lan-

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[4] https://city-of-oakland-california.forms.fm/neighborhood-voices-belonging-in-oakland/forms/5263.

[5] https://www.artsmemphis.org/grants.

guage barring the use of federal funds to conduct ovariectomies on wild horses and burros so that taxpayer dollars can be directed towards cost-effective, safe, and humane fertility control methods such as PZP. Finally, in light of the recent New York Times exposé detailing how wild horses adopted through the BLM's Adoption Incentive Program are ending up in the slaughter pipeline, we ask the Committee to include language calling for an Office of Inspector General investigation into the program.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT IMPLEMENTATION (FWS)

We ask the committee to appropriate $592.1 million (across five programs) to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for the purpose of Endangered Species Act (ESA) implementation:

—$63.7 million for Listing
—$240.3 million for Recovery
—$149 million for Planning and Consultation
—$13.5 million for Conservation and Restoration
—$125.6 million for the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (CESCF)

Implementation of the Endangered Species Act, our nation's most effective law for species conservation, has been severely underfunded for years. The Fish and Wildlife Service requires a budget of $592.1 million across five programs to begin to make up for lost ground and put species on the path to recovery. Critically, this includes ensuring every listed species receives a minimum of $50,000 per year for recovery. This funding package will allow the ESA to be implemented in the way Congress intended when it dedicated our country to protecting the species and the habitats most in need.

The funding levels requested above would allow FWS to process its entire listing backlog in less than four years; put adequate funds toward recovery planning and actions for every listed species; maximize the efficacy and efficiency of working with other federal agencies and with states, counties, and private landowners; and implement early conservation actions that keep species from ever reaching the brink of extinction. Additionally, the CESCF serves as an essential source of funding for states and private landowners, making it a crucial tool for cooperative conservation.

TROPHY HUNTING (FWS)

We urge you to include language prohibiting the use of funds by the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service for the issuance of any permit authorizing import from any country of a sport—hunted trophy from a threatened or endangered species until the Secretary has made a finding, after public notice and comment pursuant to Section 553 of Title 5 of the U.S. Code, of whether the country where the animal was killed adequately provides for the conservation and monitoring for that species, including a fully funded and implemented management plan for that species. That management plan should be based on the best available science that addresses existing threats to the species; provide a justification for how sport hunting significantly benefits the conservation of the species; formally coordinate with adjacent countries to protect transboundary populations; and ensure that any take is sustainable and does not contribute to the species' decline in either the short-term or long-term according to current population estimates.

African elephants and lions continue to face severe threats to their survival, and Americans should not be allowed to import sport—hunted trophies of threatened and endangered species in the absence of scientific data about the impact of hunting on relevant populations. Under the Trump administration, FWS tried to reverse the Obama-era bans on importing African elephant and lion trophies. In March 2018, the agency issued a memo announcing that decisions about whether to approve importation of sport—hunted elephant and lion trophies would be made on a "case-by-case basis," replacing the former policy of having rules that applied to each species within each country of origin. The Subcommittee has previously expressed concern about this policy change. FY21 House report language stated, "The inability of the Service to comply with the directive to brief the Committee within 60 days of enactment indicates the Service does not have the necessary information at hand to make these determinations," and the ongoing lack of transparency from FWS indicates that this statement continues to be true. We urge the Subcommittee to ensure that FWS upholds its mandate to conserve wildlife by prohibiting the issuance of further trophy import permits for threatened and endangered species until necessary transparency and scientific rigor can be implemented.

TRAPPING (FWS, BLM, NPS)

We urge the committee to allocate $300,000 to the Department of the Interior (specifically FWS, BLM, and NPS) to institute a three-year pilot program that replaces the use of body—gripping traps (Conibears, legholds, and snares) by agency personnel (including contractors) with non-lethal methods and equipment, with the following exceptions:

—When the body—gripping trap is used to (i) control documented, invasive species to achieve resource management objectives where alternative methods have failed; or (ii) protect a species that is listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

—Exception only applies when (i) such use of a body—gripping trap is in accordance with applicable state and federal law; (ii) prior to use of a body—gripping trap, all available and viable nonlethal methods for such control or protection, respectively, are attempted; and (iii) such attempts are documented in writing, and such documentation is maintained at the headquarters of the department that employs the individual engaging in such attempt.

Furthermore, we encourage the inclusion of language directing the Secretary to begin this pilot program within six months and to provide a report to the Committee before the end of the fiscal year with details of its implementation.

Body-gripping traps, such as snares, Conibear traps, and steel—jaw leghold traps, are inhumane and inherently nonselective. The nontarget animals caught in these traps include threatened and endangered species, as well as family pets. These traps do not belong on public lands where families enjoy spending time outdoors, and where anyone who trips a trap can become a victim. Nonlethal methods are often highly effective and DOI personnel would be serving both wildlife and outdoor recreation interests by prioritizing their use.

Based on funding levels for other predator control programs, $300,000 over three years would be a reasonable amount to fund a pilot program replacing department use of body—gripping traps with nonlethal methods. The FWS Endangered Species Conservation-Wolf Livestock Loss Compensation and Prevention fund tends to give $50,000-$100,000 to each recipient. The FWS Fish and Wildlife Coordination and Assistance fund was appropriated $150,000 in FY16 (the most recent year with data) to award grants to conservation and/or environmental projects. Wildlife Services (Agriculture) gave Colorado State University a $50,028 grant to study nonlethal management of coyote predation. This paints a picture of $50,000-$150,000 per year for a small predator management program, and a three-year program is advisable to obtain meaningful results.

[This statement was submitted by Nancy Blaney, Director, Government Affairs.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY

Honorable Senators:

On behalf of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC or "Conservancy"), I submit this request to increase the annual Operation of the National Park Service (ONPS) appropriation for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (ANST, A.T., or Trail), a unit of the National Park Service (NPS) within the Interior, EPA, and Related Agencies appropriations bill. The current level of ONPS appropriations for the Trail, $1.6 million, is insufficient to fulfil the NPS obligations under the National Trails System Act (NTSA), relevant NPS-related statutes, and the cooperative agreement with ATC. We believe a budget of $3.5 million is necessary to meet the needs of the Trail. Particularly as our nation responds to the mounting impacts of anthropogenic climate change, Congress must invest heavily in habitat restoration, combating invasive species/the loss of biodiversity, and maintaining the functionality and ecological services of our public lands. In the A.T., continued underinvestment could be catastrophic. We have been advocating within the NPS for a further increase request, but recognize the central role the Congress serves in determining funding for the federal government.

The Conservancy is the § 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization responsible for developing the Appalachian Trail and leading the Trail's Cooperative Management System, which joins the federal government, the governments of 14 states, 31 Maintaining Clubs (Clubs), and local and non-profit partners in caring for our iconic long trail. Our position with the Trail, which began 100 years ago this year, outlining the vision of a continent—spanning footpath, remains formalized under a cooperative agreement with the National Park Service (NPS). Recognizing the needs of the Trail, President Trump requested an increase in its ONPS allocation of $107,000,

which Congress granted in the Omnibus Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2021. Recognizing the unit is struggling to meet obligations, the Committees on Appropriations included in the explanatory statement for the Omnibus an "encouragement" for the NPS to submit an increased allocation. We have yet to see the line-item specifics for President Biden's Fiscal Year 2022 budget request.

The ANST runs 2,193 miles with approximately 4,500 miles of boundaries encasing an approximately 300,000-acre conserved "Corridor." The A.T. Corridor includes lands within the National Park and National Forest Systems, as well as state and local units, with the NPS directly responsible for approximately half of the acreage. The Trail is the centerline of the largest contiguous stretch of public land in the eastern United States. It is the longest park unit in the National Park System. In terms of size, the ANST has more NPS—administered acreage than Biscayne, Voyageurs, or Zion National Parks. In terms of boundary mileage, it is second in the National Park System only to Wrangell-St. Elias National Park. Its normal, estimated visitation is 3 million, placing it 36th in vistiation within the System—that is higher than Joshua Tree or Bryce Canyon National Parks, or, more locally to the Capitol, Rock Creek Park. Although the NPS does not attempt to consistently track vistation of our national trails, we believe that visitation increased Trail-wide by 50% in 2020 to 4.5 million.

The ANST's length (spanning 12° of latitude in the temperate zone), north-south alignment, changes of over 6,500 feet in elevation and the numerous peaks and ridges it crosses along the Appalachian Mountain chain creates its topographically diverse landscape, protecting very high habitat diversity and connectivity while providing for a unique recreation experience. It is an important landscape in the eastern U.S. that offers large-scale continuity and important climate refugia, increasingly vital attributes in the highly developed and increasingly taxed eastern public land network. The ANST is one of (if not the most) biodiverse units of the National Park System. While the ANST does not have the physical infrastructure such as paved roads and water systems that rank costly in terms of facility maintenance, the natural resource management needs of the Trail are legion. Unlike facility assets, opportunities within the NPS to fund natural resource programmatic work are rare to materialize.

Currently, the NPS office that administers the Trail has 9.3 fulltime—equivalent employees (FTEs), approximately 40 Conservation—related staffers at ATC, and 6,000 volunteers contributing annually a total of 245,000 labor hours (equivalent to 118 employees). The $1.6 million ONPS allocation is, for the most part, consumed by staff salary and benefits. The allocation is insufficient to allow for much project work or to enable NPS staff to visit locations along the Trail. Under the current park operations funding model, there are certain things that are very difficult to fund except through a unit's ONPS allocation, specifically: providing law enforcement (maintaining and asserting the federal government's property rights as well as providing public safety); processing environmental compliance documents (such as required by NEPA) and; overseeing (if not funding) natural resource protection work.

Between 2005 and 2020, the ANST Park Office ONPS base allocation has grown at an average annual rate of 3.3 percent. When adjusted for the effects of inflation, ONPS funding has grown at an annualized rate of 1.4 percent. Among the 42 NPS units with annual visitation in the one to three million range, the average ONPS allocation is $3.93 per visitor, while the ANST is currently at 54¢ per visitor. Few units are funded by their ONPS allocation alone; most, if not all, rely on allocations distributed subsequent to Service—wide "calls" to disburse non-unit specific funds Congress appropriates. By and large, successive administrations have requested, and Congress has granted, flat increases to the funding streams within the NPS that allow for facility asset maintenance (i.e. Cyclic Maintenance, Repair—Rehab). The same cannot be said for the Natural Resource Projects call (which, it must be noted, funds projects, but not programs, meaning it cannot fund FTE) and there is no call for law enforcement or for compliance, which, like natural resource programmatic staff, must be funded through an ONPS allocation.

The current, and reasonable needs of the unit are more than the current cooperative management partners can support given the legal division of responsibilities. Comparatively, NPS units with far smaller acreage to manage and far less complex obligations and programs receive relatively much larger base budgets, including the 16-acre Springfield Armory with a base budget of $1.5 million; the 968-acre Appomattox Court House with a base budget of $1.9 million; and the 16-acre Fort Stanwix with base budget of $1.6 million.

Law Enforcement.—The law enforcement needs of the Trail are significant considering the ANST spans 14 states and 88 counties. These responsibilities can be broken down roughly into two categories: individuals threatening safety (criminal) and

encroachments (civil). Both are commonly referred to as "incidents" and "incident response" is the general term used to mean "responding to potential harm to the legal rights of the Trail and its users." Criminal incidents on the Trail posing a significant threat to public safety are, thankfully, rare. Much more common are civil incidents/encroachments. ANST owns 2,083 fee tracts, containing 108,000 acres of lands with over 1,200 miles of exterior boundary line which is maintained and monitored by ATC staff and staff-coordinated volunteers. Roughly 50 new encroachment violations are discovered each year, with 10% of those being severe in nature. Approximately 430 known (ATC-Identified) ANST boundary violations have occurred over the past decade, many of which still remain unresolved. Examples of severe and ongoing encroachment issues include large—scale timber and resource theft, widespread ATV use, construction of building, homes, pools and patios, and waste dumping. It is the legal responsibility of the NPS to address these encroachments, something unpracticable with its current ANST law enforcement (LE) staffing of two FTEs.

ATC staff and volunteers routinely assist in responding to Trail incidents. The current-and preferred-management of the Trail places the Chief Ranger duty stationed at the Trail's administrative headquarters in Harper's Ferry, WV and the one FTE split between the ANST and BLRI (Blue Ridge Parkway NPS unit) in southern Virginia, serving that region, and one FTE split between the ANST and GETT (Gettysburg National Military Park) serving that immediate region. For the NPS-managed Trail miles north of Harrisburg, the ANST relies on less formal staff sharing. ATC advocates for replicating the staff—sharing model across the mid-Atlantic and northern stretches of the Trail, stationing six individuals, working 50% time on the ANST in Maine, New Hampshire/Vermont/Massachusetts, Connecticut/New York, New Jersey/Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania/Maryland, and West Virginia/Virginia. Increasing LE staffing on the Trail will increase the NPS' ability to connect to rural communities and to safeguard not only the increasingly manifest desire of the public to recreate on our public lands, but the narrow ribbon of conserved land providing critical species habitat and providing for migration and climate adaptations in the densely populated eastern U.S. More funding is also needed to train ATC staff and volunteers as they support incident management as needed.

Resources Management.—The majority of the management of any National Park System unit is the proper administration of natural and cultural resources and minimizing impacts from visitors. The ANST currently splits coordination for both these buckets between one FTE when at least two, and preferably three FTE, are warranted. There is no biologist on the NPS staff for the ANST. Regarding natural resources, ATC staff and volunteers are responsible for all Trail-related maintenance as well as the stewardship and restoration of the Trail corridor lands as quality habitat for flora and fauna. Except for the aforementioned FTE at the ANST, the majority of the funding for natural resources management is provided by individual and charitable foundation giving. Some of the natural resource work is funded through competitive grants awarded by DOI Region One, but funding is extremely limited and project-focused. Funding for natural resource work supported by ONPS funding has diminished steadily in recent years.

Natural resources management for the ANST is multi-faceted. Management of "endangered plants and animals, invasive species, climate change mitigation, and scientific research projects" are all Cooperative Agreement—identified responsibilities for the NPS to "provide overall leadership" for. ATC staff and volunteers are required to "coordinate [the] on-the-ground management activities needed to protect occurrences of rare, threatened, and endangered species, exemplary natural communities, historic properties, and other natural, cultural, and aesthetic resources." In recent years, ATC has led several natural resource management projects within the ANST corridor, including Ash treatments to halt the spread of the invasive Emerald Ash Borer in Massachusetts, Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee, red spruce restoration in North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia, habitat creation for the globally imperiled Northern Metalmark Butterfly in Connecticut, and restoration of Atlantic Salmon habitat in Maine. ATC staff hold professional licenses and degrees in areas such as ecological restoration, pesticide application and hazard tree arboriculture, serving as the primary experts for these services on the ANST.

Compliance.—ANST staff depend on ATC staff to collect information required for the completion of National Environmental Policy Act compliance for all treadway and corridor related work. ATC staff are generally responsible for the completion of impact assessments, field monitoring and coordination with state Natural Heritage and wildlife offices. Yet NEPA compliance is a process that can not be delegated in full and ANST capacity is required to facilitate and oversee this process as well as research permit evaluations and approvals.

The A.T. is uniquely situated to serve as a barometer for the air, water, climate and biological diversity of the Appalachian Mountains and much of the eastern United States, which is what makes it an attractive place to explore scientific questions. The ANST has clearly identified the need for sound scientific baselines and trend information on environmental and resource conditions to inform adaptive management and stewardship activities, however current capacity does not allow the ANST to even entertain proposals from educational institutions and research entities seeking permission to use the ANST as a study area. Each year, requests for scientific analysis, evaluation and monitoring within the A.T. corridor, submitted through the NPS Research Permit and Reporting System, go unanswered and unpermitted. Each of these unfilled research requests is a missed opportunity for stronger science and informed A.T. management.

For compliance under section 106 of the NHPA, ANST NPS staff cannot delegate its obligations to ATC. Additionally, closer coordination with state and tribal offices of historic preservation will further the ability of the ANST to address extant compliance demands as well as build the capacity to perform government-to-government consultations with the 34 identified Native nations with ancestral and/or reservation lands along the Trail. NPS staff cannot delegate to ATC government-to-government consultation responsibilities.

Thank you for considering our request.

[This statement was submitted by Brendan Mysliwiec, Director of Federal Policy and Legislation.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ASSINIBOINE AND SIOUX RURAL WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM

FORT PECK RESERVATION RURAL WATER SYSTEM ($3,358,000)

The Assiniboine and Sioux Rural Water Supply System (ASRWSS) submits this testimony in support of $3,358,000 in funding for continued Operations, Maintenance, and Replacement (OMR) of part of the Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System as authorized by PL 106–382.

ASRWSS is the tribally chartered entity charged with the planning, design, construction, operation, maintenance and replacement (OMR) of the Assiniboine and Sioux Rural Water Supply System, which is the part of the Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation. We are strong partners with Dry Prairie Rural Water System (DPRWS), which operates the part of the Project that is off the Reservation.

The most basic of governmental function is the delivery of clean, safe, and reliable drinking water. We are honored to provide water and service in northeastern Montana to an area of 7,750 square miles connected by 3,200 miles of pipeline when completed in 2023. Completion of all construction funding is expected in FY 2022. The project provides safe, adequate, and reliable drinking water to an area larger than New Jersey and just smaller than Massachusetts.

ASRWSS wants to thank the Subcommittee for the full funding of OMR costs of the Water Project at $3.281 million in FY 2021.

As the Project works toward completion of construction, OMR needs continue to increase. Thus, for FY 2022 we will need an additional $77,000 for total level of funding at $3.358 million in appropriations for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Construction account.

The funding increase of $77,000 is necessary to:

i) safely operate, maintain, repair and replace system features,
ii) employ the necessary level of qualified and certified staff
iii) purchase chemicals for treatment
iv) purchase power for pumping and treatment facilities.

The Congress (Energy and Water Subcommittee) will have appropriated over $320 million to complete the project through FY 2022. The project is 94% complete and full funding will be available to complete the project in FY 2022. It is imperative, through Interior appropriations (and a DPRWS non-federal cost share), that ASRWSS maintain the investment of Congress in our infrastructure valued at $220 million and held in trust by the United States.

The DPRWS cost share covers the OMR cost of their use common facilities as agreed upon between ASRWSS, DPRWS and the Secretary in a Water Service Agreement. DPRWS makes monthly payments on a timely basis.

ASRWSS provided drinking water to more than 21,500 residents in Northeast Montana in 2020. In 2002 over 24,000 residents will be served. Ultimately, 31,000

residents will be served as the population of the region continues to grow over the next several decades. The population served at the end of 2016 was less than 10,000, and OMR funding needs have been increasing accordingly. The project also serves social and governmental agencies, including the BIA Agency Office, schools, clinics, hospitals, Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Fort Union Trading Post National Historic site, U.S.-Canadian border stations, as well as the towns of Poplar, Wolf Point, Frazier, Culbertson, Medicine Lake, Scobey, Nashua, Fort Kipp and Brockton.

The Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System was authorized by the Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System Act of 2000, Pub. L. 106–382. The enactment ensured a safe, adequate, and reliable municipal, rural and industrial water supply for the residents of the Fort Peck Indian Reservation and the residents of Roosevelt, Sheridan, Daniels, and Valley Counties outside the Reservation. As noted in the President's previous budget requests: *"Groundwater from shallow alluvial aquifers . . . for the municipal systems . . . is generally poor with concentrations of iron, manganese, sodium, sulfates, bicarbonates and total dissolved solids above recommended standards."* This project provides a perpetual remedy to historic water quality issues that impaired health and stunted economic growth.

The Project called for the construction of a single treatment plant on the Missouri River near Wolf Point, Montana, that will distribute water through 3,200 miles of pipeline to both the Reservation Tribal system and through three completed interconnections to the Dry Prairie system. A single water source on the Missouri River replaced nearly two dozen individual community water sources and ensures a clean, plentiful and safe water supply.

The Federal legislation authorizing the Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System requires that the OMR costs of ASRWSS, held in trust by the United States, are fully funded. Interior appropriations to BIA are the federal source of OMR funding. This is consistent with the federal trust responsibility to the Tribes who were promised a permanent home when the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes agreed to move to the Reservation. A permanent home requires safe drinking water. The funding request enables ASRWSS to deliver superior drinking water, meeting all federal and state standards, to all the people, towns, and federal, tribal, state, public and private agencies, and businesses.

Thus, the $3.358 million requested in FY 2022 for the OMR of this vital infrastructure project is critical. The increased funding of $77,000 over the FY 2021 level for the OM&R of the Project is needed as the Project buildout increases the service population and requires additional personnel, power, chemicals, repairs, replacements and improvements to operate the water treatment plant and other facilities.

Again, we thank the Subcommittee for the continued support of OMR funding for ASRWSS as authorized by PL 106–382.

[This statement was submitted by Bill Whitehead, Chairman.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ASSINIBOINE AND SIOUX TRIBES OF THE FORT PECK RESERVATION

I am Floyd Azure, Chairman of the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation. I would like to thank the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee for the opportunity to present testimony concerning FY 2022 appropriations for the Indian Health Service (IHS), the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The Fort Peck Reservation is in northeast Montana, forty miles west of the North Dakota border, and fifty miles south of the Canadian border, with the Missouri River defining its southern border. The Reservation encompasses over two million acres of land. We have approximately 13,000 enrolled tribal members, with approximately 7,000 tribal members living on the Reservation. We have a total Reservation population of approximately 12,000 people.

Congress has long recognized that the foundation for economic development and prosperity in Indian country lay in community stability, which begins with quality health care and infrastructure, such as safe drinking water, roads, and public safety, and a clean environment.

A. INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE FUNDING

We strongly support the Administration's $2.2 billion requested increase for the Indian Health Service. The COVID–19 pandemic showed the nation the chronic health care deficiencies in Indian country. Native people acquired and died of this disease at some of the highest rates in the nation. This is because we suffer from

the comorbidities at higher rates, we lack access to adequate health care, and we lack basic community infrastructure.

As we are coming out of the pandemic, Indian country is preparing for the next health crisis, a mental health crisis. Our people were engaging in self-harming behaviors at drastic rates before the pandemic. We fear that because our people have suffered tremendous losses and have not been able to properly grieve, that this grief will manifest itself in unhealthy behaviors. Congress must focus on mental/behavioral health programs to ensure that we do not have another epidemic to respond to.

B. BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

We strongly support the Administration's requested $600 million increase for the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

1. Social Services and ICWA Funding

In particular, increased funding for our Tribal Social Services program is critically needed. There has not been any increase in this program for several years. Over 36% of the children in the foster care system in Montana are Indian children—Indian people represent only 10% of the State population. More than 100 Fort Peck children are in the foster care system. We need a social worker in the Fort Peck Agency.

Montana is one of six states in the country to have instituted an ICWA court. This court handles State ICWA cases in Yellowstone County from the Fort Peck, Northern Cheyenne, and Crow Tribes. The team approach of the ICWA Court in Montana fosters collaboration between State and Tribal stakeholders, promotes meaningful State compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act, and improves outcomes for Indian children and their families involved in the foster care system.

In this era where ICWA is under constant attack, in spite of it providing needed protections for Indian children, families and Tribes, the Committee should encourage the BIA to work collaboratively and strategically with Tribes to expand ICWA courts across the country. This kind of support and dedicated staff can only be done through additional funding for the BIA Tribal Social Service and ICWA programs.

2. Tribal Court Funding

Relatedly, while we appreciate the increased funding for Tribal courts that Congress has provided, it has not been enough. Tribal Courts are the backbone of tribal sovereignty. Without sound tribal courts, we could not be a community where people feel safe, where business want to open and where our children and our most vulnerable receive protection. The Fort Peck Tribal Court is one of the oldest in the country and we are very proud of the work our judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys and clerks do.

Currently, the Bureau of Indian Affairs only provides a fraction of the funding to operate our Tribal Court. Our court is one of the few Tribal Courts in the Country exercising expanded VAWA jurisdiction. This work is important to making our Reservation a safe place for women. However, this takes additional resources to retain properly trained defense counsel, prosecutors and judges.

3. Law Enforcement

There is critical need for increased law enforcement funding throughout Indian country. Our Police Chief estimates that 70%-80% of criminal conduct has a drug component to it, with assaults and burglaries arising out of drug use and addiction. We are dealing with violent crimes, in particular violent crimes against women and children. We need to emphasize community policing but to do this we need more law enforcement personnel to live and work in our community. The crime in our community is impacting the most vulnerable in our community the most and it is time that we stop accepting this as normal. It is not normal, it is tragic.

4. Housing

One of the reasons the Pandemic impacted our community so significantly is that too many people on our Reservation are living in overcrowded conditions. In many homes, there are three or families living in 4-bedroom homes. Across Indian country it is estimated that approximately 20% of all homes are overcrowded, it is much higher on the Fort Peck Reservation. This overcrowding situation is contributing to the social disfunction that our children experience. In many instances, it is the grandparents who take in their adult children and grandchildren. Sadly, these adult children are in the grips of addiction, and other unhealthy behaviors, which their children can't escape from as they are living with it every day. Moreover, when a grandparent allows an active user to live in their home, they are putting their own

housing security at risk, because our Housing Authority does not allow active users to live in a HUD home, and thus, these elders can face eviction. In short, in order to have a healthy community, we must have more housing. This includes not only more housing for families, but also recovery housing so that people with addictions are not forced to go homeless.

In addition to overcrowded housing on the Reservation, the housing shortage also impacts our ability to recruit professionals, including education, law enforcement, and especially health care workers. Thus, we need housing that is not only directed to low-income families, but also working families so that we can attract the professionals we need to work in our schools, clinics, and police stations.

Importantly, housing funding must include the resources for infrastructure to ensure any new housing has water, sewer, electricity, and broadband access.

5. Bison Program Funding

Presently, the Indian Buffalo Management Act has been introduced and is pending before Congress. This legislation will create a permanent buffalo restoration and management program within the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and authorize an appropriation of funds. While this legislation is pending, we want to thank the Subcommittee for funding that you provided for the Tribal Bison program for FY 2021. This funding is critical to bringing traditional food and traditional practices back to our communities.

The Fort Peck Tribes have implemented a robust bison restoration program and now have partnered with the National Park Service to conduct post quarantine assurance testing of NPS bison from Yellowstone National Park. These efforts resulted in the restoration of over 600 bison to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation. We have translocated some of these bison to other Tribes for their herd development.

C. ENVIRONMETNAL PROTECTION AGENCY

There is an important need to increase funding for tribal environmental programs with the Environmental Protection Agency. This in includes the Indian Environmental General Assistance Program, the Solid Waste-Indian Lands Program, and the Tribal Clean Air Program. None of these programs have received and increase in funding in several years. It is important to support these programs with increased funding.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

[This statement was submitted by Floyd Azure, Chairman.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF ART MUSEUM DIRECTORS

The Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) is grateful to Congress for increasing funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) in FY 2021 as well as for pandemic relief funding through various vehicles last year. Given the continuing pandemic and the extreme stresses it has inflicted on art museums, we ask for substantial increases for both agencies: we support the Administration's request for $201 million for the NEA and ask that the NEH receive an equal amount. The two agencies have received identical funding levels since FY 2008.

We ask further that both Endowments be allowed to provide funding for general operating support as well as for specific projects, and that the requirement for matching funds be suspended. Finally, we request that the Subcommittee recommend funding for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) necessary to staff and train personnel in order to avoid placing any impediments on American art museums that are importing works of art containing ivory for the purposes of accession into their collections.

In March 2020, nearly all American art museums closed due to the pandemic, and most stayed closed for extended periods of time. While most have reopened, "open" is not the same as it was a year ago. Many are open for fewer days and hours, operating under reduced capacity constraints, and requiring advance reservations and/or timed ticketing. Most have ceased offering in-person public programs such as tours, lectures and performances, and school field trips are for now a thing of the past. (Pre-pandemic, AAMD's 200-plus members typically served at least 40,000 schools annually.) Earned revenue from admissions, shops and restaurants has plummeted, while pandemic-related costs have soared. Moreover, according to Giving USA, an annual report on philanthropy, charitable giving to the arts declined by 7.5 percent in 2020. And while the Paycheck Protection Program helped many museums retain staff, some were unable or ineligible to access it, and many have since had to lay off or furlough valued workers.

Three bright spots stand out. First, art museums successfully pivoted to on-line programming. Second, they have reached new audiences; in fact, an extensive survey last year found that about half of people who were consuming museum programming had not visited an art museum in the previous year. Third, they are among the safest indoor spaces. Their sophisticated HVAC systems may have been designed to keep art safe, but they turn out to keep people safe as well. For more information, see this report on a study conducted by the Berlin Institute of Technology.

AAMD salutes both NEA and NEH for their prompt and efficient disbursement of their CARES Act funding. Altogether, 55 AAMD member museums received nearly $7 million in funding to help them retain staff and adapt to pandemic conditions. For example, during its pandemic closure, the Museum of Art at the Rhode Island School of Design received NEH support to inventory, assess, photograph, and rehouse roughly 900 objects in its internationally renowned collection of Asian costume and textiles. This project was fundamental to the museum's work toward providing access to the collection for all: viewing objects in study rooms and galleries was impossible, and this popular collection lacked adequate documentation for remote learning. The NEH grant allowed the museum to fully staff and carry out the work.

Going forward, we expect that NEA and NEH will support art museums in figuring out and dealing with "the new normal." As many of our members have said, the museum that re-opens is not the one that closed, nor are its audience or community.

We note that NEA has restarted the Blue Star Museums initiative, a collaboration with Blue Star Families and the U.S. Department of Defense to provide free summer admission to active duty military and their families to museums across the nation. The Blue Star Museums program sends our military families a clear message -that our nation's museums recognize and honor their contributions and are opening their doors to them. The initiative launched on May 15, Armed Forces Day, and we have encouraged all AAMD members to participate, as the great majority has done in past years.

We also ask that the Subcommittee provide FWS with the funding necessary to staff and train personnel in order to avoid placing impediments on American art museums as they carry out their mission to be able to legally acquire works of antique ivory from abroad. FWS staff have worked well with the art museum community on several important issues related to its mission and, as they continue to craft regulations that recognize the importance of maintaining historic works, we urge that they be given all necessary support and resources.

ABOUT AAMD

The purpose of the Association of Art Museum Directors is to support its members in increasing the contribution of art museums to society. The AAMD accomplishes this mission by establishing and maintaining the highest standards of professional practice, serving as forum for the exchange of information and ideas, and being a leader in shaping public discourse about the arts community and the role of art in society.

[This statement was submitted by Christine Anagnos, Executive Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CLEAN WATER ADMINISTRATORS

To Chairwoman Pingree and Ranking Member Joyce:

The Association of Clean Water Administrators (ACWA) appreciates the opportunity to submit written testimony to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies. As the national voice of state, interstate, and territorial officials responsible for the implementation of programs that protect surface waters across the United States, ACWA supports the President's FY22 Discretionary Budget Request's suggested increase to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) budget. This request funds EPA at $11.2 billion, which represents a $2 billion or 21.3% increase from the FY21 enacted level, including increased funding for items that critical are critical to the mission of ACWA's members.

A recent Gallup poll found that, "of six environmental problems facing the U.S., Americans remain most worried about those that affect water quality. Majorities ex-

press a 'great deal' of worry about the pollution of both drinking water (56%) and rivers, lakes and reservoirs (53%)." [1]

The President's discretionary request outlines many key areas throughout which this additional funding will be used, including: fighting climate change; promoting environmental justice; gathering data on polluters and holding them accountable; and investing in water infrastructure projects and contaminated site clean-ups. These functions are all are essential to carrying out the EPA's mission of protecting human health and the environment.

This proposed increase comes with many benefits, especially as states begin to recover from the economic hardship and disruption of the pandemic. Our nation's water and wastewater systems are critical to supporting economic growth and protecting public health. Investing in infrastructure and building a skilled labor force enable water and wastewater utilities across the United States to rebound, recover, and prepare for the future. Therefore, it is vital that we support these efforts by providing consistently robust financing for water infrastructure and workforce development, as well as state programs charged with administering the Federal Clean Water Act. The President's proposed budget increases in these areas would not only help states resume pre-pandemic actions, but ensure states are equipped to tackle emerging challenges and issues.

ACWA appreciates Congress's support of Clean Water Act programs in the FY21 Omnibus Bill, particularly restoration in Section 106 Categorical Grants for the administration of the Act within the states. The CWA Section 106 Water Pollution Control Grant Program gives states the flexibility to conduct essential pollution prevention, inspection, monitoring, permitting, and compliance activities as EPA's co-regulator. Sustainable funding for Section 106 State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG) is necessary to ensure states have the programmatic capacity to meet demands for cleaner water. Strongly funding Section 106 ensures water infrastructure projects are constructed with the appropriate public health safeguards and environmental permits, without delays or bottlenecks, and operated such that they fulfill their intended purpose.

State surface water programs play an integral role in building water infrastructure, from planning to design permitting to construction and maintenance, to permitting and compliance. State agencies are responsible for a myriad of infrastructure—related tasks including: providing technical assistance to small, rural, disadvantaged, and underserved communities; marketing investments in green infrastructure; processing loan and grant applications; prioritizing projects to meet the greatest need; conducting environmental reviews; performing engineering analyses; permitting projects; monitoring compliance; and providing fiscal accountability.

In the 2021 Omnibus, Congress maintained 2020 funding levels for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and increased support for the Water Infrastructure Financing and Innovation Act (WIFIA). Those financing vehicles are the national flagship of wastewater and stormwater infrastructure investment. Annual report cards from the American Society of Civil Engineers consistently point out the marginal-to-poor condition of our infrastructure, thwarting economic growth, diminishing the American quality of life and inadequately protecting public health and safety. It is essential that Congress build on the momentum to increase financial support in water and wastewater infrastructure to improve our Nation's grades.

The Clean Water Act Section 319 Non-Point Source Pollution Control Program enjoyed a modest increase in funding in 2021 and buttresses the quality of our national waterbodies in the face of ever—increasing and evolving non-point source contributions to pollutant loadings. Regional programs assisting the Great Lakes, Chesapeake Bay, Puget Sound, Long Island Sound, Gulf of Mexico, New Hampshire's Great Bay, and Lake Champlain protect some of our nation's most important waters to promote human health, support economic activities, and preserve habitats for wildlife. Each of these programs need ongoing funding at 2021 levels or more in 2022 and beyond.

Many of the funding increases seen in 2021 reversed years of declining support for state water programs. For example, STAG programs are now funded at the level they were 19 years ago. Shortfalls in funding undercut the proven success of states administering these programs to fulfill the goals of the Clean Water Act. Not only do increases in federal investment help reverse declines in water quality, but they also create a multitude of construction jobs, boost the national economy, and benefit private—sector development. With this in mind, ACWA asks for your support in delivering to states the resources they need to carry out these critical programs as you consider the President's budget request.

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[1] https://news.gallup.com/poll/347735/water-pollution-remains-top-environmental-concern.aspx

In conclusion, we ask that the Subcommittee use the President's discretionary budget request as a starting point and stoutly fund the above noted CWA programs. The proposed FY22 budget empowers states to invest in critical water solutions through infrastructure investment, technical assistance, data acquisition and analyses, and regulatory compliance. These investments will have significant benefits for states, interstates, territories, and all Americans across the country by fostering progress toward our nation's water quality goals and simultaneously, stimulating economic growth, supporting tourism, providing recreation, and improving nationwide health with a clean environment. True to the spirit of cooperative federalism, the states cannot do this task alone—so we ask for a vigorous federal-state partnership through the FY22 appropriations process. The essential key to achieving the goals of the Clean Water Act is Federal government support for the work of the state members of ACWA.

[This statement was submitted by Thomas C. Stiles, Director, Bureau of Water, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, ACWA President.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES

Thank you for the opportunity to submit recommendations for Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) Congressional appropriations. The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' (AFWA) mission, since our founding in 1902, is to protect and enable state fish and wildlife agencies (states) to exercise their statutory authority to conserve and manage the fish and wildlife within their borders. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands are members.

We express our deep appreciation for the increased FY21 funding levels for many of the programs that benefit fish, wildlife, their habitats, and the people who enjoy them. We look forward to working with you to provide resources for our federal agency partners as we enter another challenging budget cycle to enact funding levels consistent with FY21, and in some cases higher. Investments in conservation programs present some of the highest returns on Federal dollars and offer solutions for critical issues. States have authority for and are on the front lines of wildlife health and zoonotic diseases and must be engaged early to cooperatively develop a robust health and science framework to combat wildlife diseases. Further, we endorse recommendations submitted by regional associations of fish and wildlife agencies.

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE (FWS)

Aquatic Habitat, Assessments, Restoration, and Species Conservation.—We support no less than funding at FY21 levels for Fish and Aquatic Conservation, including full funding for the National Fish Habitat Action Plan and Partnerships at the authorized $7.2 million for restoration projects, in addition to $1.8 million for administration by the USFWS and $2 million for technical assistance provided by the USFS, USFWS, EPA, USGS, and NOAA. Fish Passage needs far outweigh the resources for species management and replacement of unsafe transportation infrastructure which also serve as an aquatic connectivity barrier. We support funding the National Fish Passage Program at no less than FY21 levels and strongly support incorporating additional fish passage funding into federal infrastructure plans. Further, we support funding at no less than FY21 levels for conservation and restoration activities in the Delaware River Basin, Klamath Basin, Chesapeake Bay, Everglades, and Great Lakes.

National Fish Hatchery Systems (NFHS) Operations is a high priority, and we recommend no less than FY21 funding levels. We recommend redirecting all previous deferred maintenance appropriations from Refuges to the more than $260 million deferred maintenance backlog for NFHS facilities to prevent systems failures and fish losses. We strongly support robust funding for the Aquatic Animal Drug Approval Partnership at $1.2 million as well as the Fish Health Centers, Fish Technology Centers, Wild Fish Health Survey, and Mass Marking program, all of which meet needs of States, tribes, and the federal government. We request no less than FY21 funds for the mass marking initiative in the Pacific Northwest and the Great Lakes region.

Aquatic Invasive Species and Law Enforcement (LE).—We request Congress continue to fund the implementation of state Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) management plans at the FY21 level of $4.4 million without compromising other ANS programs. We support continuation of FY21 funding levels at $25 million to implement the national Asian Carp management and control plan in the Mississippi River and tributaries as well as continuation of the provisions in the FY21 report language.

We recommend increased attention on a comprehensive approach across all relevant federal agencies and assistance to the states to prevent and control the spread of AIS. Finally, we support increased funding to combat wildlife trafficking activities, conduct investigations, supplement inspections, and to work cooperatively with state fish and wildlife agencies to help protect our nation's native fish and wildlife resources from unsustainable exploitation.

Habitat Conservation and the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS).—We recommend no less than FY21 funding levels for Habitat Conservation, including no less than $60 million for the Partners of Fish and Wildlife Program for voluntary conservation efforts including to support wildlife migration corridors, habitat connectivity, and landscape resiliency. We support funding NWRS Operations and Maintenance at $520 million and continue to support the use of trapping on refuges as a management tool to provide much needed research on species of interest as well as to protect federally endangered and threatened species, imperiled species, and their habitats.

State and Tribal Wildlife Grants and Partnership Grants.—The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program is the only federal program available to states to leverage non-federal funds to conserve over 12,000 state Species of Greatest Conservation Need identified in State Wildlife Action Plans to prevent them from becoming threatened or endangered. This investment in voluntary, proactive, and state-led conservation is needed now to improve the resiliency of State and Tribal natural resources and to preclude an increase in federal expenditures in the future under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). AFWA recommends $100 million for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program in FY22, and supports a legislative change proposal to enact the Recovering America's Wildlife Act which would provide States, Tribes, and their conservation partners with the dependable resources to do proactive, non-regulatory fish, wildlife, and habitat restoration and conservation. AFWA also recommends no less than $53 million for the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund, full authorized funding for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, and $15 million for the Multinational Species Conservation Fund.

Science Support.—Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) presents one of the most challenging disease threats to our nation's wildlife, and we request robust funding for USFWS to fulfill CWD responsibilities, including implementation of the Interstate Action Plan, prioritized research, monitoring, studies of CWD in wild, free-ranging deer species, and $5 million to establish the CWD Task Force as directed by Congress in P.L. 116–188.

Ecological Services (ES) & Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (CESCF).—The FWS needs additional resources in ES to address a growing workload and to increase FWS recovery efforts for federally listed species. We support robust funding for ES as well as a strategy to achieve funding within the next 4 years that is commensurate with the agency's requirements to implement the national work plan and cooperatively recover species listed under the ESA. We recommend further deployment across the country of the Southeast's cooperative conservation model for implementing the ESA in partnership with the States and reinstatement of Recovery Challenge matching grants. We also recommend Congress provide robust funding for the CESCF, which includes a larger proportion of funding that is not tied to the Land and Water Conservation Fund and much needed flexibility for ongoing habitat management and species restoration activities as well as continue support the use of State data.

Cooperative Landscape Conservation (CLC).—We support no less than FY21 funding levels for Cooperative Landscape Conservation to work with regional associations of state fish and wildlife agencies on mutual priorities that are jointly developed, fund important regional state—federal partnerships, and continue cooperative conservation efforts supported by the States such as monarch butterflies, the Midwest Landscape Initiative, and the Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy.

Migratory Bird Management (MBM).—The FWS and States share management jurisdiction for migratory birds, which represents one of the most successful state—federal cooperative partnerships for over 80 years, but the program suffers from chronic under—funding of traditional functions and activities making it particularly vulnerable to unanticipated problems, capacity/workload challenges, and single points of failure. The FWS has gone to great lengths to protect the core functions, but more funding is needed to retain sufficient staff, fill key vacancies to work in cooperation with the States on traditional co-management issues, and support science to inform FWS decision—making. AFWA supports robust funding for MBM at FY2010 levels of $134.6 million, including full funding of the Migratory Bird Joint Ventures at $19.9 million, allowing resource managers to accomplish shared state and federal responsibilities and priorities.

UNITED STATES GEOLOGIAL SURVEY (USGS)

Ecosystems.—Thank you for providing much—needed funding for the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program (CRU) in FY21, and we respectfully request $27 million for CRU in FY22. The CRU provides critically important scientific and technical support for state and federal fish and wildlife managers through collaborative scientific projects that address the nation's most critical fish and wildlife management needs and inform conservation and policy decisions. The additional $2 million would enable USGS to establish new, state and federally supported CRUs in MI and IN, to address significant scientific knowledge gaps and challenges faced by state and federal natural resource managers. Additionally, we support $5 million for each of the next 5 years for the CRU program to complete the Wildlife Migration Corridors Project for Big Game Species and $5 million for the new pollinator science cooperative to assist States, Tribes, and federal partners with pollinator identification and assessment methodologies. We support the National Cooperators Coalition's testimony on CRUs, funding for the Climate Adaptation Science Centers at $62 million and recommend $275 million in funding for the Ecosystems Mission Area, and continued financial support to the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study at the University of Georgia, which provides essential diagnostic and veterinary support services to at least 42 states.

Water Resources.—USGS provides resource managers with crucial information for the survival of species affected by the management of water resources. We support the Groundwater and Streamflow Information Program, with robust funding increasing to $125 million. AFWA recommends $28.7 million for Federal Priority Streamgages to address funding shortfalls and reinstate lost gages, $33 million for Cooperative Matching Funds to work with states, tribes, and other local partners, and $20 million for the Next Generation Water Observing System to enable additional pilot basins and data modernization. Finally, we recommend at least FY21 funding levels for the National Water Quality Program with $2 million for harmful algal bloom research.

Biological Threats and Invasive Species Research Program (BTR).—AFWA recommends $40 million in funding for BTR, in addition to $10.62 million in continued funding for Asian Carp research and $10 million for research on CWD in wild, free—ranging deer species in order to manage environmental contamination and control key sources of transmission, including to fulfill Congressional intent as directed in the FY21 omnibus for the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a transmission study of CWD. It is imperative that Congress provide additional resources to USGS Ecosystems and other federal agencies to coordinate with the states on research, management, surveillance, monitoring, testing, disposal, best management practices, and other CWD management challenges. We strongly support $0.5 million in funding for biological research and monitoring to coordinate and support the management of aquatic animal health in marine and freshwater aquaculture, including to conduct research with partners, submit data, and coordinate with other agencies to evaluate the use of drugs and other materials.

Bureau of Land Managment (BLM).—AFWA supports funding commensurate with FY21 levels at no less than $1.22 billion for management of lands and resources. Recognizing states have authority to manage species within their borders, we recommend a $10 million increase for Wildlife and Aquatic Habitat Management, at least $2 million increase for sage grouse conservation activities, a $5 million increase for Rangeland Improvement and in Bighorn sheep disease prevention, and an additional $10 million for Wildlife Habitat Management (1170) to combat invasive species. We also recommend Congress reinitiate BLM's Cost-Share Challenge Grant Program under Wildlife Habitat Management at $10 million to leverage conservation partnerships to accomplish more wildlife habitat goals and mission objectives. We support level funding for the Wild Horse and Burro (WHB) Program and recommend that funds no longer be borrowed from other budget line items within BLM to fund the WHB.

Office of Surfice Mining Reclamation and Enforcement.—The Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund is critical to the restoration of lands at the nexus of many SGCN and water quality issues, and we support level funding at the FY21 level of $139.8 million, as well as level funding for Regulation and Technology at $92.7 million.

United States Forest Service (USFS).—AFWA supports $2 billion for Wildland Fire Management, as well as a substantial increase to $2.1 billion for the Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund. We recommend level funding at $267.18 million for State and Private Forestry, including $11.9 million for the Forest Stewardship Program. We support level funding for the National Forest System and for hazardous fuels management.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).—Finally, we recommend funding the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative at $330 million and that funding be eligible for use on tributaries of the Great Lakes Region, which serve as a major conduit of invasive species introductions. We support funding for the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund at $2 billion, Nonpoint Source Grants at $177 million, and Pollution Control Grants at $230 million. AFWA recommends at least FY21 funding levels for the National Estuaries Program, the Beach/Fish Safety Program, and the Geographic Programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF THE WICHITAS

Dear Senator Inhoff:

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Association of Friends of the Wichitas to enlist your support for the National Wildlife Refuge Association's (NWRA) request to increase funding for Refuge System Operations and Maintenance to $600 million in FY2022. We work closely with Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge staff as well as regional office representatives. We are honored to share their joys and challenges in protecting and conserving America's public lands for future generations.

As you are undoubtedly aware, the Department of Interior's Refuge System Operations and Maintenance budget has been stagnant since 2010. On the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge this has meant a decrease in staffing, down to 34 positions caring for 59,000 acres with over 2.3 million visitors annually. This funding gap has led to deferred maintenance and critical infrastructure issues such as a lack of potable water. Our members share NWRAs concerns that a lack of operating budget has also led to a decline in habitat. There are too few Law Enforcement Officers on the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge to prevent human disturbance, vandalism, and a degradation of the natural environment. The result is not only a loss of precious pristine habitat, but increased public safety risks in this extremely beautiful, but very dangerous environment. As Friends members we are thrilled to volunteer alongside Refuge staff and we know that human and animal safety increases when there is a higher staff to volunteer ratio than what we are currently able to achieve.

While we are aware you aren't on the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies we also know that as an Oklahoman you are acutely aware that the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge is an economic driver, drawing tourists to Southwest Oklahoma from all over the world. As such, we respectfully request you make Chairwoman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and the other Members of the Subcommittee aware of your commitment to providing the WMWR staff with the funding needed to care for such an extraordinary piece of our American heritage.

Sincerely,

James Meyer
President
Association of Friends of the Wichitas

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Sincerely,

James Meyer
President
Association of Friends of the Wichitas

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF STATE DRINKING WATER ADMINISTRATORS

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

The Association of State Drinking Water Administrators (ASDWA) submits the following recommendations for Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations on behalf of the drinking water programs in the 50 states, five territories, District of Columbia, and Navajo Nation. ASDWA requests funding for two programs that ensure public health protection and that will result in enhancing economic stability and prosperity in American cities and towns. ASDWA requests $125 million for the Public Water System Supervision (PWSS) program and $1.95 billion for the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (DWSRF) program. ASDWA also requests $91.5 million for three drinking water grant programs to address lead in schools and communities.

OVERVIEW: THE IMPORTANCE OF SAFE DRINKING WATER FOR OUR COMMUNITIES AND THE ECONOMY & THE ROLE OF STATE DRINKING WATER PROGRAMS

States need sustained federal support to maintain public health protection and to support the needs of the water systems they oversee. State drinking water programs strive to meet the Nation's public health protection goals through two principal funding programs: the PWSS Program and the DWSRF Program. These two programs provide most of the funding for states to work with drinking water utilities to ensure the state—federal partnership of drinking water regulations thrives and American citizens have safe and adequate water supplies. Vibrant and sustainable communities, their citizens, workforce, and businesses all depend on a safe and reliable supply of drinking water. Over 90% of the population receives water used for bathing, cooking, and drinking from a water system that is overseen by state drinking water program personnel. Water systems—as well as the cities, villages, schools, and businesses they support—rely on state drinking water programs to ensure they comply with all applicable federal requirements. In addition to the water we drink in our homes, water produced by water systems is also used to fight fires, transport wastewater, cook, wash clothes and dishes, as well as by businesses for manufacturing, food processing, and cooling. State drinking water programs must have adequate funding to protect public health and maintain the economic health of communities. Incidents such as the chemical spill in Charleston, West Virginia, cyanotoxins in the water for Toledo, Ohio and Salem, Oregon, prolonged water service interruptions due to more frequently occurring natural disasters as in Jackson, Mississippi, and the lead leaching from service lines into the water supply in Flint, Michigan all serve as stark reminders of the critical nature of the work that state drinking water programs do—every day—and the reason why the funding for state drinking water programs must be not only sustained but enhanced. Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) contamination adds to the urgency of the need for increased funding.

THE PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM SUPERVISION (PWSS) PROGRAM

How the PWSS Program Operates.—To meet the requirements of the SDWA, states have accepted primary enforcement responsibility for regulatory compliance and technical assistance for more than 150,000 public water systems to ensure health—based violations do not occur or are remedied expediently. This involves 91

federally regulated contaminants and the complexity of regulations has increased in the past decade. Beyond the contaminants covered by federal drinking water regulations, states are also implementing an array of proactive initiatives to protect public health and the environment, such as source water assessments and protections, technical assistance for water treatment and distribution, and enhancement of water system performance. Many states have begun to set drinking water standards for non-federally regulated contaminants, such as PFAS and cyanotoxins. State activities go well beyond simply ensuring compliance at the tap and these activities must be efficient given continued resource constraints. These activities have increased in depth and scope during the COVID–19 pandemic to include assisting with the development of continuity of operations plans for water systems, coordination with state-level Water and Wastewater Response Networks (WARNs) on operator coverage, emergency operation, and equipment and chemical supply issues due to the pandemic; developing COVID–19 drinking water risk communication for the public and modifying "routine" drinking water public notices to clarify the connection or lack of connection to the coronavirus; developing new forms and processes for tracking closed facilities and revising reopening system and building procedures; developing and implementing remote work and oversight tools; and modifying and updating operator training classes and licensing programs.

Why Adequate Support is Needed.—States will be unable to protect public health without adequate federal funding. Inadequate federal support for state drinking water programs has several negative consequences. For example, as part of ASDWA's comments on EPA's proposed Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR), ASDWA updated its Costs of States' Transaction Study (CoSTS), which found the proposed LCRR will increase state staff hours by 835,000 hours annually over the current Lead and Copper Rule in its first five years of implementation. Using the national average loaded hourly rate for state employees, full implementation of the proposed LCRR would cost the states $50 million annually. In addition to the 91 contaminants regulated under the SDWA, states are balancing additional actions to address non-regulated contaminants such as cyanotoxins and PFAS. This is especially difficult given relatively flat PWSS funding over the past decade. While the FY21 increase of 5.6% to PWSS funding (to $112.2 million) was a small step to closing the 20% funding gap caused by inflation in addition to the proposed LCRR, which alone will take 47% of current PWSS funding to fully implement. In total, to fully implement SDWA and continue to work proactively to keep drinking water safe, states require a 62.8% increase in funding. States will have to make tough decisions about how to prioritize support to existing programs to implement the requirements of the final LCRR. States want to offer the flexibilities allowed under existing rules to local water systems, however, fewer state resources mean less opportunity to work individually with water systems to improve their systems and protect public health.

State drinking water programs are already hard pressed financially. State—provided funding has historically compensated for inadequate federal funding, but state budgets have been less able to bridge this funding gap in recent years, especially during the ongoing COVID–19 pandemic, which has continued to negatively impact state budgets. Insufficient federal support for this critical program increases the likelihood of scenarios that put the public's health at risk. This is an untenable situation, as the long—standing regulatory oversight remains constant and several proactive actions such as addressing PFAS and cyanotoxins and providing oversight for the development of water systems' inventories of lead service lines have increased states' workloads. States consistently step in to help solve problems and return systems to compliance and to providing safe water as quickly as possible. Any reduction in federal funding for state water programs, no matter how small, exacerbate the existing financial difficulties.

For the PWSS Program in FY 22, ASDWA Respectfully Requests $125 million.—The number of regulations requiring state implementation and oversight as well as performance expectations continue to grow while the federal funding increases have not kept pace. Inflation has further eroded the relatively static funding levels. The requested funding amount is based on ASDWA's 2020 Resource Needs Report, which found the funding gap for the PWSS program in 2020 to be $375 million, increasing to $469 million by 2029. The funding gap has increased by $197 million since the previous analysis in 2011 due to increasing demands on state programs to address unregulated contaminants such as PFAS and harmful algal blooms, and to respond to the COVID–19 pandemic. The federal share of program funding has decreased by 8% since the previous analysis in 2011. Increased PWSS funds are urgently needed for implementing existing drinking water rules, taking on new initiatives, and to account for the eroding effects of inflation. It is a small price to pay for public health protection.

THE DRINKING WATER STATE REVOLVING LOAN FUND PROGRAM

How the DWSRF Program Operates.—Drinking water in the U.S. is among the safest and most reliable in the world, but it is threatened by aging infrastructure and emerging contaminants. Through low interest loans provided by the DWSRF, states help water systems overcome these threats. Since its inception, the DWSRF have provided funding for projects that enhance drinking water systems and protect public health. Through the DWSRF program, $21.1 billion in federal capitalization grants since 1997 have been leveraged by states into over $41.1 billion in infrastructure loans to 14,500 communities across the country. 26.3% of the cumulative DWSRF funding, including low- and negative—interest loans, has been provided to disadvantaged communities. Such investments pay tremendous dividends—both in supporting our economy and in protecting public health. For every $1 invested in the DWSRF from the federal government, $2 has gone to communities. States have effectively and efficiently leveraged federal dollars with state contributions. An important feature of the DWSRF program is the state "set-aside" fund component, a key reason to fully fund this critical program. Set-asides provide a process for states to work with water systems to maintain compliance and avoid violations. States may reserve up to 31% of these funds for a variety of critical tasks, such as increasing the technical, managerial, and financial capacity of water systems, providing training and certification for water system operators, and continuing source water protection efforts. Set-asides are an essential source of funding for states' core programs and these efforts work in tandem with infrastructure loans.

Drinking Water Infrastructure Investment is Well below the Documented Need.—EPA's 6th Drinking Water Needs Survey concluded that $427.6 billion of capital investment was needed for the next 20 years. The total translates to $21.4 billion annually. Continued investment is needed for aging treatment plants, storage tanks, pumps, and distribution lines that carry water to our nation's homes, businesses, and schools. Unlike other water infrastructure funding programs, the DWSRF offers project subsidization for disadvantaged communities, funds for training and technical assistance, and is a fundamental funding mechanism for many medium and small utilities who would pay much higher interest rates if forced to use the bond market. The DWSRF plays a key role in keeping infrastructure projects and upgrades affordable for many communities. Having access to low—interest loans allows water systems to pass on the savings to their rate payers while working towards full—cost pricing of their water service.

For the DWSRF Program in FY 21, ASDWA respectfully requests $1.95 billion.—The DWSRF program was funded at $1.126 billion for FY19, FY20, and FY21, an increase from previous years of steady funding, an excellent step to provide increased support to the nation's water systems. In America's Water Infrastructure Act (Public Law 115–270), Congress authorized an increase in the funding of the DWSRF over time so that states can increase their staff and expand their expertise in conjunction with the increased funding. ASDWA fully supports this authorized increased funding. Funding the DWSRF at $1.95 billion (the FY 21 authorized level) will support state drinking water programs and America's water systems in proactively addressing emerging contaminants and the increased workload associated with the LCRR.

THREE EPA DRINKING WATER GRANT PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS LEAD IN WATER IN SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

ASDWA respectfully requests $91.5 million for three drinking water grant programs.—In FY21 appropriations, Congress funded the Voluntary School and Childcare Lead Testing Grant program at $26.5 million. ASDWA requests Congress continue the same appropriation for FY 21. In 2018, Public Law No: 115–270 authorized $5 million through FY21 for a new EPA grant program to provide assistance to schools for the replacement of drinking water fountains manufactured prior to 1988. ASDWA requests that Congress fully appropriate the $5 million authorization for this grant in FY 22. Public Law No: 114–322 established an EPA grant for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water and authorized $60 million through FY21. Congress appropriated $21.5 million in FY21 and ASDWA requests full appropriation of $60 million for FY22. Addressing lead contamination in schools and communities is a priority for state water programs and continued funding for these three grant programs will provide significant public health impacts, particularly for children.

CONCLUSION

ASDWA recommends Congress fully fund state drinking water programs in the FY 22 in order to protect public health and drinking water across the nation. States

are willing and committed partners, however, additional federal funding is needed to meet the ongoing and growing regulatory and infrastructure needs. Strong state drinking water programs supported by the federal-state partnership will ensure the quality of drinking water in this country will continue to improve so the public knows that a glass of water is safe to drink no matter where they live.

[This statement was submitted by J. Alan Roberson, P.E., Executive Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS AND AQUARIUMS

Thank you Chair Merkley and Ranking Member Murkowski for the opportunity to submit testimony about the priorities of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums for Fiscal Year 2022. Specifically, I support Endangered Species Recovery Challenge Grants and the Multinational Species Conservation Funds administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Environmental Education Act (NEEA) programs at the Environmental Protection Agency, and sufficient funding for the Fish and Wildlife Service to carry out its work, including to support the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

My name is Dan Ashe, and I am the President and CEO of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). Founded in 1924, the AZA is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that our 241 member zoos, aquariums, nature centers, and science centers represent the very best in animal care and welfare, conservation, education, science, and guest experience. In 2019, AZA's accredited member facilities welcomed nearly 200 million visitors (more than all professional sports combined), generated more than $22 billion in economic activity, and supported more than 210,000 jobs across the country. They also contributed $230 million in direct support for field conservation in 127 countries benefiting more than 980 species and subspecies, of which 246 are listed under the ESA.

At the heart of AZA is its mandatory accreditation requirement, which assures that only those zoos and aquariums that meet the highest standards can become members. The rigorous, independent, objective, and exhaustive AZA accreditation process includes self-evaluation, on-site inspection, and peer review. Our standards are publicly available and are continuously evolving and improving as we learn more about the needs of the animals in our care. Once earned, AZA accreditation confers best-in-class status, an important message for local, state, and federal government and the visiting public.

AZA and its members are leaders, partners, and participants in species conservation. We work in concert with Congress, the federal agencies, conservation organizations, state governments, the private sector, and the general public to conserve our wildlife heritage. AZA's Wildlife Trafficking Alliance is a coalition of private companies, non-profit organizations, and AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums working closely with U.S. government agencies to combat wildlife trafficking worldwide. AZA and its member facilities have long-standing partnerships with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Our collaborative efforts have focused on:

—Engaging in endangered species recovery and reintroduction, including some of the most successful and heralded recovery efforts, like California condor;
—Supporting conservation domestically and internationally through multinational species conservation funds and state wildlife grants; and
—Collaborating on partnership opportunities involving national parks and wildlife refuges, migratory birds, freshwater and saltwater fisheries, national marine sanctuaries, illegal wildlife trade, amphibians, and invasive species.

I am submitting testimony in support of the following key programs funded through the annual Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

ENDANGERED SPECIES RECOVERY CHALLENGE GRANTS

The Endangered Species Recovery Challenge Grant program recognizes the critically important role of nonprofit partners to the Service's endangered species recovery efforts, and it is a mechanism, through merit—based matching grants, to provide funding in a more commensurate manner to support and enhance these efforts. Recovery Challenge Grants are limited to nonprofit organizations implementing the highest priority recovery actions identified in recovery plans, such as for genetically sound breeding, rearing, and reintroduction programs.

I urge you to continue to provide robust funding for endangered species recovery and prioritize longstanding recovery efforts in which existing resources and partner expertise can be most effectively leveraged. Specifically, I am requesting an increase

in funding for the Recovery Challenge Grant program to $20 million in FY2022. This funding will power recovery partnerships and inspire their work to better recover critically endangered species.

MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION FUNDS

Next, I support the inclusion of $30 million for the Multinational Species Conservation Funds (MSCF) administered by the Fish and Wildlife Service. These programs support public—private partnerships that conserve wild tigers, Asian and African elephants, rhinos, great apes, freshwater turtles, tortoises, and marine turtles in their native habitats. Through the MSCF programs, the United States supplements the efforts of developing countries that are struggling to balance the needs of their human populations and endemic wildlife. These programs help to sustain wildlife populations, address threats such as poaching and illegal trade, reduce human—wildlife conflict, and protect essential habitat. The Fish and Wildlife Service is seen as a global conservation leader in large part due to its commitment to international conservation efforts. This federal program supports AZA-accredited facilities in their field conservation efforts and partnerships with the Service.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

AZA and its members enthusiastically support the ESA, which has prevented hundreds of listed species from going extinct. Like AZA accreditation, the ESA is the global "gold standard." It reflects our national commitment to species and ecosystem conservation, and it is working. Since its inception in 1973, it has prevented the extinction of 99% of the species it protects. However, we know that the challenges facing our planet in the 21st century are as complex as they are urgent. Scientists estimate that the total number of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish has declined by more than 50% since 1970, and many believe, including me, that we are living amidst the planet's sixth mass extinction. Climate change is accelerating this crisis. Without critical intervention today, we are facing the very real possibility of losing some of our planet's most magnificent creatures such as lions, cheetahs, elephants, gorillas, sea turtles, and sharks.

AZA-accredited facilities have a unique opportunity and responsibility to help others understand this crisis. It is our obligation—to these animals and to all life on earth—to take bold action now to protect our planet's biodiversity. One achievement that has gone unnoticed by most people is that zoos and aquariums have played a significant role in bringing over 25 species, including California condor, Florida manatee, and black—footed ferret, back from the brink of extinction.

Although we have made significant progress in saving endangered species, this work is far from done. Species protection and conservation requires long-term commitment by all of us. It is through the ongoing work related to species recovery plans that we will conserve these species for future generations. The AZA and its members fully support the ESA, and I encourage you to assure that the agencies responsible for carrying out the mandates of the Act receive the necessary funding and human resource capacity to succeed.

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE BUDGET

Much of the important conservation work at AZA-accredited facilities depends on a robust and fully staffed Fish and Wildlife Service. Acknowledging the budget challenges facing Congress and the agencies, I encourage you to assure that the Fish and Wildlife Service has sufficient resources to employ qualified professionals, particularly for the programs handling permits, which support AZA's science—based conservation breeding and wildlife education programs that require animals to be moved in an efficient, timely manner: International Affairs (Management and Scientific Authorities), Endangered Species, Law Enforcement, and Migratory Birds. In particular, AZA is keenly interested in expanding our critical work in support of treating and placing live confiscated wildlife seized at the ports/borders and on scientific and conservation research on polar bears in AZA facilities. The success of these important initiatives depends on the effective assistance of the Fish and Wildlife Service.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION GRANTS

Finally, I urge the Subcommittee to include $14 million for National Environmental Education Act programs. This relatively small investment in communities yields an impressive return.

Since 1990 the NEEA has served as a highly effective tool for improving student performance in science and math, protecting public health, and helping build 21st

century skills by promoting job training and innovation. NEEA-supported education programs at AZA-accredited institutions provide essential learning opportunities in formal and informal settings. In the last 10 years, accredited zoos and aquariums trained more than 400,000 teachers, supporting science curricula with effective teaching materials and hands-on opportunities. School field trips at AZA member facilities annually connect more than twelve million students with the natural world.

AZA-accredited facilities are long-standing partners that have made possible conservation successes for species like California condor, manatee, Mexican wolf, sea turtles, and less charismatic species like grasshopper sparrow, hellbender and American burying beetle. We appreciate the Subcommittee's support for $30 million in the "American Rescue Plan Act" for the care of captive species listed under the ESA, rescued and confiscated wildlife, and federal trust species in facilities experiencing lost revenues due to COVID–19. Although AZA-accredited facilities were closed or operating at reduced capacity for much of 2020, losing more $2 billion in earned revenue, they continued their support for Service—driven recovery efforts.

AZA and its members look forward to continuing to work with this Subcommittee and Congress to assure that as a nation we are devoting the necessary resources to conserve wildlife at home and globally.

Thank you.

[This statement was submitted by Dan Ashe, President and CEO.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Chairman Leahy, Vice Chairman Shelby, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for consideration of our testimony. For FY 2022, we are requesting (1) an increase in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service budget of $1 billion, (2) an increase in funding to the Bureau of Land Management by $250 million concomitant with a decrease in funding for all new leasing on public lands and waters (3) a $3.8 billion increase in EPA funding to restore funding to FY 2010 levels, and (4) a decrease in the U.S. military budget of 25% to end the cycle of pitting critical programs that help people and the environment into an untenable austerity competition for budgetary scraps at the table.

The world is in the midst of a staggering extinction crisis, with one million species facing extinction in the coming decades due to habitat loss, climate change, wildlife exploitation, pollution, and other human activities. The COVID–19 pandemic almost certainly arose from people's unsustainable and reckless exploitation of the natural world, and it demonstrates just how dangerous it can be when Congress fails to sufficiently protect biodiversity both at home and abroad. And the catastrophic wildfires of 2020 from California to the Amazon to Australia continue to demonstrate the inexorable connection between the climate and the extinction crises.

Despite this, the Appropriations Committee has ignored the extinction crisis for years, content to throw only the meagerest breadcrumbs to the Fish and Wildlife Service and other conservation agencies, even though these austerity budgets will only ensure that future generations will inherit a world devoid of its most magnificent wildlife.

For a tiny fraction of the cost of a few non-functional F–35 fighter jets or one-third of the money now dedicated to "Community Project Funding," the United States could save all of the endangered species found in this country, it could stem the tide of ever—increasing deforestation around the world, and could crack down on the global wildlife trade—the only thing that would make it less likely another global pandemic like COVID–19 would occur again in the future.

Accordingly, we request the Appropriations Committee stop enriching special interests and multinational corporations, stop forcing environmental priorities to fight amongst one another over pennies in the budget, and put the needs of people and environment first and foremost in the fiscal year 2022 budget. We request a 25% decrease in the military budget and a comparable increase in non-defense discretionary spending so that Congressional funding in the 302(a) and 302(b) allocations actually helps people and the environment. Below are our specific requests:

I. INCREASE WILDLIFE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT FUNDING BY $1 BILLION

To begin to make up for lost ground and support the Biden Administration's commitment to address the threat of climate change to biodiversity, the Service requires a budget for domestic endangered species of at least $600 million, distributed across five programs, starting in FY2022. This would ensure every listed species receives a minimum of $50,000 per year for recovery and will allow more species to be put

on the road to recovery. To save the western monarch butterfly from its likely extinction in the next 12 months, we request $50 million in emergency funding. To reestablish our role as a global leader in conservation, the Service requires a budget for foreign endangered species of at least $350 million, distributed across the five multinational species conservation funds.

—Listing. At current funding rates, it will take the Service 10 years to process the 400+ species remaining in the Service's listing workplan, during which time, 5–8 additional species will likely go extinct. The listing program budget should be increased to at least $63.7 million in FY2022.

—Recovery. Hundreds of endangered species receive less than $1,000 a year for their recovery, with many receiving no funding from Congress at all. Congress must provide a minimum of $50,000 per year per species for recovery to make sure that no species slips through the cracks, or approximately $250 million for the recovery program in FY2022.

—Planning and Consultation. The Planning and Consultation program includes key processes that ensure species receive fundamental protections while allowing flexibility for infrastructure and other forms of development. This program could provide critical tools to address the threat of climate change and to better mitigate landscape level threats such as pesticides. Congress needs to provide the Service with $150 million in FY2022.

—Conservation and Restoration. This program provides critical tools to help conserve species by improving their habitat and removing threats before they need to be listed. To efficiently keep species back from the brink of needing the protections of the Act, Congress needs to provide $13.5 million for Candidate Conservation in FY2022.

—Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation. This program is one of the most effective tools for states and tribes to conserve wildlife on private lands. At least half of all listed species spend a portion of their life cycle on private lands. To reverse the gap from previous funding shortfalls and match the current need for state and private lands conservation, the Service requires CESCF funding of at least $125 million for FY2022.

—Monarch Butterflies. The western monarch population has crashed by 99.9%, and now numbers fewer than 2,000 monarchs in coastal California this year—the lowest number ever recorded, down from 30,000 last year and 1.2 million a decade ago. Without immediate help, it is almost certain that the western population will collapse by the next appropriations cycle. To save western monarchs, Congress needs to provide $50 million immediately in FY2022.

—Multinational Species Conservation Funding. Just last month, the IUCN declared the African Forest Elephant critically endangered. All three species of orangutan, both species of gorilla, the tiger, and all rhino species face imminent extinction. Current funding levels are obscenely insufficient. We recommend increasing the Fund to $350 million spread evenly across the elephants, rhinoceroses, tigers, great apes, and marine turtle programs. Funding to sustain these species would help address habitat loss and deforestation, which would also benefit the fight against climate change and help to prevent future pandemics.

II. END SUBSIDIZATION OF FOSSIL FUEL EXTRACTION ON PUBLIC LANDS AND WATERS

President Biden's Executive Order 14008, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad, took the bold step of pausing oil and gas leasing on public lands and waters to allow for a comprehensive review of the climate impacts of these activities. Congress must not undermine the President's actions by mindlessly maintaining the status—quo by funding further oil and gas activities that conflict with this landmark Executive Order. Accordingly, we recommend zeroing out funding for all new leasing and permitting during this time. Funds should be reallocated towards renewable energy, restoration, and protection of wildlife habitat to address the millions of acres that have already been destroyed or degraded by fossil fuel extraction.

Bureau of Land Management

—Oil and Gas Inspection and Enforcement. Increase funding to $80 million. Since 2016, the appropriated amount in this line item has remained largely unchanged despite the massive increase in oil and gas activities on public lands. Failure to fund inspections and enforcement inevitably leaves the public to pick up the tab for environmental damage down the road.

—Wildlife and Aquatic Habitat Management. Many populations of once common species including pronghorn and greater sage grouse are declining on BLM lands due to habitat fragmentation, fossil fuel extraction and industrial development, as well as climate change. To further President Biden's goal to protect

30% of the nation's lands and waters, and to stop the downward trend of wildlife, the BLM line item for wildlife management must be increased to no less than $300 million in FY2022.

—Abandoned Mine Lands and Hazardous Materials Management. There are over 50,000 abandoned mines on BLM lands, which pose serious risks to environment and public safety. We recommend an increase in funding to $100 million in FY2022 to address the backlog more aggressively in abandoned wells across BLM lands.

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

—Renewable Energy. Increase funding to $50 million. Congress should increase the funding for the deployment of renewable energy projects on the Outer Continental Shelf. This funding is needed to ensure that the siting and environmental reviews of any offshore wind capacity fully complies with the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act and Coastal Zone Management Act in a robust manner.

—Environmental Assessments. Increase funding to $120 million. Congress should ensure the agency places an emphasis on both programmatic and project or site—specific environmental impact statements under NEPA. Renewable energy projects should not be excluded from an in-depth environmental review under the premise that it would not result in significant harm.

III. INCREASE FUNDING FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY BY $3.8 BILLION

Despite the President's proposed increase of $2 billion, this still represents a decreased budget compared to the EPA's 2010 budget once inflation is taken into consideration. The EPA requires a total budget of at least $13 billion for FY2022 if it is going to make progress beyond what it accomplished in 2010. A decade of funding cuts and staff reductions at the EPA have jeopardized the integrity of the EPA's core missions to protect clean air, clean water and protect people from dangerous chemicals. Since 2000, the EPA has lost 21% of its full-time staff because of funding cuts, amounting to nearly 4,000 dedicated employees. Congress's failure to adequately fund the EPA has resulted in missed statutory deadlines, which have set back the health of our most vulnerable people.

—Water Quality Protection. Water quality has suffered due to the EPA's chronic understaffing and lack of funding. The Clean Water Act instructs the EPA to develop and publish "criteria for water quality accurately reflecting the latest scientific knowledge." The EPA has developed water quality criteria for aquatic life for only two pollutants in the last decade. Criteria for several pollutants such as lead have not been updated since the 1980s. The EPA has also failed to develop criteria for hundreds more chemicals known to cause harm in aquatic ecosystems. The EPA needs an increase of $250 million for its water quality criteria program to $466 million for FY2022 in order to address new chemicals and other water pollutants that do not have water quality criteria and to update the numerous existing criteria that are decades out of date.

—Clean Air. The Clean Air Act directs the EPA to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for criteria air pollutants and review them every five years. However, the EPA is already overdue in its reviews of NAAQS for particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, and sulfur dioxide, and must also review tainted determinations from the Trump administration. Additionally, the Clean Air Act requires that localities that do not meet air pollution standards must submit State Implementation Plans (SIPs) to the EPA with the goal of reaching federal standards. Though the Clean Air Act requires the EPA to approve or deny a SIP within 12 months, there is an enormous backlog of SIPs awaiting review, with submissions dating back to 1993. Congress must prioritize clean air by providing an additional $212 million in FY2022 to bring the line item for Clean Air to at least $500 million to support the EPA's critical Clean Air Act programs.

—Pesticide Licensing. Pesticides are used every day without complying with all statutory requirements to protect the environment. The EPA is required to consult with the Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Marine Fisheries Service under the Endangered Species Act when registering or reviewing a pesticide to ensure use of that pesticide will not jeopardize the existence of endangered or threatened species. Yet the EPA has never completed the consultation process for any chemical nationwide. Further resources are desperately needed so that the EPA is able to conduct biological evaluations more thoroughly and efficiently, guaranteeing stronger protections for endangered species. We urge Con-

gress to designate $50 million for Endangered Species Act consultations to prevent further harm to imperiled species.

[This statement was submitted by Brett Hartl, Government Affairs Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CENTER FOR INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION

The Coalition Against Forest Pests (CAFP) consists of non-profit organizations, for-profit entities, landowners, state agency associations and academic scholars who have joined together to improve our nation's efforts to address forest health threats.

We appreciate this opportunity to comment on funding for USDA Forest Service programs that address non-native tree-killing pests.

Between Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 and FY 2018, spending by the Forest Health Protection program to combat 11 specified non-native insects and pathogens fell by about 50%. Funding for research conducted by the Research stations on ten non-native pests decreased from $10 million in Fiscal Year 2010 to just $2.5 million in Fiscal Year 2020—more than 70%. As far as we can determine, very little additional funding has been allocated by these programs to species of non-native pests that have established in the country in recent years. As a result of these reductions, the Service's ability to develop and implement effective tools to manage the growing number of pests threatening the health of the Nation's forests has been crippled.

We ask that the Appropriations Committee restore funding to these crucial programs by providing the following appropriations:

—State and Private Forestry, Forest Health Protection—total funding
  —Cooperative Lands, funding for program work: $51 million
  —Federal Lands, funding for program work: $25 million
—Research and Development: total funding $320 million; we ask for report language encouraging the USDA Forest Service to increase funding for research targeting non-native insects and pathogens.

BACKGROUND

To understand how damaging these cuts have been, consider that since 2010, the following new tree-killing pests have been detected: polyphagous and Kuroshio shot hole borers, spotted lanternfly, two rapid ʻōhiʻa death pathogens, Mediterranean oak beetle, and velvet longhorned beetle. In the meantime, the Asian longhorned beetle has been detected in Ohio and South Carolina; the emerald ash borer expanded its range from 14 to 35 states; laurel wilt disease spread from five states to 11; a second strain of the sudden oak death fungus appeared in Oregon and California forests; and whitebark pine has been Pelisted by the US Fish and Wildlife Service as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

In total, more than 228 tree species growing in the "lower 48" states are attacked by non-native pests; additional tree species in Hawaiʻi and other islands are also infested by non-native pests. A study by Randall Morin found that non-native forest pests had caused an approximately five percent increase in total mortality by tree volume nation-wide. The greatest increases in mortality rates were a four-fold increase for redbay; and a three-fold increase for ash, beech, and hemlock. A study by Songlin Fei estimates that the 15 most damaging of the introduced species threaten 41.1% of the total live forest biomass in the 48 conterminous states.

The Mission of the USDA Forest Service is "To sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations." To achieve this mission, the Forest Service needs adequate funding to address the difficult challenge of containing the spread of introduced pests, protecting host tree species from mortality caused by those pests, and restoring decimated tree species to the forest.

Much of this effort must take place on the 60% of America's forests managed by states and private landowners. Effectively countering non-native insects and pathogens requires addressing them where they are first detected. Almost always, those first detections occur in or near cities—which are the destination of the imported goods and plants which are the means by which the pests are introduced.

Furthermore, once established, the non-native pests spread to forests in rural and wildland areas. The pests' spread is often facilitated by people moving firewood, plants or household goods. Consequently, addressing spread requires scientific understanding of the pest's biology and understanding what motivates people to avoid activities that facilitate pests' spread.

Obviously, given the large number of damaging non-native pests, the Forest Service must set priorities. This need has been met by "Project CAPTURE" (Conservation Assessment and Prioritization of Forest Trees Under Risk of Extirpation)

[https://forestthreats.org/research/projects/project-summaries/genetic-risk-assessment-system]. Priority species for forests on the continent are listed below. A separate study is under way for forests in Hawai'i, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands.

Florida torreya (Torreya taxifolia)	Port-Orford cedar (Chamaecyparis lawsoniana)
American chestnut (Castanea dentata)	tanoak (Notholithocarpus densiflorus)
Allegheny chinquapin (C. pumila)	butternut (Juglans cinerea)
Ozark chinquapin (C. pumila var. ozarkensis)	eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)
redbay (Persea borbonia)	white ash (Fraxinus americana)
Carolina ash (Fraxinus caroliniana)	black ash (F. nigra)
pumpkin ash (F. profunda)	green ash (F. pennsylvanica)
Carolina hemlock (Tsuga caroliniana)	

Project CAPTURE says these 15 species should be the focus of two types of programs. First, seed collection and banking and similar activities should be carried out as part of a comprehensive gene conservation program aimed at maintaining genetic integrity and natural levels of genetic diversity within species. Second, researchers should establish the trees' potential resistance to the pest, and develop tree breeding and restoration components—including possibly careful utilization of new genomic technologies. These projects would enable or hasten the establishment of applied breeding programs.

We hope that the Congress will choose to implement these recommendations by providing additional funding to the USFS FHP and Research programs.

FOREST HEALTH AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

To be most effective, the USDA Forest Health Management program must address pests where they are first found—which is almost always in urban or semi-rural forests. This pattern means that the initial responsibility for countering non-native pests falls primarily to the Cooperative Forest Health Management program. This program supports partners' efforts to prevent, monitor, suppress, and eradicate insects, diseases, and invasive plants through technical and financial assistance to state forestry agencies who deal directly with private forest owners.

Of course, many of the pests spread into National forests. For example, since its introduction a century ago, white pine blister rust has spread throughout the West; 74 percent of the threatened whitebark pine grows within National forests. Since the 1950s, hemlock wooly adelgid has spread to National forests from Georgia to Pennsylvania and even Michigan. Within 20 years of its first detection, the emerald ash borer has spread from the Detroit area to kill trees in many National forests across the Northeast and Midwest. Over an even shorter period, the polyphagous and Kuroshio shot hole borers have entered the Cleveland National Forest. Forests in National parks in the Appalachians, California, the Pacific Northwest and Hawai'i have also been severely damaged by these pests. All were first discovered in urban forests.

Considering the priorities established by Project CAPTURE, we applaud the continuing commitment by the FHP program to projects addressing Port-Orford-cedar root disease, threats to whitebark pine, and thousand cankers disease. However, we are concerned about past reductions in programs targetting laurel wilt and sudden oak death. We hope that the inclusion of their hosts (redbay and tanoaks) in the Project CAPTURE priority list will result in new funding becoming available. Furthermore, we support efforts to manage "lingering" ash and breed ash trees resistant to the emerald ash borer. Indeed, FHP leadership will be vitally important to stakeholders trying to manage spread of the emerald ash borer now that the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has terminated its regulatory program. Wildland and urban forests in the Western states are at greatest risk to EAB spread.

We expect that FHP will continue to help Hawaiian partners to counter the rapid 'ōhi'a death fungi, which threatens ?ohi?a lehua—which makes up 80% of native forests. The fungus has killed over a million trees on 180,000 acres on the Big Island alone and has now spread to the other islands.

We are pleased that the FHP program has established an "emerging pest" line, which in FY2021 is funded at $500,000. Welcome as this funding is, it is inadequate to carry the burden of addressing the dozens of non-native pests not included in the national program.

As noted above, the Coalition Against Forest Pests asks that the Committee provide total appropriations of $51 million FHP Cooperative Lands and $25 million under FHP Federal Lands for Fiscal Year 2022.

USDA FOREST SERVICE FOREST AND RANGELAND RESEARCH PROGRAM

Effective programs to prevent, suppress, and eradicate non-native insects, diseases, and plants depend on understanding of the pest-host relationship gained through research. We seek $320 million for the USDA Forest Service Research and Development program in FY2021.

Funding for research conducted by USFS on ten non-native pests decreased from $10 million in FY 2010 to just $2.5 million in FY 2020-more than 70 percent. Current funding for invasive species thus constitutes about one percent of the total R&D budget. As a result of these reductions, the USFS's ability to develop and implement effective tools to manage the growing number of pests threatening the health of the nation's forests has been crippled. Programs targeting hemlock woolly adelgid, white pine blister rust, sudden oak death, and the Sirex woodwasp were cut in recent years. Programs targeting several other high-impact pests, including the Asian longhorned beetle, emerald ash borer, goldspotted oak borer, thousand cankers disease, and laurel wilt disease have been funded at a steady rate. We could find no documentation of USDA Forest Service research into beech leaf disease, rapid ʻōhiʻa death, or other pests currently killing trees.

Effective measures depend on an understanding of both the pest's biology and factors that motivate people to avoid activities that facilitate pests' spread. As part of the requested $320 million for Forest Service Research and Development, the signatory organizations urge you to include language in the Interior Appropriations report encouraging the USDA Forest Service to increase funding for research targeting non-native insects and pathogens.

Thank you for considering our views. If you have any questions, please contact Faith Campbell at phytodoer@aol.com

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CENTER FOR LARGE LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION & ALASKA CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

Dear Chairman Merkley and Ranking Member Murkowski:

Collaborative, landscape-scale conservation brings people together across geographies, jurisdictions, sectors, and cultures to restore fragmented landscapes, thereby safeguarding the ecological, cultural, and economic benefits provided by intact and connected habitat. We are therefore encouraged to see $18.8 million (an increase of $6.3 million above the 2021 enacted level) proposed in the President's Budget for Cooperative Landscape Conservation via the Science Applications Program within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). However, additional funding is necessary to effectively coordinate landscape conservation across the federal government and with state, tribal, and nongovernmental partners across the country.

In its Fiscal Year 2022 budget justification, USFWS claims: "Science Applications is the only program in the Federal government that provides collaboration and technical capacity to facilitate the integration, development, and strategic alignment of actions to achieve the conservation landscape [sic] of the future to sustain fish, wildlife, and plant by working with and for partners and local, State, and regional partnerships across the Nation" (CLC–2, emphasis added).[1] We fervently support this work and deeply appreciate the USFWS's leadership on landscape conservation. And yet, addressing complex, multi-scalar problems like biodiversity loss, the climate crisis, and environmental injustice requires a whole-of-government approach, as stated in the Biden administration's recent Conserving and Restoring the America the Beautiful report.[2] Achieving the administration's ambitious conservation goals and tackling our most pressing natural resource management challenges at the landscape scale requires meaningful involvement of many agencies within the departments of Interior, Agriculture, and Commerce, as well as the Council on Environmental Quality and other federal entities, in partnership with tribal, state, regional, and local stakeholders. Coordinating landscape conservation should not indefinitely be the sole responsibility of one program within one agency: it is by nature a collective responsibility.

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[1] United States Fish and Wildlife Service. 2021. "The United States Department of the Interior Budget Justifications and Performance Information, Fiscal Year 2022." Available at: https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/fy2022-fws-budget-justification.pdf.

[2] United States Department of the Interior, United States Department of Agriculture, United States Department of Commerce, and Council on Environmental Quality. 2021. "Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful." Available at: https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/report-conserving-and-restoring-america-the-beautiful-2021.pdf.

Effectively synchronizing landscape conservation and climate adaptation efforts across federal agencies and with non-federal partners will require investing in a new durable, comprehensive, and inclusive structure and approach to landscape conservation. With insights from diverse leaders in landscape conservation across the nation, our two organizations recently released a report calling for this commitment: Build back a better national landscape conservation framework.[3] The report recommends providing national funding to support robust federal leadership and coordination, and providing resources to support and connect regional conservation partnerships across the nation to address large-scale conservation challenges. More specifically, the experts that contributed to the report suggest the following, among other recommendations: a) tasking an entity within the Biden administration to lead and coordinate federal government functions for the landscape conservation framework and b) creating a multi-stakeholder national landscape conservation council to maximize coordination, communication, and collaboration on policies and projects. This perspective is shared by many prominent leaders in the conservation community, as articulated in a recent op-ed published in The Hill by former U.S. Department of Interior officials Lynn Scarlett and Dr. Mamie Parker.[4]

We propose providing $3 million of additional funding to USFWS (beyond the requested amount of $18.8 million for "Cooperative Landscape Conservation") to initiate the process of establishing a new framework for coordinating landscape conservation and climate adaptation efforts nationwide, in accordance with the recommendations in the report referenced above and excerpted below (see excerpt on page 4 of this testimony). These additional funds would raise the total level for the Cooperative Landscape Conservation Program to $21.8 million, which is approximately the funding used to facilitate the Landscape Conservation Cooperative Network from 2010–2017.

We also suggest the following report language to clarify the purpose of the proposed additional $3 million:

First, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will expend these dollars on coordinating landscape conservation and climate adaptation efforts with other natural resource and environmental agencies within the federal government. Second, USFWS will use these funds to launch an interagency and public engagement process that solicits recommendations for developing a new national framework for landscape conservation. Within 12 months, USFWS will submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees outlining the following:

1. The need for and benefits of a durable, inclusive, and comprehensive national framework for landscape conservation;

2. The opportunities and challenges of coordinating landscape conservation across federal agencies and with state, regional, and local governmental and non-governmental partners;

3. The opportunities and challenges of integrating landscape conservation with climate adaptation efforts across the federal government;

4. A proposed new or existing entity within the Biden administration to lead and coordinate federal government functions of the national landscape conservation framework;

5. A proposed structure for a nationwide network of regional conservation partnerships;

6. A proposal for establishing a diverse, inclusive national landscape conservation council composed of federal, state, and tribal agencies, regional partnerships, non-governmental organizations, university partners, private landowners, and other stakeholders; and

7. A sustainable funding strategy to support the following: the new national landscape conservation network and framework; the federal interagency governing entity and multi-stakeholder council for national landscape conservation; dedicated federal, state, tribal, regional, and local agency staff positions to coordinate landscape conservation efforts across all scales of government; and landscape conservation projects across the country.

The proposed new investment in developing a durable, inclusive, and comprehensive national framework will enable USFWS to facilitate greater involvement in and support for landscape conservation and climate adaptation. Such a coordinated ap-

[3] Mankowski, J., Wathen, G., Poe, A., Mordecai, R., and Wearn, A. 2021. "Build back a better National Landscape Conservation Framework." Commissioned by the Center for Large Landscape Conservation and the Alaska Conservation Foundation. Available at: https://largelandscapes.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Landscape-Conservation-Framework.pdf.

[4] Scarlett, L. and Parker, M. April 22, 2021. "21st century conservation: A vision of collaboration across landscapes." Available at: https://thehill.com/opinion/energy-environment/549729-21st-century-conservation-a-vision-of-collaboration-across.

proach would improve outcomes, eliminate redundancies, create synergies, promote inclusion, facilitate collaboration, and streamline the whole-of-government response necessary to conserve a network of healthy and productive lands and waters that sustain our nation's unique natural and cultural resources.

We appreciate your consideration of our testimony and stand ready to address any questions or provide further resources.

Sincerely,

Michael Barber, Executive Director
Alaska Conservation Foundation
mbarber@alaskaconservation.org

Gary Tabor, President
Center for Large Landscape Conservation
gary@largelandscapes.org

BUILDING BACK A BETTER

NATIONAL LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION FRAMEWORK

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RECOMMENDATIONS

To achieve the overarching goal of a connected network of healthy and productive lands and waters that sustain natural and cultural resources to meet the challenges of the 21st century, including climate change, environmental justice, the loss of biodiversity, and sustained economic well-being, the nation needs a durable national framework for landscape conservation. A federal convening structure and policy leadership will create opportunities and provide resources to advance conservation science and collaboration. The following recommendations will allow such an effort to be more effective, garner more public support, create a more equitable and inclusive conservation paradigm, and endure for generations to come.

Policies

1. Identify an entity within the Biden Administration to lead and coordinate federal governmental functions for the landscape conservation framework.
2. Issue an executive order, or take other executive action, directing federal agencies to bring together science and people through landscape conservation collaboratives.
3. Over the next few years, work with Congress on a strategy to codify a national landscape conservation network.
4. Create a national, multi-stakeholder landscape conservation council to maximize coordination, communication, and collaboration on landscape conservation policy and projects.
5. Integrate landscape conservation and national climate adaptation science efforts.

Necessary Funding and Resources

6. Work with Congress and the executive branch on joint sustainable funding strategies.
7. Provide national funding to support backbone capacity and coordination.
8. Seek new funding, and leverage existing funds, for landscape conservation efforts.
9. Ensure that funding supports a diverse array of organizations and stakeholders.
10. Revitalize investments previously made by the Obama-Biden administration in landscape conservation.

CONCLUSION

A common element in these recommendations is the important role of people in landscape conservation. Gone are the days of artificial lines and thinking about nature separate from people. Today we know that conservation is about sustaining whole landscapes for both communities and nature. This means involving a broad range of people in planning for and investing in the future of the places where they live and work. It also means recognizing the economic, ecological, cultural, recreational, and health benefits that intact, functioning ecosystems provide to local communities and citizens across America. This collaborative and holistic approach

will be essential in achieving the administration's biodiversity, equity, and climate change goals.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CENTRAL ARIZONA WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

On behalf of the Central Arizona Water Conservation District (CAWCD), I encourage you to direct the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to again expend at least $2.0 million from its Aquatic Habitat Management Program sub-activity (formerly known as the Soil, Water and Air Program) for Colorado River specific salinity control activities in Fiscal Year 2022. The funding will help protect the water quality of the Colorado River that is used by approximately 40 million people for municipal and industrial purposes and used to irrigate approximately 5.5 million acres in the United States.

CAWCD manages the Central Arizona Project (CAP), a multi-purpose water resource development and management project that delivers Colorado River water into central and southern Arizona. The largest supplier of renewable water in Arizona, CAP diverts an average of over 1.5 million acre-feet of Arizona's 2.8 million acre-foot Colorado River entitlement each year to municipal and industrial users, agricultural irrigation districts, and Indian communities.

Our goal at CAP is to provide an affordable, reliable and sustainable supply of Colorado River water to a service area that includes more than 80 percent of Arizona's population.

These renewable water supplies are critical to Arizona's economy and to the economies of Native American communities throughout the state. Nearly 90% of economic activity in the State of Arizona occurs within CAP's service area. The canal provides an economic benefit of $100 billion annually, accounting for one-third of the entire Arizona gross state product. CAP also helps the State of Arizona meet its water management and regulatory objectives of reducing groundwater use and ensuring availability of groundwater as a supplemental water supply during future droughts. Achieving and maintaining these water management objectives is critical to the long-term sustainability of a state as arid as Arizona.

NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF CONCENTRATED SALTS

Natural and man-induced salt loading to the Colorado River creates environmental and economic damages. EPA has identified that more than 60 percent of the salt load of the Colorado River comes from natural sources. The majority of land within the Colorado River Basin is federally owned, much of which is administered by BLM. Human activity, principally irrigation, adds to salt load of the Colorado River. Further, natural and human activities concentrate the dissolved salts in the River.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has estimated the current quantifiable damages at about $354 million per year to U.S. users with projections that damages would increase to approximately $671 million per year by 2040 if the program were not to continue. These damages include:

—A reduction in the yield of salt sensitive crops and increased water use to meet the leaching requirements in the agricultural sector;
—Increased use of imported water and cost of desalination and brine disposal for recycling water in the municipal sector;
—A reduction in the useful life of galvanized water pipe systems, water heaters, faucets, garbage disposals, clothes washers, and dishwashers, and increased use of bottled water and water softeners in the household sector;
—An increase in the cost of cooling operations and the cost of water softening, and a decrease in equipment service life in the commercial sector;
—An increase in the use of water and the cost of water treatment, and an increase in sewer fees in the industrial sector;
—A decrease in the life of treatment facilities and pipelines in the utility sector; and
—Difficulty in meeting wastewater discharge requirements to comply with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit terms and conditions, and an increase in desalination and brine disposal costs due to accumulation of salts in groundwater basins.

The threat of salinity continues to be a concern in both the United States and Mexico. On November 20, 2012, a five-year agreement, known as Minute 319, was signed between the U.S. and Mexico to guide future management of the Colorado River. Among the key issues addressed in Minute 319 included an agreement to

maintain current salinity management and existing salinity standards. The United States, Mexico, and key water users, including CAWCD, worked since 2015 to develop a successor agreement, Minute 323, which was finalized on September 27, 2017. Minute 323 continues collaboration and cooperation among the United States and Mexico with respect to salinity control in the Colorado River system. The CAWCD and other key water providers are committed to meeting these goals.

Adequate funding for salinity control will prevent the water quality of the Colorado River from further degradation and avoid significant increases in economic damages to municipal, industrial and irrigation users.

CONCLUSION

Implementation of salinity control practices through the BLM Program has proven to be a very cost effective method of controlling the salinity of the Colorado River and is an essential component of the overall Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program.

The continuation of funding will prevent further degradation of the water quality of the Colorado River and further degradation and economic damages experienced by municipal, industrial and irrigation users. A modest investment in source control pays huge dividends in improved drinking water quality for nearly 40 million Americans. CAWCD requests that this committee direct that BLM again expend in Fiscal Year 2022 at least $2.0 million from its Aquatic Habitat Management Program subactivity for Colorado River specific salinity control activities.

[This statement was submitted by Theodore C. Cooke, General Manager.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CHUGACH REGIONAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

The Chugach Regional Resources Commission (CRRC) is a Tribal Organization whose primary mission is to develop the natural resource capability and capacity for each of our seven member Tribes located within Alaska's Chugach Region in southcentral Alaska; the Chenega IRA Council, Native Village of Eyak, Nanwalek IRA Council, Port Graham Village Council, the Qutekcak Native Tribe, Tatitlek IRA Council, and the Valdez Native Tribe. We depend on Federal appropriations to the BIA's Tribal Management/Development Program (TM/DP) account and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to carry out programs which benefit our member Tribes. CRRC seeks a funding level of $750,000 within the Tribal Management/Development Program account and an increase of $1.0 million within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service budget to increase Tribal opportunities in the policies of the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council.

We thank Senate members for passage of the CARES Act in 2020, increased funding within the Interior appropriations budget for FY 2021, and passage of the American Rescue Plan this year. Without these measures, our member Tribes would not have been able to navigate the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic, the economic collapse that ensued, and the resulting challenges faced by Tribal governments, small Tribal businesses, and Alaska Native families. We thank Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Subcommittee Members for your steadfast support of Tribes and Tribal Organizations like CRRC.

CRRC was organized in 1984 to address environmental and natural resource issues for our Tribes and develop culturally sensitive economic projects at the community level. Through our programs and services, CRRC contributes significantly to the health and economic vitality of our Tribes and their members. This was especially important this past year during the pandemic. As of 2021, we serve an estimated population of over 1,200 Alaska Natives. Here is a short overview of what we do:

—Operate and fund the maintenance costs and salaries of the 12,000 sq. ft. Alutiiq Pride Marine Institute (APMI), located in Seward, one of the only Tribally operated shellfish hatcheries in Alaska that produces oyster and littleneck clam seeds, geoducks, cockles, and razor clams for direct consumption;
  —Through funding the APMI, enable hatchery staff to develop a shellfish sanctuary in Port Graham and Resurrection Bay;
  —Through funding the APMI, enable hatchery staff to study ocean acidification as part of the Alaska Ocean Acidification Network and the impact of acidification on fish and shellfish stocks.
—Operate and fund the Nanwalek Salmon Enhancement Project, a subsistence fishery, to rejuvenate the availability of fish for direct consumption;
—Lead natural resource efforts on behalf of our Tribes, including wetlands monitoring and planning, traditional foods advocacy and protection, climate change

vulnerability and adaptation planning, subsistence resource advocacy, and the development and management of a Tribal Conservation District;

—Is the statewide manager and member of the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council (AMBCC) working with the State and USF&WS; and

Over the last year of the pandemic, we improvised our services, conducting education and outreach to our member Tribes through video teleconferences and posting information on our website.

Through your support, the TM/DP account has grown nearly 45% over the last 8 years, from $9.22 million in FY 2013 to $13.387 million in FY 2021. During the same period, however, our funding rose only 16.8%, from $350,000 to $409,000, only to contract to $348,000 (FY 2018) and $380,000 (FY 2019 and FY 2020) before we raised concerns with the BIA that its unilateral reductions were contrary to the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. We have not been a beneficiary of the appropriation increases made to the TM/DP account by Congress despite the fact that we are one of the longest standing inter-tribal natural resource organization in Alaska and we regularly engage in co-management activities with the federal government.

Our work is vital and important for the future of the mariculture industry in Alaska and importantly to our Tribes and their members who depend on CRRC's programs and services. We require a stable budget, together with eligible contract support cost funds, to help us carry out our programs, pay salaries, and operate and maintain the hatchery.

We respectfully request an FY 2022 budget of $750,000, the funding level we sought in FY 2021 just as the pandemic was impacting the United States. This funding level will permit us to fully support the salaries of our Executive Director, the APMI Director, Science Director, Shellfish Technician Ocean Acidification Manager, Technician, and operate and maintain the APMI facility. Had CRRC received increases to our budget equal to the annual growth of the TM/DP subaccount since FY 2013, our budget would have grown to $507,500 by FY 2021.

We also request that the Subcommittee include report language that directs the BIA to transfer TM/DP funds to Tribes based on the funding level reflected in the enacted appropriation and not a funding amount unilaterally decided by BIA reflected in its budget tables with no consultation, and certainly not below the prior year's appropriated level in violation of Pub. L. 93–638.

Our work sustains full-time and seasonal employment for up to 20 Alaska Native people and we help Tribal businesses, all of which contributes to community stability. Our employees are able to earn a living and support their families, reinvest their wages in the community, supporting the employment of other Alaska Native and non-Native families, thereby removing families from the rolls of people needing Alaska State and Federal support. This contributes to family and community stability and is a bulwark against depression, substance abuse, suicide, and other social ills that plague remote Alaska Native communities. The prior year cuts to our TM/DP funding level undermined our services, reduced our natural resource and marine research and development, stretched our limited resources, and made it difficult to retain staff.

Our programs also support future economic and commercial opportunities for the Prince William Sound and Lower Cook Inlet regions—protecting and developing the Alaskan shellfish industry and other natural resources. Federal investment in CRRC has translated into economic opportunities and community investments that have a great impact on the region. We highlight additional programs of CRRC below:

Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council.—As the statewide manager and member of the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council (AMBCC), CRRC works with its co-management partners—ten Alaska Native experts representing the people from each of their regions, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the State of Alaska—to develop regulations governing the subsistence harvest of migratory birds during the spring and summer. Through years of representing our Region on the AMBCC, CRRC was unanimously selected to serve as the managing entity for the statewide program, housing staff in the CRRC office, and providing overall management of the subsistence migratory bird program on behalf of the USFWS. This program has become one of the leading models of co-management in the state.

Funding for the program comes from the USFWS to the Alaska Native non-profit organization through cooperative agreements. There is no specific line item for the AMBCC in the USFWS budget. As a result, Tribes do not know what level of funding will be available for the program from year to year. Funding decisions for the AMBCC are decided internally at the USFWS. This denies Tribes an opportunity to provide input in the decision-making process. We think this is wrong and ask the

Subcommittee to include report language directing the USFWS to engage in meaningful consultation with Tribes consistent with the government-to-government relationship and the Interior Department's Tribal consultation policy.

The Native Caucus of the AMBCC has directed the staff to pursue a P.L. 93–638 contract with the USFWS. We again seek additional funding of $1 million from Congress to the USFWS budget to support efforts to increase Tribal opportunities and Tribal voices in the policies of the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council.

Natural Resource Management Program.—CRRC's Natural Resource Management Program created an action plan to address the region's natural resources. This plan set priorities and direction for the future management of the natural resources of the Region. While guiding the plan development, CRRC has recognized that there is a wide variety of natural features, land uses, and priorities across villages in the Chugach Region. An inventory analysis was conducted to extract common themes and areas of concern from a tribal level. These themes were then integrated by CRRC and our Tribes to produce an effective regional plan that benefitted every community.

Sockeye Salmon Enhancement Project.—CRRC continues to work along with the Nanwalek IRA Council members, staff, and community members to continue the Sockeye Salmon Enhancement Project. CRRC rejuvenated the project and become more involved in the management of this important subsistence fishery and now solely funds the operation of the program. CRRC pursues partnerships with organizations that can assist the Tribe, such as the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association, the Alaska Pacific University (APU), Chugachmiut, and the Alaska Department of Fish & Game.

In addition to these programs, CRRC is involved in a Wetlands Program Plan Development Project for our Tribes; a Traditional Foods Program; a Climate Change Program; a Subsistence Memorial Gathering to commemorate the effects of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill; and a Tribal Conservation District program to work more effectively with governmental agencies and explore grant opportunities to better manage natural resources.

With your continued support, CRRC is making a meaningful difference for the Alaska Native peoples we serve.

Thank you for the opportunity to share CRRC's funding needs in the FY 2022 budget.

[This statement was submitted by Willow Hetrick-Price, Executive Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COALITION FOR AMERICAN HERITAGE

Thank you for the opportunity to offer the Coalition for American Heritage's recommendations for Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) Interior, Environment and Related Agencies appropriations for the Department of the Interior.

The Coalition for American Heritage ("the Coalition") is an organization comprised of heritage professionals, scholars, small businesses, non-profits and history-lovers across the country. Our 350,000 members work together to promote our nation's commitment to historic preservation. Preserving historic resources helps stabilize neighborhoods, attract investment, create jobs, generate tax revenues, support small businesses, and power America's heritage tourism industry.

We appreciate the strong funding provided to historic preservation programs in the FY21 Interior Appropriations legislation. Investing in these programs will help ensure the continuance of our country's proud tradition of preservation. As you work to address funding levels for FY22, the Coalition requests robust funding for all of the U.S. Department of the Interior's historic preservation and cultural management programs, and for the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Respectfully, the Coalition urges the Committee to approve the following funding levels for FY22:

—NPS Historic Preservation Fund: $150 million
—NPS Office of International Affairs: $2.1 million
—NPS National Heritage Areas and Heritage Partnership Program: $32 million
—Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Cultural Resources Management: $21.131 million
—BLM National Conservation Lands: $65.131 million
—Department of Interior Land and Conservation Fund (LWCF): continued increase toward the full $900 million in dedicated funding from offshore mineral leasing revenues
—National Endowment for the Arts (NEA): $176 million
—National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH): $225 million

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The popularity of our national parks is at an all-time high. Our country cannot afford unwarranted reductions to visitor services and cuts to the responsible stewardship of our historic and cultural resources. The NPS is responsible for 418 National Park System units. Over the past 20 years, more than 40 new parks have been added to the park system. Many recent additions preserve historic places and themes that have traditionally been underrepresented within the system.

Within the requested funds, we recommend robust funding for Resource Stewardship, including $1 million for the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, $1 million for the African American Civil Rights Network, and $1 million for the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network. Funding for these popular initiatives provides the public with valuable educational resources that honor and preserve our country's rich African-American heritage and history for future generations.

NPS HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND

We urge the Committee to appropriate $150 million in FY22 for the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF), a vital program that, in partnership with states, local governments and tribes, is the cornerstone of our country's historic preservation initiatives.

Within the $150 million request, we recommend the following funding breakdown:

—$60 million for State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) for heritage preservation and protection programs.
—$24 million for Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs).
—$19 million for competitive grants to document, interpret, and preserve historic sites associated with the Civil Rights Movement.
—$7 million for the competitive grants program to preserve the sites and stories associated with securing civil rights for all Americans, including women, Latinos, Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, Alaska Natives, and LGBTQ Americans.
—$20 million for Save America's Treasures grants for the preservation of nationally significant sites, structures, and artifacts.
—$10 million for grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities to preserve and repair historic buildings.
—$9 million for Paul Bruhn preservation grants to revitalize historic properties of national, state, and local significance.
—$1 million for competitive grants for the survey and nomination of properties associated with communities currently underrepresented on the National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks.

NPS DEFERRED MAINTENANCE

We urge the Committee to address the deferred maintenance backlog at America's national parks. Almost half of the current backlog concern historic assets. Robust investments in this area will contribute to the successful preservation of historic sites and structures and other NPS cultural resources. Without critically needed funding for repair and rehabilitation, these critical sites, buildings and artifacts that draw visitors to our national parks' assets risk further deterioration and potential loss.

We recommend the following funding breakdown:

—$140 million for Line-Item Construction projects
—$150 million for Repair and Rehabilitation
—$205 million for Cyclic Maintenance

Line-Item Construction projects.—We support $140 million toward addressing the needs of the highest priority non-transportation assets.

Repair and Rehabilitation.—We recommend $150 million, a $14 million increase above the FY21 enacted level. The Committee's support for these programs has been very helpful in addressing the long-term maintenance needs at America's national parks over the past several years.

Cyclic Maintenance.—We recommend $205 for cyclic maintenance, a $16.8 million increase above the FY20 enacted level. These efforts are critical to preventing assets from degrading to the point of needing repair. Performing regular maintenance will help prevent an increase in the number of deferred maintenance projects.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE: OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

We urge a $2.1 million FY22 appropriation for the NPS Office of International Affairs. This funding would ensure that the United States can robustly engage in and

support the World Heritage Program. Communities throughout the country are pursuing nominations of sites in their area to the World Heritage List, including Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks in Ohio and Mount Vernon in Virginia. The Office of International Affairs is critical to shepherding advocates through the nominations process.

NPS NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS

We recommend $32 million in funding for the Heritage Partnership Program and our National Heritage Areas (NHAs). Through the use of public-private partnerships, NHAs support historic preservation, heritage tourism, and recreation. These programs collaborate with communities to make heritage relevant to local interests and needs.

BLM CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

We appreciate the Committee's ongoing oversight of the BLM reorganization and the impacts of the move on BLM's ability to oversee the largest, most diverse collection of historic and cultural resources on America's public lands. We remain very concerned about the staff reductions in the Cultural Resources Division. It is vital that BLM has sufficient staff to support Section 106 reviews, monitor compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and consult with tribes.

To assist staff with providing these key services, we respectfully request that the committee provide $21.131 million for BLM Cultural Resources Management. We ask that the Committee support BLM efforts to fill key staff vacancies, especially those cultural resources positions stipulated in the BLM Tribal Relations Manual, including: National Curator/NAGPRA Coordinator, National Tribal Coordinator, and 10 of the 12 state office Tribal Coordinator positions.

This funding would also support ongoing collaboration with state historic preservation offices to standardize and integrate cultural resources data for BLM lands through the National Cultural Resources Information Management System. Strengthening BLM's ability to update predictive modeling and data analysis will enhance the agency's ability to address large-scale, cross-jurisdictional land-use projects.

BLM NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

We urge a $65.131 million FY21 appropriation for the National Conservation Lands. An increase in base funding will prevent critical damage to 36 million acres of congressionally and presidentially designated National Monuments, National Conservation Areas, Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas, National Scenic and Historic Trails, and Wild Scenic Rivers managed by BLM. Increased funding will help achieve President Biden's goal of conserving at least 30% of our lands and waters by 2030.

BLM LAND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

We urge the Committee to continue increasing LWCF funding toward the full $900 million from offshore mineral leasing revenues that is dedicated to the LWCF annually. Many of our country's most significant historic and cultural landscapes have been permanently protected through LWCF investments, including Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Park, Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, and Hopewell Culture National Historic Park. In total, more than $550 million has been invested to acquire historic sites and 137,000 acres in 162 NPS units.

Within LWCF funding, we urge the Committee to fund the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) at $20 million in FY22. Through public-private partnerships, the ABPP has helped communities to preserve more than 100 historic battlefields in 42 states and territories. In protecting the hallowed ground upon which so many Americans fought and died, the ABPP preserves a valuable part of our shared history.

INDEPENDENT AGENCIES: ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

We request $8 million for the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), to fund its work to administer the rulemaking process for historic preservation law, assist in resolving conflicts from historic resource reviews, and provide advice on historic preservation.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENTS FOR THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

The Coalition urges the Committee to fund the NEA at $176 million and the NEH at $225 million each in FY22. Robust funding for the NEA and NEH is critical to communities across America. NEH Preservation Assistance Grants help small and mid-sized institutions—such as libraries, museums, historical societies, archival repositories, cultural organizations, town and county records offices, and colleges and universities—improve their ability to preserve and care for their significant humanities collections, which may include books and journals, archives and manuscripts, prints and photographs, architectural and cartographic records, decorative and fine art objects, archaeological and ethnographic artifacts, furniture, historical objects, and digital materials.

The Coalition is grateful to the Committee for the opportunity to offer its perspective on FY22 appropriations for the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies appropriations bill. The Coalition stands ready to work with the Committee on finding common ground to achieve the FY22 funding levels that will support and enhance historic preservation.

[This statement was submitted by Marion Werkheiser, Policy Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COALITION FOR HEALTHIER SCHOOLS

Dear Chairman Merkley and Ranking Member Murkowski:

We—the undersigned sixty-six organizations and 39 individuals—write to urge two critical improvements to the President's Budget FY22 Budget for US EPA. The nation and its children, many in the poorest and or most remote areas, have just endured a year school closures and lack of access to education. While we support the PBFY 22 top-line increase for EPA, the proposed boost is not proportional to the risks. Specifically, it does not restore or expand funding to the offices in EPA most critical to keeping schools open safely: the Office of Air and Radiation/Indoor Environments Division and the Office of Children's Health Protection. They have long worked to improve the condition of learning facilities for all children. In a continuing pandemic, we believe schools and child care facilities, children and communities, and the economy, need those offices enhanced to meet the crises of poor indoor air amid the pandemic and severe weather like high heat.

CLEAN AIR IN EVERY SCHOOL. Understanding that poor indoor air is common in schools and erodes children health and learning, in the face of the continuing airborne infective virus, announced by CDC on May 7, 2021, we urge that $65 Million be directed to EPA's Office of Air and Radiation/Indoor Environments Division's to restore and expand its Reducing the Risks of Indoor Air program and $10 Million directed to Office of Children's Health Protection to restore and expand pediatric environmental health assistance. The offices provide voluntary education, technical assistance, and related grant programs to educate communities, parents and personnel, schools, states, and tribes on how to improve Indoor Air and fix other problems of educational facilities.

There are 98,000 school buildings enrolling 51 million children. That is more children in fewer schools with fewer staff than five years ago. Schools are more densely occupied than nursing homes and 40% of children have chronic health conditions. Poor indoor air quality can be a severe health risk in 'normal times' for the 6 million American children with asthma, the leading cause of school absenteeism due to chronic illness. About half of school children rely on subsidized meal programs, and half are children of color. An estimated 40% of all school children had no internet or devices at home during the past school year.

In 2019, schools were clearly not pandemic-ready, and just as clearly, they were not weather resilient nor climate-ready either. A 2020 US GAO report found tens of thousands of schools needed updated or all new ventilation systems. In spring 2021, a survey found that most schools were unable to implement CDC's reopening guidance. This means that the 2019 environmental factors that made it impossible to reopen schools fully in 2020 were not addressed: no ventilation and poor sanitation.

EPA is the only agency, not CDC and not Education, that has authorizations, critical technical information, and educational grant programs to help parents, communities, education leaders, and personnel understand how to keep school buildings open safely and how to reduce barriers to learning. EPA's Indoor Environments Division has a 25+ year history of programs and guidance on aspects of indoor environments like indoor air quality, molds, hazardous chemical management, and flood repairs to schools and child care facilities. Further EPA is continuing to build on its archive of training programs that, ten years ago, had spurred a learning network

on school facilities operated as healthy places for children and staff. The children's office supports pediatric environmental health services. The science has only grown over the decades, with the most recent publications on moving air to reduce the viral load from UC Davis and Johns Hopkins, while the Harvard School of Public Health's "Schools for Health" recaps the leading science on healthful indoor environments for learning and contributed significantly to media's understanding of how the virus is transmitted.

Today, K–12 schools are receiving an estimated $200 billion in COVID relief aid, but not one dollar is required to be spent on indoor air or ventilation. A proportional response to the real risks of contaminated indoor air to children who are required to go to school is needed now from EPA and from this administration.

A proportional response must restore and expand support for the Office of Air and Radiation/Indoor Environments Division working under its authorizations from the Clean Air Act and Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act to host annual symposia and provide education and training to school personnel, districts, and nongovernmental organizations and communities both nationally and regionally. A proportional response should also support the Office of Children's Health Protection's grants to pediatric environmental health experts and researchers.

SINCERELY,

Alaska Community Action on Toxics
American Public Health Association
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Association of Asthma Educators (PA)
Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO International)
Breast Cancer Prevention Partners
Californians for Pesticide Reform
Cancer Prevention Coalition for Los Angeles (CA)
Center for Environmental Health
Child Care Aware of America
Children's Environmental Health Center of the Hudson Valley at New York Medical Center and Maria Farer Children's Hospital (NY)
Children's Environmental Health Network
Children's Environmental Protection Alliance (AL)
Clean and Healthy NY
Coalition for Environmentally Safe Schools (MA)
Collaborative for High Performance Schools
CT Foundation for Environmentally Safe Schools
The Deirdre Imus Environmental Health Center at Hackensack UMC (NJ)
Earth Day Network
Education Law Center
Empire State Consumer Project (NY)
First Focus
Green Schools National Network
Healthy Legacy (MN)
Health Resources in Action
Healthy Schools PA/Women for a Healthy Environment
Healthy Schools Network, Inc.
Improving Kids' Environment (IN)
Indoor Air Institute
IPM Institute of North America
Kids for Saving the Earth (MN)
Learning Disabilities Associations of America
Learning Disabilities Association of Arkansas
Learning Disabilities Association of Georgia
Learning Disabilities Association of Illinois
Learning Disabilities Association of Iowa
Learning Disabilities Association of Maine
Learning Disabilities Association of Maryland
Learning Disabilities Association of Minnesota
Learning Disabilities Association of Pennsylvania
Learning Disabilities Association of New Jersey
Learning Disabilities Association of Oklahoma
Learning Disabilities Association of South Carolina
Learning Disabilities Association of Tennessee
Learning Disabilities Association of Texas
Learning Disabilities Association of Utah
Maine PTA
Maryland Children's Environmental Health Coalition
Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health
Midwest Pesticide Action Center
National Center for Environmental Health Strategies
Nontoxic Certified (NY)
Pesticide Action Network of North America
Occupational Health & Safety Section of the American Public Health Association
Ohio Public Health Association
Parents for Students Safety (TN)
Partners for a Healthier Community (MA)
Pennsylvania Integrated Pest Management Program

Pioneer Valley Asthma Coalition (MA)
Project Green Schools (MA)
Rachel Carson Council (MD)
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention (CA)
Responsible Purchasing Network
School-Based Health Alliance
School Based Health Alliance of Arkansas
Sierra Club
South Texas Asthma Coalition
Toxics Information Project (RI)
Twenty-first Century Schools Fund (DC)
Valley Community Healthcare (CA)
Western New York Council on Occupational Safety & Health

INDIVIDUALS (ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATIONS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY)

Rosemary Ahtuangaruak, Nuiqsut (AK)
Elgin Avila, MPH, Esq., Health Solutions
Louis Allen, MD
David Hammond, MD, NW Passage (WI)
Gary Arthur, Issaquah Educ. Assoc. WA)
Carl R. Baum, MD, Yale School of Medicine
Gloria E. Barrera, MSN, RN (IL)
Carla C Campbell, MD, MS, FAAP, University of Texas at El Paso
Marie Chan, Fremont VA
Richard Crime, Env. Engineer (KY)
Evan A. Davis, (NY)
Mary Rothwell Davis (NY)
Mary Gant, Green Science Policy Institute
Augusta Gross, PhD (NY)
Chip Halverson, ND, Northwest Center for Biological Medicine (OR)
Miriam Heilbrun, MS, Brooklyn, NY
Brent Ibata, PhD, JD, MPH, FACHE (FL)
Tenaya Jackman, MPH (HI)
Senator Emanuel Jones, Ellenwood, GA
Jerry Lamping, Take Care of Your Classroom Air (TX)
Paul Landsbergis, PhD, MPH, SUNY Downstate Medical Center
Patricia A. Lasley, MPH, Great Lakes Center for Children's Environmental Health (IL)
Larry K. Lowry, Southwest Center for Pediatric Environmental Health (TX)
Daniel Lefkowitz (NY)
Virginia Mott (ME)
Christina Lorentz, MPH, Columbia University
Larry K. Olsen, DrPH, MCHES, AT Still University (NM)
Jerome A. Paulson, MD, FAAP, Emeritus, George Washington University School of Public Health
Kim Poli, MD (NY)
Joseph Pones, PhD, Rutgers University
Chelsea Alexandra Schafer, California State University, Northridge
Alexandra W. Siniora (IL)
Lindsay Talon, PhD, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
Joan K. Teach, PhD (GA)
Mariana Torchia (CA)
Theodora Tsongas, PhD, MS (OR)
Jeff Vincent, PhD, UC Berkeley
Leon Vinci, DHA, Health Promotion Consultants (VA)
Yolanda Whyte, MD, Whyte Pediatrics Atlanta, GA

List as of June 24, 2021

Contact: Claire L. Barnett, Coordinator, Coalition for Healthier Schools and Executive Director, Healthy Schools Network, 153 Regent Street, Ste. 1050, Saratoga Springs, NY, 12866., info@healthyschools.org

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COALITION OF REFUGE FRIENDS AND ADVOCATES

Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee:

I appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony on behalf of the Coalition of Refuge Friends and Advocates, CORFA, a nonprofit organization registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia. We thank you for your support for the National Wildlife Refuge System and for the opportunity to offer comments on the FY2022 Interior Appropriations bill, most importantly regarding funding for the Refuge System Operations and Maintenance Fund, which we respectfully request you fund at $600 million in FY2022.

CORFA is an all-volunteer organization whose mission is to provide a national peer support group for members of Friends organizations and community partners, who are working to promote the understanding and conservation of natural, cultural, and historical resources associated with the National Wildlife Refuge System. Over 700 members of these nonprofit groups turn to CORFA to build relationships through conversations that answer questions and share information, insights, and experiences concerning nonprofit governance and management. Members of these

nonprofits can receive and give advice on the various challenges our incredible organizations face such as building capacity, marketing and communications, fund-raising, and coalition building. I am a member of the Board of this organization and serve as Vice President and Secretary.

Just over a year ago, when the pandemic quickly shutdown most federal, state, and local parks, and other public lands, there were few places visitors could go to safely drink in nature, while masked and socially distanced. One of those places was often a National Wildlife Refuge. Although Visitor Centers, restrooms, and even the parking lots might be closed, people flocked to National Wildlife Refuges by the hundreds of thousands to soak up a much-needed ration of the outdoors.

As more and more people "discovered" refuges as a respite in a very stressful time, there has been a heightened public awareness of these public lands as a valuable resource to local communities. But, with increased awareness and usage came increased need for upkeep and protection. The Fish and Wildlife Staff has done a stellar job of preserving the habitat of our refuges, but they are working at a great handicap. The completely inadequate budgets continue to fail to cover the cost of maintaining the incredibly rich and diverse wildlife habitats that make up the Refuge System. Our refuges are being loved to death.

The funding gap that has arisen due to low budget allocations over the last decade has degraded critical wildlife habitat and imperiled important species. Although the FY2020 appropriations bill injected a much needed additional $14 million into this budget, funding levels remain below the high of $503 million in FY2010, with the shortfall becoming more acute every year. We must change this trajectory.

National Wildlife Refuges are currently funded at 59 per acre per year. Compare that to funding for National Park Service at $30 per acre per year.

The Refuge System cannot fulfill its obligation to the American public, our wildlife, and 59 million annual visitors (in FY2019) without increases in maintenance and operation funds. Even with the gains in FY 2020, overall funding for the Refuge System has declined substantially over the last twelve years. Funding in FY2010 was $503 million—$598 million in today's dollars with inflation and salary increases. This difference of $95 million has forced the Service to cut back on programs and create efficiencies whenever possible—efficiencies that are sometimes harmful or even dangerous. For example, many refuges have been placed into complexes, where staff travel sometimes large distances to juggle duties on multiple refuges.

The number of annual Refuge System visitors jumped by 13 million over the last few years and is likely to take another jump for 2020 visitors, due to lack of access to many other nature areas as mentioned above. More people are looking to recreate on wildlife refuges, yet understaffed refuges struggle to provide those opportunities. Reductions in visitor services can be extremely limiting for constituencies who want to visit.

Equally troubling is a 15% drop in the number of volunteers since FY2011. At a time when record numbers of Americans are retiring and have the capability and desire to give back, the Service's ability to oversee volunteer efforts has been curtailed. Volunteers provide an additional 20% of work on our national wildlife refuges, yet they are being turned away when the System needs them the most. We hear every day from Friends groups about the frustration their members are experiencing because they cannot perform the volunteer work for their refuge that they would ordinarily be doing. Outdoor areas will continue to be a safer and popular choice for Americans looking to escape the seclusion of pandemic lock downs but without adequate staffing, refuges cannot provide the volunteer supervision that makes many of their visitor services possible.

The Refuge System is bare bones right now and increased growth in urban spaces and outdoor recreation, and the impacts of climate change, place additional stress on the System. Every year, more and more refuges are closed to the public, habitat degrades, and visitors are turned away. Current funding is nowhere near the at least $900 million needed for full funding. Our goal is to reach that figure in the next three years. Funding the Refuge System Operations and Maintenance Fund at $600 million is a step to reaching that goal.

CORFA appreciates the Subcommittee's consideration of our request of $600 mil for the refuge system operations and maintenance budget for FY2022. We look forward to working with Congress to accomplish this goal and appreciate your consideration of our requests. Please let me know if you have any questions.

[This statement was submitted by Cheryl Turoczy Hart, Board Member.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COLORADO RIVER BASIN SALINITY CONTROL FORUM

Waters from the Colorado River are used by nearly 40 million people for municipal and industrial purposes and for irrigation of approximately 5.5 million acres in the United States. Natural and man-induced salt loading to the Colorado River causes environmental and economic damages. In 2020 the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) estimated the quantifiable damages to Lower Basin water users due to elevated salinity levels at about $354 million per year. Congress authorized the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program (Program) through the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act (Act) (P.L. 93–320) in 1974 to offset increased damages caused by continued development and use of the waters of the Colorado River. Modeling by Reclamation indicates that the quantifiable damages would rise to approximately $671 million by the year 2040 without continuation of the Program. Congress has directed the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) to implement a comprehensive program for minimizing salt contributions to the Colorado River from lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). BLM has funded these efforts as directed by Congress through its Aquatic Habitat Management subactivity. BLM's efforts are an essential part of the overall effort. A funding level of $2.0 million for salinity specific projects in 2022 is requested to prevent further degradation of the quality of the Colorado River and a commensurate increase in downstream economic damages.

EPA has identified that more than 60 percent of the salt load of the Colorado River comes from natural sources. The majority of land within the Colorado River Basin is federally owned, much of which is administered by BLM. In authorizing Program (P.L. 93–320, Act) in 1974, Congress recognized that most of the salts in the Colorado River originate from federally owned lands. Title I of the Act deals with programs downstream of Imperial Dam that enable the U.S. to meet its commitment regarding the quality of waters being delivered to Mexico (Minute No. 242 of the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico). Title II of the Act addresses measures upstream from Imperial Dam, thus improving the quality of the water delivered to users in the United States. This testimony deals specifically with Title II efforts. In 1984, Congress amended the Salinity Control Act (P.L. 98–569) and directed the Secretary to develop a comprehensive program for minimizing salt contributions to the Colorado River from lands administered by BLM. In 2000, Congress reiterated its directive to the Secretary and requested a report on the implementation of BLM's program (Public Law 106–459). In 2003, BLM employed a Salinity Coordinator to increase BLM efforts in the Colorado River Basin to pursue salinity control studies and to implement specific salinity control practices.

BLM is now working on a comprehensive Colorado River Basin salinity control program as directed by Congress. In January 2018 BLM issued A Framework for Improving the Effectiveness of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program, 2018–2023. This document lays out how BLM intends to implement Colorado River Basin salinity control activities over the five-year period. Meaningful resources have been expended by BLM in the past few years to better understand salt mobilization on rangelands. With a significant portion of the salt load of the Colorado River coming from BLM administered lands, the BLM portion of the overall program is essential to the success of the effort. Inadequate BLM salinity control efforts will result in significant additional economic damages to water users downstream.

Concentration of salt in the Colorado River causes approximately $354 million annually in quantified damages and significantly more in unquantified damages in the United States and results in poor water quality for United States users. Damages, by water usage sector, include the following:

—a reduction in the ability to reclaim and reuse water for beneficial uses, including drinking water and irrigation water supplies, due to high salinities in the water delivered to water treatment and reclamation facilities,

—a reduction in the yield of salt sensitive crops, increased water use to meet leaching requirements and additional actions necessary to comply with the Clean Water Act within the agricultural sector,

—increased use of imported water and cost of desalination and brine disposal for recycling water in the municipal sector,

—a reduction in the useful life of galvanized water pipe systems, water heaters, faucets, garbage disposals, clothes washers and dishwashers, and increased use of bottled water and water softeners in the household sector,

—an increase in the cost of cooling operations and the cost of water softening, and a decrease in equipment service life in the commercial sector,

—an increase in the use of water and the cost of water treatment, and a corresponding increase in sewer fees in the industrial sector,

—a decrease in the lifespan of treatment facilities and pipelines in the utility sector, and

—difficulty in meeting wastewater discharge requirements to comply with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit terms and conditions, and an increase in desalination and brine disposal costs necessary to minimize accumulation of salts in groundwater basins.

The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum (Forum) is composed of gubernatorial appointees from Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming. The Forum is charged with reviewing the Colorado River's water quality standards for salinity every three years to facilitate compliance with Section 303(c) of the Clean Water Act (P.L. 92–500). In so doing, it adopts a Plan of Implementation consistent with these standards. The level of appropriation requested in this testimony is in keeping with the adopted Plan of Implementation. If adequate funds are not appropriated, significant damages from higher salinity concentrations in the water will be more widespread in the United States and Mexico.

In summary, implementation of salinity control practices through BLM is a cost-effective method of controlling the salinity of the Colorado River and is an essential component to the overall Program. Continuation of adequate funding levels for salinity control within the Aquatic Habitat Management sub-activity will assist in preventing further degradation of the Colorado River's water quality with a commensurate significant increase in economic damages to municipal, industrial and irrigation users. A modest investment in source control pays huge dividends in improved water quality to nearly 40 million Americans. The Forum requests that this committee direct that BLM again expend at least $2.0 million in 2022 from its Aquatic Habitat Management Program sub-activity for Colorado River specific salinity control activities.

[This statement was submitted by Don A. Barnett, Executive Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

This testimony is in support of Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 funding for the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management (BLM) associated activities that assist the implementation of Title II of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act of 1974 (P.L. 93–320). This long-standing successful and cost-effective salinity control program in the Colorado River Basin is being carried out pursuant to the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act and the Clean Water Act (P.L. 92–500). Congress has directed the Secretary of the Interior to implement a comprehensive program for minimizing salt contributions to the Colorado River from lands administered by the BLM. BLM funds these efforts through the Aquatic Habitat Management Program. BLM's efforts are an essential part of the overall effort. A funding level of $2.0 million for salinity specific projects in FY–2022 is requested to prevent further degradation of the quality of Colorado River water supplies and increased environmental and economic damages.

The Colorado River Board of California (Colorado River Board) is the state agency charged with protecting California's interests and rights in the water and power resources of the Colorado River system. In this capacity, California participates along with the other six Colorado River Basin states through the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum (Forum), the interstate organization responsible for coordinating the Basin States' salinity control efforts. In close cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and pursuant to requirements of the Clean Water Act, the Forum is charged with reviewing the Colorado River water quality standards every three years. Every three years the Forum adopts a Plan of Implementation consistent with these water quality standards. The level of appropriation being supported in this testimony is consistent with the Forum's 2020 Plan of Implementation. The Forum's 2020 Plan of Implementation can be found on this website: https://coloradoriversalinity.org/docs/2020%20REVIEW%20-%20Final%20w%20appendices.pdf. If adequate funds are not appropriated, significant damages associated with increasing salinity concentrations of Colorado River water will become more widespread in the United States and Mexican portions of the Colorado River Basin.

The EPA has determined that more than sixty percent of the salt load of the Colorado River comes from natural sources. The majority of land within the Colorado River Basin is federally owned, much of which is administered by BLM. Through passage of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act in 1974, Congress recognized that much of the salts in the Colorado River originate on federally owned lands. Title I of the Salinity Control Act deals with the U.S. commitment to efforts

related to maintaining the quality of waters being delivered to Mexico pursuant to the 1944 Water Treaty. Title II of the Act deals with improving the quality of the water delivered to water users in the United States. In 1984, Congress amended the Salinity Control Act and directed that the Secretary of the Interior develop a comprehensive program for minimizing salt contributions to the Colorado River from lands administered by BLM. In 2000, Congress reiterated its directive to the Secretary and requested a report on the implementation of BLM's program (Public Law 106–459). In 2003, BLM employed a Salinity Coordinator to coordinate BLM efforts in the Colorado River Basin states to pursue salinity control studies and to implement specific salinity control practices. BLM is now working to create a comprehensive Colorado River Basin salinity control program as directed by Congress. In January 2018 BLM issued A Framework for Improving the Effectiveness of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program, 2018–2023. This document lays out how BLM intends to implement Colorado River Basin salinity control activities over the next five years. Meaningful resources have been expended by BLM in the past few years to better understand salt mobilization on rangelands. With a significant portion of the salt load of the Colorado River coming from BLM—administered lands, the BLM portion of the overall program is essential to the success of the entire effort. Inadequate BLM salinity control efforts will result in significant additional economic damages to water users downstream.

Over the forty-seven years since the passage of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act, much has been learned about the impact of salts in the Colorado River system. Currently, the salinity concentration of Colorado River water causes about $354 million in quantifiable economic damages in the United States annually. Economic and hydrologic modeling by Reclamation indicates that these economic damages could rise to more than $671 million by the year 2040 without continued implementation of the salinity control program. For example, damages can be incurred related to the following activities:

—A reduction in the ability and increased costs to reclaim and reuse water due to high salinities in the water delivered to water treatment and reclamation facilities;
—A reduction in the yield of salt-sensitive crops and increased water use to meet the leaching requirements in the agricultural sector;
—Increases in the amount of imported water;
—Increased costs of desalination and brine disposal for recycled water in the municipal sector;
—A reduction in the useful life of galvanized water pipe systems, water heaters, faucets, and other household appliances, and increased use of bottled water and water softeners in the residential sectors;
—Increased costs of cooling operations and the cost of water softening, and a decrease in equipment service life in the commercial sector;
—Increases in the use of water and cost of water treatment, and an increase in sewer fees in the industrial sector;
—Decreased life of treatment facilities and pipelines in the utility sector;
—Increasing difficulty in meeting wastewater discharge requirements to comply with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit terms and conditions; and
—Increased desalination and brine disposal costs due to accumulation of salts in groundwater basins.

The Colorado River is, and will continue to be, a major and vital water resource to the nearly 20 million residents of southern California, including municipal, industrial, and agricultural water users in Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Ventura Counties. The protection and improvement of Colorado River water quality through the continued implementation of this very effective salinity control program avoids, or reduces, additional environmental and economic damages to California, the other Colorado River Basin states, and Mexico that rely on Colorado River water resources.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

[This statement was submitted by Christopher S. Harris, Executive Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION

Chairman Merkley and members of the subcommittee, the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) is pleased to share its view on the Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) FY 2022 budget. We have specifically

identified the following funding needs within the Rights Protection Implementation account:

1. $5.913 million for Columbia River Fisheries Management (CRFM) to meet the base program funding needs of the Commission and fisheries programs of our member tribes;
2. $6.279 million for U.S./Canada Pacific Salmon treaty to implement obligations under the recent agreements adopted by the U.S. and Canada;
3. $1.7 million for the Columbia River In-Lieu and Treaty Fishing Access Sites to sustain annual Operations and Maintenance (O&M) at the 31 In-lieu and Treaty Fishing Access Sites and prevent a complete lapse in services anticipated in 2023;
4. $1.5 million annually to maintain the increased funding for Public Safety, Criminal Investigations, and Police Services that was provided in FY 2020 and 2021 for law enforcement at the In-Lieu and Treaty Fishing Access Sites;
5. $11 million for the Columbia River In-Lieu and Treaty Fishing Access Sites to support implementation of P.L. 116–99;
6. $9.0 million for Tribal Climate Resilience for treaty-based climate change adaptation and planning, a combined figure for US v OR and U.S. v. WA case areas; and
7. $5.0 million for the Tribal Youth Initiative Program to build a tribal workforce pool of respected and skilled Native American scientists, policy analysts, technicians, and managers that serve the tribes' fisheries and natural resource management program needs.

History and Background.—CRITFC was founded in 1977 by the four Columbia River treaty tribes: Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, and the Nez Perce Tribe. CRITFC provides coordination and technical assistance to these tribes in regional, national, and international efforts to protect and restore our shared salmon resource and the habitat upon which it depends. Our collective ancestral homeland covers nearly one-third of the entire Columbia River basin in the United States, an area the size of the State of Georgia.

In 1855, the U.S. entered treaties with the four tribes[1] whereupon we ceded millions of acres of our homelands. In return, the U.S. pledged to honor our ancestral rights, including the right to fish in all Usual and Accustomed locations. Unfortunately, a perilous history has brought the salmon resource to the edge of extinction with 12 salmon and steelhead populations in the Columbia Basin listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

The CRITFC tribes are now globally recognized leaders in fisheries restoration and management. We are principals in the region's efforts to halt the decline of salmon, Pacific lamprey, and sturgeon populations and rebuild them to levels that support ceremonial, subsistence, and commercial harvests. Columbia River fish stocks form the core of high-value fisheries from the interior West to Southeast Alaska valued in the hundreds of millions of dollars. To restore these fish populations, our actions emphasize 'gravel-to-gravel' management including supplementation of natural stocks, restoration of healthy watersheds, and a commitment to collaboration with state, federal, and private entities.

1. Columbia River Fisheries Management within Rights Protection Implementation.—The tribes are leaders in one of the nation's largest fishery restoration efforts as a result of the negative impacts of the Federal Columbia River Power System. Management is increasing in complexity requiring greater data collection, collaboration, and enforcement. Funding shortfalls are prohibiting the achievement of tribal self-determination goals for fisheries management, ESA recovery efforts, protecting non-listed species, conservation enforcement, and harvest monitoring. The BIA's Columbia River Fisheries Management budget supports the core fishery program efforts of CRITFC and our member tribes and covers the bulk of current anadromous fish habitat in the Columbia Basin. We request an increase of $144,000 over current levels for a new program base of $5.913 million to account for inflationary pressures.

CRITFC and our member tribes are principal implementers of actions laid out in three landmark agreements: 1) the Columbia Basin Fish Accords with federal action agencies overseeing the federal hydro system in the Columbia Basin,[2] 2) continuing engagement in a 10–Year Fisheries Management Plan with federal, tribal, and state parties under U.S. v Oregon, and 3) a new Chinook Chapter of the Pacific Salmon

[1] Treaty with the Yakama Nation, June 9, 1855, 12 Stat. 951; Treaty with the Tribes of Middle Oregon, June 25, 1855, 12 Stat. 963; Treaty with the Umatilla Tribe, June 9, 1855, 12 Stat. 945; Treaty with the Nez Perce Tribe, June 11, 1855, 12 Stat. 957

[2] The Nez Perce Tribe is not a Columbia Basin Fish Accord signatory

Treaty. These agreements establish regional and international commitments to harvest and fish production efforts, commitments to critical investments in habitat restoration, and resolving contentious issues by seeking balance of the many demands within the Columbia River basin. While the tribes have committed to substantial on-the-ground projects through these agreements with additional resources from the Bonneville Power Administration, the overall management responsibilities of the tribal programs have grown exponentially without commensurate increases in BIA base funding capacity. For example, Congress recently enacted the Endangered Salmon Predation Control Act, P.L. 115–329, which recognizes that CRITFC and its member tribes assist the region in management of sea lion predation in the Columbia River. The tribes are also addressing unmet mitigation obligations such as fish losses associated with the John Day and The Dalles dams and increasing avian and piscivorous fish predation. Rights Protection Implementation funding takes on even greater importance as funding for state co-management agencies has become inconsistent or decreased.

2. U.S./Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty within Right Protection Implementation.—In response to Yakama Nation v Baldridge the U.S. and Canada forged the Pacific Salmon Treaty in 1985 to conserve and rebuild salmon stocks, provide for optimum production, and control salmon interceptions. The treaty established the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) as a forum to collaborate on intermingled salmon stocks. The U.S. Section of the PSC annually develops a coordinated budget for tribal, state, and federal programs to ensure cost and program efficiencies. The 2008 agreement, which expired at the end of 2018, represented a step forward in ensuring the conservation and rebuilding of the shared salmon resource. The Parties recently completed revisions to the 2008 agreement. The revised agreement calls for the implementation of additional data requirements.

For tribal participants in the Pacific Salmon Treaty, the U.S. Section has identified a continuing program need of $6.279 million for the 25 participating tribes to implement the revised agreement. These funds provide for direct tribal participation with the Commission, panels, and technical committees. This funding maintains tribal resource assessment and research programs structured to fulfill required Treaty implementation activities, which protect trust resources and ensures that our tribal fishers receive an equitable portion of the harvestable fish numbers. Our FY 2022 recommended level for this program is consistent with the FY 2021 level and correlates to the U.S. Section's recommendation.

3. Columbia River Treaty Fishing Sites Operation and Maintenance, a NEW PROGRAM within Rights Protection Implementation.—Short-term reliability of O&M funding for the 31 federally owned In-lieu and Treaty Fishing Access Sites is in jeopardy. A federal commitment to provide O&M funding was established under a 1995 MOU between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and BIA. This fund was assigned to CRITFC in 2003 under a Self-Determination Act (P.L. 93–638) agreement. It will be exhausted during Fiscal Year 2023, short of its projected life due to delayed initial capitalization by BIA necessary for interest earnings, erosion of the principle during this period, and unanticipated low federal interest rates compared to the rates assumed in the MOU. Since the federal government has not recapitalized this fund, operations and maintenance services for the sites are anticipated to lapse in 2023. CRITFC is required to inform the BIA if we anticipate insufficient funds for performance of O&M requirements. We request $1.7 million in reoccurring inflation-adjusted annual appropriations to meet the ongoing O&M at the sites as anticipated in federal law.

4. Public Safety, Criminal Investigations and Police Services within Rights Protection Implementation.—Public safety continues to be a high priority for CRITFC and our member tribes. Our conservation and criminal enforcement officers are the cornerstone of public safety in the popular and heavily used Columbia River Gorge area patrolling 150 miles of the Columbia River, including its shorelines in Oregon and Washington. In this area we are the primary provider of enforcement services at 31 fishing access sites developed pursuant to P.L. 87–14 and P.L. 100–581 for use by treaty fisheries. CRITFC's officers possess BIA Special Law Enforcement Commissions to enhance protection and service to tribal members and federal trust properties along the Columbia River. CRITFC entered a P.L. 93–638 contract with BIA in February 2011 for enforcement services along the Columbia River. That contract currently provides funding for two enforcement positions. Additional appropriations were provided in FY2020 ($500K) and FY2021 ($1.5M) that are currently being implemented to enhance public safety and law enforcement services. Our immediate priority is to assure that the appropriations of FY2020 and FY2021 are reoccurring for the long term. The operational priority is to add four patrol officers, one sergeant, one investigator, one lieutenant, and three dispatchers.

5. Implementation of P.L. 116–99 (Columbia River In-Lieu and Treaty Fishing Access Sites Improvement Act) within Rights Protection Implementation.—P.L. 116–99 recognized the deteriorating condition of the sites due to age and significant use. Under the act, Congress authorized $11 million, and we are requesting that amount in FY 2022, to fulfil the intent of the act including immediate improvements to begin restoration of the facilities at the 31 sites to safe and sanitary conditions which are protective of human health and safety.

6. Tribal Climate Resilience within Rights Protection Implementation.—The Columbia River treaty tribes are a place-based people. We have lived thousands of years on the same geographic landscape. We walk in the footsteps of our ancestors. Unlike our immigrant neighbors we cannot simply move on to find other locales that might fit our needs. Our place is on the specific landscape of the Columbia River.

Climate-related stress was evident in 2020 in the form of historic forest fires and in 2015 with the loss of up to 400,000adult sockeye salmon due to elevated water temperatures. There needs to be continued funding to help the tribes collaborate with public, private, and non-profit sectors to develop and implement adaptation strategies to protect species at risk.

7. Tribal Youth Initiative Program within Rights Protection Implementation.—CRITFC strives to build a tribal workforce pool of respected and skilled Native American scientists, policy analysts, technicians and managers that serve the tribes' fisheries and natural resource management program needs. CRITFC's Workforce Development Program helps prepare tribal members of all ages for jobs and careers in natural resources management by providing hands-on, culturally relevant experiences in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). Since 2010, CRITFC has held a yearly week-long Salmon Camp for middle school students in collaboration with our member tribes using limited funding resources. From 2014–2018, CRITFC was able to offer paid internships and research experiences for college students interested in fisheries and natural resources, but due to a lack of funding those opportunities are not currently available. In 2020, CRITFC acquired the Center for Coastal Margin Observation and Prediction (CMOP), a renowned ocean and estuary research institution dedicated to further understand the linkage between the Columbia River and the Pacific Ocean which we hope will provide tribal workforce opportunities in the marine environments.

[This statement was submitted by Jeremy Takala, Chair.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CONSORTIUM FOR OCEAN LEADERSHIP

On behalf of the Consortium for Ocean Leadership (COL), which represents our nation's leading ocean science, research, and technology organizations from academia, industry, and the larger nonprofit sector, I appreciate the opportunity to submit for the record a few of COL's fiscal year (FY) 2022 funding priorities for the Department of the Interior and the Smithsonian Institution appropriations.

In the last few years, there has been bipartisan interest from Congress, federal agencies, the administration, private partners, philanthropists, academia, and more in growing our nation's efforts related to ocean mapping, exploration, and characterization. These efforts include increased funding for NOAA Ocean Exploration and Research (OER); legislation reauthorizing the National Oceanographic Partnership Program; presidential memorandums establishing ocean mapping, exploration, and characterization as a national priority; and the creation of a National Ocean Mapping, Exploration, and Characterization (NOMEC) Council to coordinate federal policy and actions and to support collaboration with non-federal and non-governmental partners related to mapping, exploring, and characterizing our ocean.

With this increased interest and activity around ocean exploration will come increased data and sample collection through NOAA OER and the NOAA Ship Okeanos Explorer, the Ocean Exploration Cooperative Institute, and other academic, private, and philanthropic partners, particularly as ship operations pick up following cancellations and delays due to COVID–19 health and safety protocols. As an advocate for increased funding for NOAA mapping and exploration activities, COL would also like to ensure sustained and adequate funding to support academic, private, and philanthropic partners; enhanced support for interagency partnership efforts; and augmented support for the management of the collected data and geological and biological samples.

Given the important role the Department of the Interior plays in mapping, exploring, and characterizing waters within the United States Exclusive Economic Zone (U.S. EEZ), I support the President's requested increases of $37.0 million for the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and $29 million for the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Natural Hazards programs. The proposed $227.8 million

BOEM budget includes $45.8 million for renewable energy, $15.0 million for marine minerals, and $86.8 million for environmental programs. The proposed $207.7 million USGS Natural Hazards budget includes important increases for subduction zone science within the Earthquake Hazards Program (+$2.0 million) and enhanced research, observations, and forecasting within the Coastal/Marine Hazards and Resources Program (+$10 million). Together, these activities are essential to advancing ocean understanding, promoting the blue economy, and using sound science to support balanced ocean use.

I respectfully request an additional $1 million to BOEM's Marine Minerals program, $2 million to BOEM's Environmental Studies Program, and $2 million to USGS's Coastal/Marine Hazards and Resources Program to support continued efforts to map, explore, and characterize the critical mineral and offshore renewable energy potential of California and Oregon, the Aleutian Island Arc, and the central and Western Pacific Ocean in partnership with other agencies, academia, and the private sector. Given increasing demand for critical minerals, including those needed to support the Administration's renewable energy goals, and continuing concerns regarding critical mineral supply chains, there remains an urgent need to catalogue the strategic reserves of ocean-based critical minerals within the U.S. EEZ, support continued development of BOEM's National Offshore Critical Mineral Inventory, advance interagency NOMEC efforts, and ensure the best available data and scientific analyses are available to support sustainable offshore energy development.

I also support the president's requested increase of $1.3 million for the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History (NMNH). The proposed $53.4 million includes $567,000 for collections support, and I respectfully request an additional $1 million to NMNH collections to support the museum's work as the biological sample repository for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)'s ocean exploration efforts. Currently, biological specimens collected during expeditions of NOAA's Okeanos Explorer, the only federal vessel dedicated to exploring the ocean, are catalogued, curated, archived, and made publicly accessible by the NMNH. This $1 million would support sustained curatorial staff to curate and analyze biological samples, make them available to the scientific community, and allow for the timely analysis to document the many new species discovered each year, which will help improve our understanding of marine life and ocean biodiversity and inform important ocean stewardship and management decisions.

I also respectfully request $2 million to ensure adequate support for the Smithsonian's leadership of the Marine Life 2030 program, which was endorsed by the Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC). Marine Life 2030, which is led by the Smithsonian Institution and includes more than 30 NGO and nearly 40 academic partners around the world, seeks to establish a globally coordinated system over the next decade to deliver information on ocean life, which will promote human well-being, sustainable development, and ocean conservation. A better understanding of marine biodiversity through increased biological observations will help in decision-making on issues ranging from fisheries management to climate change. These resources will allow for increased staffing needed within NMNH to lead Marine Life 2030 efforts both domestically and internationally, in partnership with academic, private, philanthropic, not-for-profit, and other non-governmental organizations.

I appreciate the subcommittee's consideration of these requests. I look forward to engaging more on these and other topics related to using science to support sound and sustainable use of ocean resources, which is increasingly important as ocean use continues to grow. Finding ways to sustain and grow interagency and cross-sectoral work on overlapping ocean issues (e.g., offshore renewable wind and ocean mapping, exploration, and characterization activities) will be critical to effective management that ensures sustainable use for decades to come.

CONSORTIUM FOR OCEAN LEADERSHIP MEMBERS

Alaska Ocean Observing System
Alaska SeaLife Center
Aquarium of the Pacific
Arctic Research Consortium of the United States (ARCUS)
ASV Global, LLC
Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences
Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences
Chevron USA
College of William & Mary (VIMS)
Columbia University (LDEO)
Consumer Energy Alliance (CEA)
Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES)
Dauphin Island Sea Lab
Duke University
Earth2Ocean
East Carolina University
Esri
Estuary & Ocean Science Center, San Francisco State University
Exocetus Autonomous Systems

FAU Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute
Florida Institute of Oceanography
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation
Harte Research Institute
Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute
IEEE Oceanic Engineering Society
Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)
IOOS Association
JASCO Applied Sciences
L–3 MariPro, Inc.
Liquid Robotics, Inc.
Louisiana State University
MARACOOS
Marine Technology Society (MTS)
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Monmouth University Urban Coast Institute
Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute
Moss Landing Marine Laboratories
Mystic Aquarium
National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA)
NERACOOS
New England Aquarium
North Carolina State University
North Pacific Research Board
Nova Southeastern University
Ocean Aero, Inc.
Old Dominion University
Oregon State University
Pennsylvania State University
Rutgers University
Saildrone
Savannah State University
Schmidt Ocean Institute
Sea-Bird Scientific
Severn Marine Technologies, LLC
Shell Exploration and Production Company
Skidaway Institute of Oceanography of the University of Georgia
Sonardyne, Inc.
South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium
Southeastern Universities Research Association (SURA)
Stanford University
Stony Brook University
Texas A&M University
ThayerMahan
U.S. Arctic Research Commission
U.S. Naval Postgraduate School
University of Alaska Fairbanks
University of California, Davis
University of California, San Diego (Scripps)
University of California, Santa Barbara
University of California, Santa Cruz
University of Delaware
University of Florida
University of Hawaii
University of Maine
University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science
University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth
University of Miami
University of New Hampshire
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
University of North Carolina, Wilmington
University of Rhode Island
University of South Carolina
University of South Florida
University of Southern California
University of Southern Mississippi
University of Texas at Austin
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee School of Freshwater Sciences
Vulcan, Inc.
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution

[This statement was submitted by Dr. Alan P Leonardi, President and CEO.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE FOR REFUGE ENHANCEMENT

Chairwoman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee:

The National Wildlife Refuge System stands alone as the only federal land and water conservation system with a mission that prioritizes wildlife and habitat conservation alongside wildlife-dependent recreation. Since 1995, the Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (CARE) has worked to showcase the value of the Refuge System and to secure a strong congressional commitment for conserving these special landscapes.

All of the CARE members listed below have endorsed this testimony and our request to your subcommittee. We represent millions of users of the National Wildlife Refuge System-wildlife watchers, hunters, anglers, wildlife professionals and conservationists, and Friends members. We are watching the Refuge System degrade as year after year, funding for operations and maintenance erodes, positions are lost, and habitat is under-managed or, in some cases, abandoned. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been decimated. We need the committee to include robust funding that will get the System back to land and wildlife protection.

We ask that the Committee provide a funding level of $600 million for the Operations and Maintenance accounts of the National Wildlife Refuge System for FY 2022.

American Birding Association

American Fisheries Society
American Sportfishing Association
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation Defenders of Wildlife Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
Izaak Walton League of America
Marine Conservation Institute
National Audubon Society National Rifle Association
National Wildlife Federation
National Wildlife Refuge Association
Safari Club International
The Corps Network
The Nature Conservancy
The Wilderness Society
The Wildlife Society
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Trout Unlimited
U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance
Wildlife Forever
Wildlife Management Institute

INADEQUATE FUNDING-CHALLENGES TO THE REFUGE SYSTEM

Found in every U.S. state and four territories, national wildlife refuges conserve a diversity of America's environmentally sensitive and recreationally vital ecosystems, including wetlands, coasts, forests, prairie, tundra, deserts, and oceans, and provide Americans with an opportunity to encounter and engage with these areas. With its primary focus on wildlife conservation, refuges provide habitat for an abundance of species, but they also provide a place for people to go to recreate.

The Fish and Wildlife Service has been decimated by a decade of slow erosion of funding. In the late 2000's, CARE worked closely with the Bush and Obama Administrations and Congress to increase funding for Refuge System O&M by $132 million over three years (FY07–10). At its peak funding of $503 million in FY2010, staffing levels were over 3,240 across the Refuge System O&M. Over 800 refuge positions have been lost since that time, a 25% loss in staff. Across the entire NWRS, 1,050 positions have been lost in that time. Wage grade staff number only 500, down from 1,000 in the late 1990's.

Funding remains today (FY2021) at $503 million. With inflation, level funding in FY2021 (with FY2010 as the base year) would be $603 million. That loss of $100 million in capacity has translated into those staffing cuts of over 1,000 FTEs, with a dramatic loss of habitat maintenance and refuge programs. A minimum of $8–10 million is needed each year to keep pace with inflation and fixed costs.

These losses simply cannot continue. If we want a Refuge System and the associated wildlife populations the System supports to be around to pass along to our children, Congress must appropriate at least $600 million in FY2022. Here are a few grim statistics:

—No refuges are fully staffed, while even large, priority refuges have seen 50%+ loss in staffing levels.
—Over half of refuges are unstaffed, with occasional checks by staff from neighboring refuge units.
—For staffed refuges, budget cuts have meant a loss of all extra capacity—refuges with three biologists now have one; maintenance work is done by regional strike teams, not dedicated staff; entire states share 1–2 law enforcement officers; if an environmental education program exists, it is more than likely run by volunteers.
—Many refuges lost all but one staff, leading managers to pull all staff due to safety concerns.
—Over 53 million visitors came to refuges last year, but that number has skyrocketed due to COVID shutdowns. Some funding from the CARES Act, for example, will cover some costs of bathroom openings and visitor center ventilation, but the staffing needs to maintain lands with constant visitors has not been addressed.

CARE's primary concern is what this means for wildlife populations. A striking example of long term declines in bird populations is occurring along the Atlantic flyway. Shorebird populations have declined 40% over the last 40 years, the primary cause of which is human disturbances. There are numerous refuge units along the east coast, which should be a haven and resting spot for migratory birds. However, chronic funding shortages have meant that there are virtually no staff on the beaches anymore, and there is no one present to stop beachgoers from letting their dogs

run into groups of feeding birds or disrupting nests. When these birds are disturbed numerous times a day, they lose nutrients and their ability to reproduce. Law enforcement staff in Region 5 (Northeast Region) alone has dropped in half-there are now 21 LE officers in 13 states with one-quarter of the American population.

In previous years, CARE has focused on critical areas of funding that are particularly low. This year, however, we are at a crisis point. Every aspect of the Refuge System is strained to the point of breaking.

—Law enforcement needs a minimum of $35 million additional dollars to even get to a point where there are enough federal wildlife officers to make a difference.
—Invasive species strike forces cannot keep up with the demand, and numerous refuges are overrun with phragmites and mice, kudzu and quagga mussels, purple loosestrife and feral hogs. 2.4 million Refuge System acres are infested with invasive plants, and current funding and capacity only allows treatment of 10% of those acres. Similarly, the Refuge System has 1,749 invasive animal populations and currently controls 5.3% of those.
—Many visitor services and environmental education programs have been turned over to volunteers. And as wonderful as they are, volunteers and Friends members are now the face of many visitor's centers (when they're actually open, due to COVID restrictions) because there are not enough staff to operate them.
—Refuges are down to one specialist (if they're lucky, they still have one) for each refuge complex. For example, cuts have been made strategically so that there is at least one biologist per refuge complex. But if that biologist is on leave or leaves the complex for a different position, there is no one to continue the work. And it is the same scenario with law enforcement and maintenance workers and every other position in the System.
—Salary increases are eating into any appropriations increases. In Alaska, for example, a 0.5% salary increase last year translated into a loss of 3 FTEs. System-wide, the modest funding increase provided in FY2021 did not even cover the cost of the scheduled 1% federal wage increase.
—As the Refuge System has opened additional acres for hunting, there is not an equivalent increase in funding-habitat maintenance, parking lots, bathrooms, youth hunt programs, hunt programs for disabled citizens, etc, are all severely impacted.

This dire funding situation can be seen across the other seven regions. Without significant increases in funding, there is simply no room left to trim positions and still maintain at least a portion of those services—they will simply disappear, and school programs or ongoing maintenance will end. And refuges will continue to close.

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM: BACKGROUND

The National Wildlife Refuge System, established by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1903, protects approximately 850 million land and marine acres on 568 national wildlife refuges and 38 wetland management districts in every state and territory in the U.S., and 5 marine monuments in the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. These acres are part of the Refuge System and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service managed (with some marine acres co-managed with NOAA). From the Virgin Islands to Guam to Alaska to Maine, the Refuge System spans 12 time zones and protects America's natural heritage in habitats ranging from arctic tundra to arid desert, boreal forest to sagebrush grassland, and prairie wetlands to coral reefs.

CARE welcomes recreational use of our nation's refuges. The "Big 6" uses of the Refuge System—hunting, fishing, wildlife watching, photography, environmental education, and interpretation—were enshrined into law in the 1997 National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act. Refuges provide major environmental and health benefits, such as filtering storm water before it is carried downstream and fills municipal aquifers; reducing flooding by capturing excess rainwater; and minimizing the damage to coastal communities from storm surges.

CARE REQUESTS $600 MILLION IN FY2022

There is no alternative to allocating this amount of funding to Refuge System Operations and Maintenance in FY2022. Anything less means refuges will slip further into neglect, and with shifting ecosystems from climate change and human impacts, refuges need protection now. Financially, it will be easier and far cheaper to properly maintain refuges now rather than restore all 100 million land acres in the future.

If annual operations and maintenance funding does not rise substantially, CARE anticipates further impacts both within and outside of refuge boundaries, including further closures of visitor centers, elimination of environmental education programs

that currently work closely with local schools, reduced quality of habitat for hunting, reduced treatment of invasive plants that reduce habitat quality for wildlife (both game and non-game) and place nearby private lands at higher risk of infestations, and decreased use of prescribed fire, which is used on refuges both to improve habitat for wildlife and to reduce hazardous fuels that pose a wildfire risk to nearby communities.

The common denominator to all these challenges is a lack of funding. Adequate staffing and funding are critical to the maintenance of healthy wildlife populations and access for recreational users to a healthy ecosystem. Increasing funding for the System will empower and enable individual refuge units to deliver on-the-ground conservation that benefits not only wildlife and recreation, but also local communities across the nation.

We urge Congress to fund the Refuge System at $600 million in FY2022—to bridge the growing gap between what the System needs and what it receives—enabling refuges to continue moving America forward as the world's leader in wildlife conservation and restoration.

On behalf of our more than 16 million members and supporters, CARE thanks the Subcommittee for the opportunity to submit comments on the FY2022 House Interior Appropriations bill, and we look forward to meeting with you to discuss our request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony to the Subcommittee. I write to focus on Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations for the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). By way of background, I served as CEQ's General Counsel for 25 years, beginning with the administration of President Reagan and ending with the administration of President George W. Bush.

CEQ has enormous potential to significantly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the environmental review process mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). CEQ's focus has traditionally focused on excellence in analysis and on interagency, inter-governmental and public involvement in implementing NEPA while at the same time discouraging excess documentation of peripheral issues, duplication of processes, and delay. However, in its attempts to make the process more efficient, CEQ has encountered two related obstacles: inadequate resources to oversee NEPA within CEQ and inadequate resources within the implementing agencies to implement NEPA.

Let me offer some perspective. In the later half of the 1970's, CEQ staff numbers ranged from fifty to seventy full time employees. There were teams of people handling discrete sets of issues, including a robust team overseeing NEPA implementation in the eighty some agencies that implement the law. However, CEQ's current staffing level is at 17 FTEs. The administration's request is to raise that number to 22 FTEs. In light of the nation's bi-partisan interest in improving infrastructure, as well as the enormous challenges of climate change and regular ongoing business, that is simply inadequate.

The challenge in terms of CEQ oversight is not just issuing regulations and guidance, as critical as those tools are. Indeed, while I was at CEQ, the regulations in place had, as a major purpose, the reduction of delay and paperwork. When those provisions were followed, the process worked quite well. But as agency budgets and staff declined (along with CEQ's) for NEPA implementation, two problems emerged: 1) agency staff who were frankly not well trained in how to implement the regulations, and 2) a dramatic rise in the use of contractors to prepare NEPA documents.

While contractors may do excellent work, in my experience, the use of contractors inevitably slows down the overall review process, often quite significantly. The agencies must first, of course, expend a fair amount of time and work on the procurement process and then establish communication protocols with the contractors. Agency personnel generally have a fair better sense of their goals then the contractors, who need to check back early and often in ways that often take more time than internal agency communications. Because the implementing agencies themselves often lack adequate staff, contractors not infrequently are waiting on agencies to move to the next step.

The environmental impact statements that I have seen go from start to completion within a year or eighteen months—and yes, it happens—were those that were done by an agency in-house team that was well trained in NEPA implementation and that had good leadership, management support and, appropriate, CEQ guidance. Leadership, good management and adequate resources were the key. These are not just my personal observations, based on 25 years of experience. The Depart-

ment of Energy initiated a process in 1994 that lasted through 2017 to measure their NEPA performance, including issues of time and delay, using specific program metrics. Their analysis routinely came to the same conclusions.[1]

Implementation issues are not what people usually consider when thinking of delay in the environmental review process. Instead, they often assume there is something inherent in the law or regulations that causes the problem. In my twenty-five years of experience at CEQ, I often found that people came in with good ideas for a "fix" that were already in the regulations. Indeed, I once had a group of County Commissioners come to me with fourteen suggestions for amending CEQ's NEPA regulations to expedite the process. When I went through each suggestion with them, we determined that each of their recommendations was already incorporated into the CEQ regulations. Yet those provisions were clearly not being implemented well. In all honesty, I did as much as I possibly could, usually working six to seven days a week, but in most of my time at CEQ, I was either the sole person overseeing NEPA or had one other person plus an intern helping to do the work. That is flat out inadequate.

CEQ's oversight of NEPA and the integration of other environmental review requirements into the NEPA process has the potential for being an enormous help in implementing whatever new infrastructure and transportation legislation this Congress enacts. But it cannot fully meet its potential with resources requested in the administration's budget.

I urge the Subcommittee to add, at a minimum, $1,500,00.00 dollars to CEQ's appropriations and to designate those additional funds specifically to add capacity for oversight of NEPA implementation. I also recommend that the Subcommittee direct CEQ to use a portion of those funds to survey the capacity of the agencies to implement NEPA in an effective and efficient manner and to report back to the Subcommittee about its findings prior to the next appropriations cycle.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony.

[This statement was submitted by Dinah Bear.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID JONAS BARDIN

SUPPORTING FULL FUNDING OF ADMINISTRATION FY 2022 REQUEST FOR USGS GEOMAGNETISM PROGRAM TO PROTECT CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AGAINST SOLAR STORMS MAGNETOTELLURIC (MT) SURVEY, EXISTING OBSERVATORIES, ADDING OBSERVATORIES

The Honorable Jeff Merkley, Subcommittee Chair

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Subcommittee Ranking Member

The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Chairman, Full Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate

The Honorable Richard Shelby, Vice Chairman, Full Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Joyce, Chairman Leahy. Vice Chairman Shelby, and Members:

This OWT fully supports the Request: a FY 2022 appropriation of $5,673,000 and 14 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions for the USGS Geomagnetism Program, to continue the magnetotelluric (MT) survey, to operate ground-level geomagnetic observatories, and to begin adding observatories (for which Administration requests $1.5 million and 2 FTEs).[1]

—The Request aims to "protect critical national infrastructure from geomagnetic events."

—Careful bi-partisan and bi-cameral attention, at the Subcommittee and Full Committee levels, during several budget cycles lay the foundations for favorable action on the FY 2022 Request.

FY22 Justifications for this Program[1] are well explained and compelling and rightly stress the value and aims of completing the MT survey and expanding the geomagnetic observatories:

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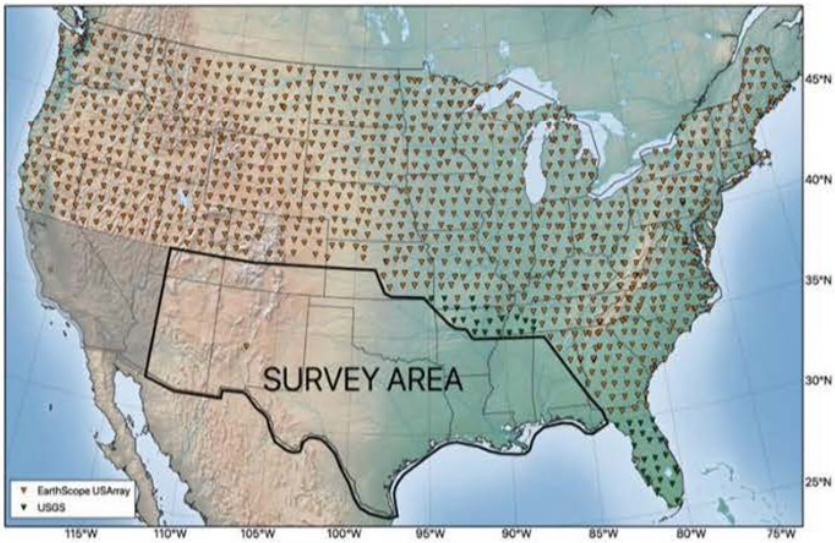
[1] *See, Shorter EIS Completion Times: A Closer Look,* NEPA Lessons Learned, September, 2017, available here: https://www.energy.gov/nepa/downloads/lessons-learned-quarterly-report-september-2017

[1] Pages 75, 76, 77 of USGS FY 2022 Budget Justifications [https://www.usgs.gov/media/files/fy2022-usgs-budget-justification-greenbook and https://prd-wret.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/as-



Map of the United States showing the area of the country undergoing a magnetotelluric (MT) survey by the USGS Geomagnetism Program. Source: USGS.

MAGNETOTELLURIC (MT) SURVEY

The USGS Geomagnetism Program is completing a magnetotelluric (MT) survey across the southern third of the lower 48 States ["CONUS"[2]], carrying out requirements established by the National Space Weather Strategy and Action Plan and Executive Order 13865 for Coordinating National Resilience to Electromagnetic Pulses. The survey will provide a public service by conducting electromagnetic pulse vulnerability assessments, which will be used to protect critical national infrastructure from geomagnetic events. The survey is being executed through a cooperative agreement with Oregon State University, which began in April 2020, and is now in its second year, with an estimated completion date of 2024. Sustained efforts on the MT survey have been provided for in annual congressional appropriations, with $1.7 million provided for the effort in FY 2021. [Emphases added.]

The Geomagnetism Program will continue the magnetotelluric (MT) survey of the United States to improve U.S. electrical grid resilience, improve forecast models for geomagnetic storms, and aid in mineral resource assessments. Collection of MT data on a national scale is a basis for modeling the Earth's electric field, used to assess the impact of electrical storms. This survey is responsive to priorities established in the National Space Weather Strategy, as well as related international initiatives for pursuing induction hazard research. This broad collaboration includes scientists from NASA, NOAA, the Institute for Defense Analyses, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the NSF.

The Geomagnetism Program provides data and information on short-term and long-term variations in the strength and direction of the Earth's magnetic field, including the intensity of magnetic storms, through operation of a network of geomagnetic observatories and supporting research, and analyzes related geomagnetic hazards that threaten the economy and national security. Magnetic storms are caused by the dynamic interaction of the Earth's magnetic field with the Sun. While magnetic storms often produce beautiful aurora lights that can be seen at high latitude, they can also wreak havoc on the infrastructure and activities of our modern, technologically based society. Large storms can induce voltage surges in electric-power grids, causing blackouts and the loss of radio communication, reduce GPS accuracy, damage satellite electronics, and affect satellite operations, enhance radi-

sets/palladium/production/atoms/files/
FY2022%20USGS%20Budget%20Justification%20%28Greenbook%29.pdf] (June 3, 2021)

[2] CONUS = "contiguous United States" or "conterminous United States" (or "lower 48").

ation levels for astronauts and high-altitude pilots, and interfere with directional drilling for oil and gas. [Emphases added.]

The Geomagnetism Program is part of the U.S. National Space Weather Program (NSWP), an interagency collaboration that includes programs in NASA, DOD, NOAA, the National Science Foundation (NSF), and DOE. The Geomagnetism Program provides data to the NSWP agencies, oil drilling services companies, geophysical surveying companies, and several international agencies, including INTERMAGNET, an organization with a worldwide membership drawn from institutes operating geomagnetic observatories who coordinate geomagnetic monitoring around the world. Data, products, and services from the USGS are also used by the electric-power industry to evaluate geomagnetic storm risk. [Emphasis added.]

Domestically, the USGS continues to operate 14 geomagnetic observatories (six within CONUS), delivering data and working cooperatively with the NOAA Space Weather Prediction Center (SWPC), the U.S. Air Force 557th Weather Wing, and numerous other customers and Federal agencies. For example, USGS observatory data are used by NOAA's SWPC, and by the U.S. Air Force, for issuing geomagnetic warnings and forecasts. USGS geomagnetism research is conducted in collaboration with the Colorado School of Mines, the USGS Crustal Geophysics and Geochemistry Science Center, the NOAA SWPC, and the NASA Community Coordinated Modeling Center. [Emphasis added.]

Expansion of Magnetometer Observatories (+$1,500,000/+2 FTE)—The USGS would enhance monitoring and evaluation of space—weather hazards via a significant expansion of operational ground-based magnetometer stations. In coordination with the NOAA Space Weather Prediction Center, this expansion would enable delivery of accurate geoelectric hazard maps by reducing uncertainties that are primarily associated with the limited number of current observatories. This expansion is necessary for national electric grid resilience and is responsive to the interagency Space Weather Action Plan, which calls for an enhanced geomagnetic monitoring network that will deliver data to operational centers in real time. The Space Weather Action Plan is being executed by the Space Weather Operations, Research, and Mitigation Interagency Working Group, involving Interior, Department of Energy (DOE), Department of Commerce, Department of Defense (DOD), Department of Homeland Security, Department of Justice, Department of State, and Department of Transportation. Funding will begin the addition of the first of three planned new permanent observatory sites, adding to the six existing sites within the CONUS and will facilitate beginning the addition of roughly a dozen new low-cost variometer stations. As the three new observatories are completed, they will be targeted to cover regions of high hazard and fill in the geographic footprint of the current observatory network. [Emphases added.]

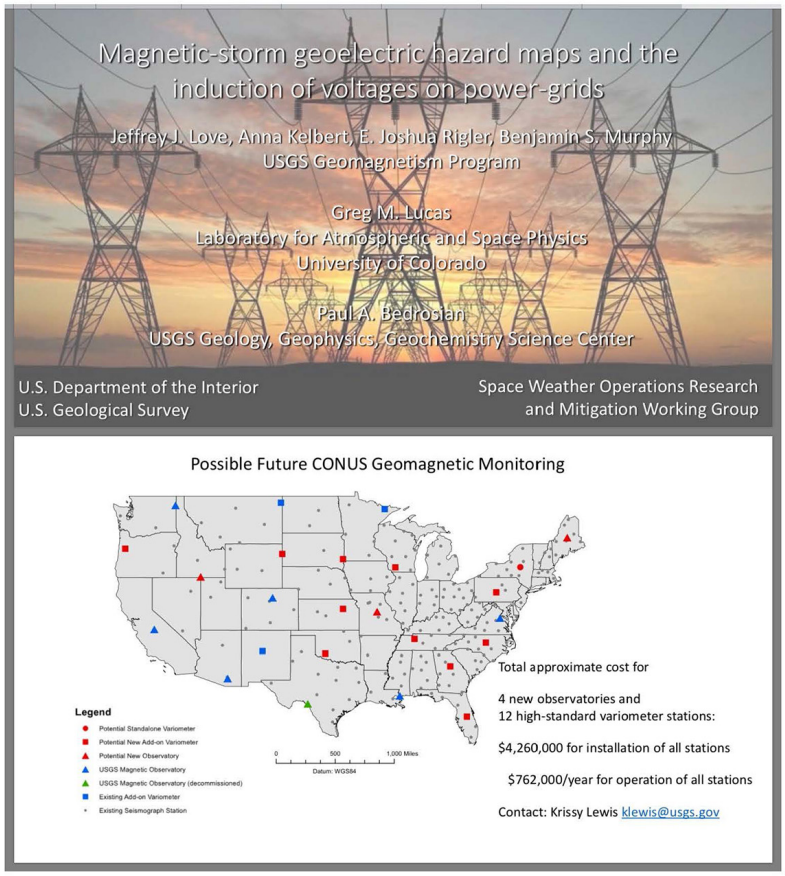
New England is a "region of high hazard" with a deficient observatory "footprint", USGS advises me, supporting, a new observatory somewhere in or near Maine to protect the Northeast.

—Using regional MT survey data (which are available) and geomagnetic monitoring data from its remote Frederick, Virginia observatory, USGS found a geohazard "hot spot" in Maine and regional risks endangering the Northeast.
—Canadian observatories are also relatively remote.
—USGS will take time and effort to pick specific observatory sites (in Maine or elsewhere) for maximum cost effectiveness. Preferring, for example, sites which already have local utility services and sites which will be available without up front land acquisition costs.
—If funded, USGS would obligate FY22 funds in FY22 to procure equipment for a New England observatory even though operations don't begin until later. (I do hope USGS decides to monitor electric—as well as magnetic—fields there, as does its Boulder, CO observatory.)
—The FY 2022 Request's Observatories Expansion builds upon USGS's February 20, 2020, presentation to the GeoMagnetic Disturbance Task Force (see Appendix hereto).

I urge full funding of this FY 2022 Request. Please let me know if you have any questions.

APPENDIX

"Possible Future CONUS Geomagnetic Monitoring", presented by USGS on Feb. 20, 2020, under Agenda Item 4 at a face-to-face meeting of the GeoMagnetic Disturbance Task Force [GMDTF], in Salt Lake City, UT. It is also posted online at https://michaelmabee.info/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Item__4__USGS.pdf. [This statement was submitted by David Jonas Bardin.]



PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE

Mister Chairman, Ranking Member and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. I am Mary Beth Beetham, Director of Legislative Affairs at Defenders of Wildlife. Founded in 1947, Defenders has nearly 2.2 million members and supporters and is dedicated to the conservation of wild animals and plants in their natural communities.

Biodiversity is in crisis on a global scale. Numerous scientific studies in the last several years have raised the alarm about this crisis. A landmark 2019 study [1] compiled by hundreds of the world's leading scientists found that about 1 million species are facing extinction. A subsequent report [2] by the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity warned that humanity is at a crossroads and the biodiversity crisis is intensifying. The health of wildlife and ecosystems is directly related to human health and well-being—exploitation of wildlife and habitat fragmentation create circumstances that can cause spillover of animal diseases to humans. More-

[1] Diaz, S., J. Settele, E. S. Brondizio, et al. 2019. "Summary for Policymakers of the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services."

[2] Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. 2020. "Global Biodiversity Outlook 5." Montreal.

over, the World Economic Forum found that the biodiversity crisis is one of the top three threats to the global economy in its 2020 report.[3]

The biodiversity crisis cannot be addressed without funding—more than 1,900 scientists signed a letter[4] published in the journal Science which asked Congress to fully fund conservation programs to protect biodiversity, including the Endangered Species Act (ESA). But years of severely inadequate funding and the scale of the catastrophe facing the planet's wildlife mean significantly more funding is needed in every area.

In addition, we are extremely disappointed that the final FY 2021 omnibus bill once again reinstated the longstanding prohibition on protecting the sage—grouse under the ESA, which undermines the science—based listing process critical to the law's functionality—listing decisions should be based solely on science, not politics. New research[5] shows sage—grouse populations have declined 80 percent range wide since 1965 and nearly 40 percent since 2002. Time is running out for the sage—grouse and the Sagebrush Sea. The President's FY 2022 budget did not include the rider in its legislative proposal. We urge the Subcommittee to exclude the rider from the final FY 2022 bill.

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is our nation's premier wildlife conservation agency. To address the biodiversity crisis, the agency needs significant increases to support recovery of threatened and endangered species; protect migratory birds and fish, species of global conservation concern and other trust species; and prevent domestic and international wildlife crimes.

Ecological Services—Earlier this year, a coalition of more than 170 organizations sent a letter to Congress requesting a significant infusion of funds into the Ecological Services program to begin to address the biodiversity crisis. Based on available data on the needs and costs for ESA implementation by FWS across its programs, as well as inflation adjustment, the recommendation totaled $466.5 million, or $196.8 million more than the current level:

—Listing: Currently, FWS is scheduled to review 330 species in its listing workplan between FY 2021–FY 2025. At current funding levels it would take about ten years to address this backlog. For FWS to meet this obligation a total of $63.7 million is needed annually, an increase of $42.9 million.

—Recovery: Of the more than 1600 listed U.S. species, more than 1200 have no recovery plans or have plans that are at least a decade old and that may no longer contain current scientific information, especially related to climate change. Hundreds of listed species receive less than $1,000 per year for recovery and many receive no FWS funding at all. Congress should provide a minimum of $50,000 per year per species for recovery. For FWS to meet its obligations under the recovery budget, a total of at least $240.3 million is needed annually, an increase of $135.3 million. We very much appreciate prior report language directing FWS to establish extinction prevention programs for critically endangered species and we urge the Subcommittee to press for the establishment of these programs.

—Planning and Consultation: FWS conducts ESA Section 7 consultations on more than 10,000 federal actions each year so that projects can move forward while minimizing harm to listed species. The requirements of pesticide consultations in particular are highly technical and essential to protecting species. To meet these needs and to work with non-federal stakeholders to develop Habitat Conservation Plans, $149 million is needed annually, an increase of $39.7 million. In addition, we are grateful for the direction included in the FY 2021 report for FWS to enhance the Information for Planning and Consultation system and develop a system for compliance monitoring. We urge continued oversight of these efforts.

—Conservation and Restoration: At least $13.5 million per year is needed for the Candidate Conservation element of Conservation and Restoration to assist with early conservation action on the current 27 candidate species.

—Wolf Livestock Loss Demonstration Program: We are disappointed that the President's budget zeroed out this important program that assists livestock

[3] World Economic Forum Global Risks Report 2020

[4] Malcom, J et al. 2019. "Solve the biodiversity crisis with funding." Science 365 (6459): 1256

[5] Coates, P.S. et al., 2021. "Range-wide Greater Sage-Grouse Hierarchical Monitoring Framework: Implications for Defining Population Boundaries, Trend Estimation, and a Targeted Annual Warning System," U.S. Geological Survey Open-File Report (2020)

owners co-existing with wolves, and we urge continued funding at no less than $1 million.

National Wildlife Refuge System.—A key component in addressing the biodiversity crisis in the U.S. is to refocus federal land management on the conservation of biodiversity. Our National Wildlife Refuge System is the largest network of public lands and waters in the nation dedicated to wildlife conservation. Substantially increased funding commensurate with the true costs of maintaining and recovering the biological integrity, diversity, and health of the System should be prioritized. Yet the System has lost 25 percent of its staff since FY 2010, and in FY 2021, the System was funded at just $503.9 million, $100 million short of inflation adjusted FY 2010 funding levels. Defenders and the Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement, a coalition of 23 hunting, fishing, conservation, and scientific organizations, support funding at no less than $600 million for FY 2022 to allow the FWS to begin to recover from the erosion of staff and resources over the last decade.

Migratory Bird Management.—In North America nearly 3 billion birds have disappeared since 1970 and the only groups to not suffer severe declines were waterbirds that have received substantial funding over the decades.[6] Given the harm to migratory birds under Trump-era regulations, funding for conservation is more important than ever. Defenders supports the FY 2022 request of $66 million, an increase of $18.2 million over the FY 2021 level, which includes increases of $5 million to modernize the permitting process and $1 million for Urban Treaties to help address threats to birds in underserved communities.

Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) and International Affairs (IA).—For OLE, we are extremely grateful that the FY 2021 bill continues appropriated funding to support inspectors at ports of entry and we urge it be maintained. Defenders supports $115 million for FY 2022, an increase of $28 million, to help OLE continue to address the crisis in the illegal global wildlife trade and the threat of zoonotic disease. For IA, Defenders supports $30 million for FY 2022, an increase of $7 million, crucial in continuing to combat illegal wildlife trade and to build capacity in range countries.

Cooperative Landscape Conservation and Science Support.—We thank the Subcommittee for again restoring funding for these two programs, which the prior administration had continually proposed to zero out. We support the President's request, for $18.8 million (an increase of $6.3 million) and $36.4 million (an increase of $19.2 million) respectively. With these increases, FWS can continue to work to address complex challenges posed by the dual climate and biodiversity crises.

Key grant programs.—Defenders supports: $125.6 million for the Cooperative Endangered Species Fund, an increase of $83.6 million; $7.9 million for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Fund, an increase of $3 million; $30 million for the Multinational Species Conservation Fund, an increase of $12 million; and $100 million for State and Tribal Wildlife Grants, an increase of $27.6 million.

U.S FOREST SERVICE AND BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service (FS) manage approximately twenty percent of the country's land base, providing habitat for hundreds of species listed under the ESA and thousands of sensitive species. These agencies have long been deprived of the funding they need to adequately conserve and restore imperiled species. Given the enormity, urgency, and complexity of the biodiversity crisis and the importance of these lands in contributing to solutions, Defenders urges funding increases for programs that specifically address the biodiversity crisis and restore resilient ecosystems as listed below. (For the FS, given the recent budget restructuring, sufficient allocations for salaries and expenses must be made to accompany program investments.)

BLM Threatened and Endangered (T&E) Species Management.—Current T&E program funding levels support recovery actions for a fraction of the 337 listed species that occur on BLM lands. Defenders supports a total of $33.8 million, an increase of $12.3 million, to support more recovery actions for more species. This program has been flat at $21.6 million since FY 2014. Additionally, given the impact of the recent agency reorganization, we recommend that the Subcommittee direct BLM to report on species recovery needs and T&E program capacity and make clear to the agency that T&E funding is to be used specifically to advance recovery of listed species on its lands rather than to pay for ESA Section 7 compliance, which should generally be funded by the benefitting programs. We are disappointed that the President's request does not seem to designate a specific sub-category for the

[6] Rosenberg, L. V. et al. 2019. "Decline of the North American avifauna." Science 366 (6461): 120–124.

T&E program and recommend reinstating the program as its own subactivity within the Wildlife and Aquatic Habitat Management activity to improve outcome tracking and accountability.

BLM Plant Conservation and Restoration.—This program provides national leadership across BLM and the federal agencies to ensure consistent and adequate supplies of America's native plant species for restoration of native ecosystems. Historically, funding has been cobbled together from multiple sources within the agency. We support a total of $25 million for FY 2022, $11.2 million more than BLM's internal FY 2021 allocation, for continuing the National Seed Strategy and increasing botanical expertise necessary to yield successful habitat restoration and long-term ecosystem resiliency. We recommend establishment of the program as its own subactivity to ensure it endures and is accountable Bureau-wide to specific outcomes and expenditures.

BLM Resource Management Planning, Assessment and Monitoring.—Defenders supports the President's request of $95.7 million, an increase of $28.6 million to support urgently needed programmatic initiatives and associated plan amendments to establish regional and range-wide strategies for the conservation and recovery of imperiled species' habitats. The increase will also support enhanced expertise necessary to advance the President's Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis and needed changes to Trump administration plan revisions that reduced essential protections for imperiled species.

FS Wildlife and Fisheries Habitat Management.—Defenders supports the President's request of $36.7 million, an increase of $16 million. At least $10 million of this increase should be used to reestablish a new budget line item for the Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive (TES) Species Program. This will enable greater transparency and accountability regarding the agency's legal obligations to conserve the over 480 listed, proposed, and candidate species and 3,100 sensitive species that occur on FS lands. We also ask that the Subcommittee direct the agency to report on its progress toward conducting recovery plan actions and other recovery work for listed species.

FS Land Management Planning, Assessment and Monitoring.—Close to fifty percent of all land management plans are over 15 years old. Defenders supports a significant increase in funding from the FY 2021 level of $16.5 million to $24.5 million in FY 2022 to help accelerate the number of plans revised to finalization and to improve the ability of planning processes to help achieve 30x30.

FS Forest and Rangeland Research (FS R&D).—Defenders supports the President's request of $88.7 million, an increase of $48 million for R&D Programs, including funding for the Wildlife and Fish Research Program, to support crucial science and applied research. This should include a specific budget allocation for the Wildlife and Fish Research Program, which has historically received 9–10 percent of the R&D Programs line item but warrants a significant increase given the magnitude of the biodiversity crisis.

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Ecosystems—Defenders supports the President's request of $358.2 million, an increase of $99 million to support development of crucial scientific information for sound management of our nation's biological resources. This includes an important increase of $43 million for the National and Regional Climate Adaptation Centers which is more than double the current level. The Survey's work and the data it provides will be essential to guiding our national effort to achieve 30x30, which is a central part of the solution to the biodiversity crisis.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE DZILTH-NA-O-DITH-HLE COMMUNITY GRANT SCHOOL (DCGS)

Dzilth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Community Grant School (DCGS) is K–8, tribally controlled grant school funded by the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). We are located in Bloomfield, New Mexico on the Navajo Nation reservation and primarily serve Navajo students, many of whom travel great distances over unimproved roads to attend school each day. We have operated as a tribally controlled school since 2005. As a tribally controlled school, we have both the greater freedom and the tremendous responsibility to ensure that our students receive a quality and culturally relevant education that will help them reach their fullest potential. We take this responsibility seriously. Our testimony covers the following priorities:

—Inclusion in the Federal COVID–19 Response and the Pending Infrastructure Legislation;

—Teacher Benefits and Pay Parity;
—School Repair and Replacement and DFMC Oversight;
—Halting Unnecessary and Unlawful BIE Reporting Requests; and
—FY 2022 Funding Priorities: ISEP Formula Funds, Tribal Grant Support Costs, Student Transportation, the FACE program (early childhood learning), Facilities Operations and Maintenance, and Facilities Improvement and Repair and Replacement Construction.

Inclusion in the Federal COVID–19 Response and the Pending Infrastructure Legislation. We would like to extend our tremendous gratitude to the House and Senate Appropriations Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittees for the role you played in ensuring that schools in the BIE school system were included in the COVID–19 relief laws in a robust and equitable manner. Our communities have been some of the hardest hit by the pandemic. This emergency funding was greatly needed and has enabled us to continue providing instruction to our students in a safe manner, despite these unbelievably challenging circumstances. Thank you.

As Congress now turns its attention to our Nation's infrastructure needs, we ask that you similarly ensure that schools in the BIE school system are included. As you know, our students go to school in some of the oldest buildings, have some of the slowest internet connections, and travel great distances every day over largely unpaved or unimproved school bus routes. Progress has been made on these persistent inequities because the Subcommittees continue to prioritize funding to address them on a fiscal year basis. This pending infrastructure package provides an opportunity to make significant headway on the tremendous backlog you have been working so hard to address each fiscal year. Your support can once again make the difference.

Teacher Benefits.—We would also like to thank these Subcommittees for the inclusion of a provision in the latest COVID–19 relief law, which allows tribally controlled schools to participate in the Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) and Federal Employee Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) programs. While not directly an appropriations matter, the option to participate in FEHB/FEGLI means that tribally controlled schools now have the opportunity to purchase cheaper and more comprehensive insurance options for our employees-at no cost to the federal government. These new options will bolster our teacher recruitment and retention efforts and put less pressure on our ISEP funds. Thank you.

Teacher Pay Parity.—We would also like to specifically thank the House Subcommittee for your oversight and FY 2021 report language requesting reports from the BIE on teacher pay parity. The BIE's failure to appropriately request fixed cost increases to provide pay parity for teachers and counselors in the BIE school system with their counterparts in the Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA) puts us and other schools at a competitive disadvantage while it erodes the spending power of our budgets year after year. Further, federal law requires BIE–DODEA teacher pay parity. We look forward to reading this report and hope that BIE will adjust its subsequent budget requests to comply with federal law.

School Replacement Construction and DFMC Oversight.—As you may be aware, the DCGS is one of the schools on the 2016 Replacement School list to receive funding for school replacement construction projects. DCGS's facilities are in desperate need of replacement in order to provide our students with an adequate learning environment. DCGS is committed to putting our replacement school in operation as promptly as possible for the wellbeing of our students. Under DCGS leadership, the school replacement construction project is currently on track, with the dormitory building completion by August 2021 and the academic buildings by December 2021. Our 100% design drawings have been completed and approved, the dorm building has been enclosed, the gym walls are going up, the academic building footings are completed, and the roof beams and walls are being installed.

Unfortunately, DCGS has already weathered significant bottlenecks due to the Indian Affairs Division of Facilities Management and Construction (DFMC), failures to respect the grant agreement terms. DCGS has had to trigger the procedures to address two disputes under the grant agreement (one of which is still pending) and the DFMC continues to misinterpret key grant provisions that are intended to ensure prompt and thorough review of project documents by the DFMC in accordance with the project schedule. As a result, reaching the project's current milestone has unfortunately taken significantly more time, money, and effort than it should have. The lack of proper supervision and oversight at DFMC threaten not only to delay the date by which DCGS will have a safe, new school campus, but they have the cascading effect of delaying the schools behind us in line on the 2016 Replacement List.

We have repeatedly raised these and related concerns with DFMC and BIE leadership in the spirit of constructive criticism and building a strong working relation-

ship between DCGS and DFMC moving forward. While BIE leadership and some DFMC officials have shown commitment to the project, DCGS is concerned about the lack of supervision of personnel within the DFMC and the inadequate oversight of the DFMC with respect to school replacement construction. To ensure integrity, efficiency and cost-effectiveness in the school replacement construction process, we encourage the Subcommittees to request a report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) on the DFMC's role in school replacement construction projects that will allow tribally controlled schools to share their observations and experiences.

Halting Unnecessary and Unlawful BIE Reporting Requests.—DCGS has had to expend excessive time and resources to address the BIE's unauthorized and improper reporting requests and evaluations. Congress established clear limits upon the BIE's ability to impose its own administrative directives upon tribally controlled schools. By statute, agency directives applicable to tribally controlled schools are expressly limited to the Tribally Controlled Schools Act (TCSA, PL 100–297), its implementing regulations, and guidelines, manuals, and policy directives to which the tribally controlled school has agreed to in its grant agreements. Any authority otherwise not explicitly referenced does not apply to tribally controlled schools, including authorities the BIE may impose upon its BIE-operated schools.

DCGS has had to field several BIE requests in which BIE officials have acted beyond their authority. DCGS is particularly concerned with the BIE's overreaching with respect to its new approach to school employee background check requirements, which has introduced audit findings that mischaracterize the applicable standards and tribal school compliance. DCGS has been complying and is absolutely committed to comply with federal statute and the 25 CFR Part 63 regulations for Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention. Protecting the wellbeing of our children is of paramount concern for our school and our community.

DCGS has adopted and implemented best practices in our background check procedures, including contracting with a private firm that specializes in background investigations, as authorized by regulation. The Part 63 regulations repeatedly draw distinct lines between what is required of the BIA/BIE and what is required of Tribal entities, such as DCGS. Our focus, as required by statute and regulation, is to obtain complete, thorough and accurate investigations of any person who will have contact with our students. A recent BIE background check audit of DCGS, however, called for DCGS to replicate the federal process used by the Office of Personnel Management, including background checks on individuals who have no contact with students. As established by law, regulation and established best practices, DCGS will continue directing its resources to the protection of our students. We do not agree with the BIE's suggestion that a finance office director (with no direct contact with children) should be subject to higher scrutiny in background investigations than our custodial staff. Federal law, regulation, DCGS procedures and common sense call for the investigation of those individuals who will have contact with children. The BIE's audit of our background check process should not have issued findings on matters not provided by statute, regulation or agreement and should not distract us from the important responsibilities we work to fulfill.

FY 2022 Funding Priorities.—We deeply appreciate the Subcommittees' ongoing commitment to fully funding Tribal Grant Support Costs—which are analogous to Contract Support Costs for tribally controlled schools. We would also like to thank the Subcommittees for increases for our core operating accounts: ISEP Formula Funds, Student Transportation, the FACE program (early childhood learning), and for Facilities Operations and Maintenance. These critical accounts fund the bulk of our budgets and are in need of further increases to meet schools' basic operating needs.

We would also like to thank the Subcommittees for the recent increases for the Education Construction accounts including Facilities Improvement and Repair and Replacement Construction. As the Subcommittees are very much aware, the deferred maintenance backlog for schools runs into the hundreds of millions of dollars and many schools are long past due for replacement construction. We applaud the Subcommittees' efforts to urge Indian Affairs to develop and maintain building lifecycle and replacement plans for each school.

Looking forward, we urge the Subcommittees to redouble your oversight of DFMC. As we explained in detail, there are real concerns to be addressed at DFMC and these factors are delaying much needed school repair and replacement efforts. DCGS finds the DFMC's lack of qualified personnel with experience in school construction and federal grants management to be disconcerting. Unqualified personnel have been placed in positions of authority, yet lack proper supervision. We do not accept that remote work under COVID–19 can explain or justify the poor performance of DFMC personnel or the lack of supervision or oversight of these employees. The

Subcommittees have provided significant resources for school replacement construction. The federal employees hired to carry out the federal responsibilities must be appropriately qualified, provided with proper training and supervised to ensure successful project results.

CONCLUSION

In closing, Dzilth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Community Grant School thanks the Subcommittees for the important funding increases and oversight directed to school repair and replacement construction. Direct, consistent funding is needed to achieve the timely completion of construction of schools on the 2016 Replacement List and to properly maintain these important federal investments for our children's future. For FY 2022, we ask that you continue these critically needed funding increases and redouble your efforts to keep the Administration accountable for the timely and transparent completion of projects. At DCGS, we believe that all children deserve the opportunity to reach their potential and to go to school in safe buildings. Thank you for remaining our steadfast partners in this most critical endeavor.

Please continue to consider us a partner and a resource. Please contact our Administrative Services Director Faye BlueEyes at: fayeblueeyes13@gmail.com if you have any questions.

[This statement was submitted by Ervin Chavez, School Board President.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

The Entomological Society of America (ESA) respectfully submits this statement for the official record in support of funding for entomology-related activities at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service, and the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI). For fiscal year (FY) 2022, ESA recommends $830 million for EPA Science and Technology, as well as strong support for programs across the agency that advance the safe application of pesticides. ESA strongly supports EPA's commitment to work with other federal agencies to monitor and improve pollinator health. In addition, ESA requests the Forest Service be funded at no less than $8.4 billion in discretionary funds. Within the Forest Service, ESA requests the Forest and Rangeland Research budget be supported at $313.5 million to preserve valuable invasive species research and development. The Society also supports continued investment in Forest Health Management programs across the Forest Service at no less than the FY 2020 enacted level of $100 million. ESA also recommends that DOI continue to support the important work of the National Invasive Species Council (NISC), to be funded at no less than $2 million for its critical coordination of efforts across agencies to respond to the threats posed by invasive species.

Advances in forestry and environmental sciences, including the field of entomology, help to protect our ecosystems and communities from threats to our nation's economy, public health, and agricultural productivity and safety. Through improved understanding of invasive insect pests and the development of biological approaches to pest management, entomology plays a critical role in reducing and preventing the spread of infestation and diseases harmful to national forests and grasslands. The study of entomology also contributes to the development of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques, which use science-based, environmentally conscious, comprehensive methods to take effective management action against pests, often resulting in lower costs and a more judicious use of pesticides. In addition, entomology improves our knowledge of pollinators and factors affecting pollinator health and populations, helping to ensure safe, reliable crop production that meets the needs of a growing world population.

EPA carries out its mission of protecting human health and the environment by developing and enforcing regulations, awarding grants for research and other projects, conducting studies on environmental issues, facilitating partnerships, and providing information through public outreach. Through these efforts, EPA strives to ensure that our nation enjoys clean water, clean air, a safe food supply, and communities free from pollution and harmful exposures to chemicals.

EPA's Pesticides Licensing Program Area, supported by EPA's Science & Technology and Environmental Program & Management budgets, serves to evaluate and regulate new pesticides to ensure safe and proper usage by consumers. Through the mandate of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), EPA uses scientific expertise and data, including knowledge gained from entomological sciences, to set maximum tolerated residue levels and to register pesticide products as effective and safe. By controlling insects that carry diseases of humans and do-

mesticated animals, and invasive insect species that endanger our environment, pesticides registered by EPA help protect public health and the nation's food supply.

Although pesticide registrations and regulations are the purview of the EPA, the agency has not traditionally been a major sponsor of entomology research. However, EPA has recently announced its intention to provide up to $2 million for projects that promote IPM adoption while promoting pollinator protection and addressing major challenges such as citrus greening disease. These Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP) grants will enable grantees to "implement sustainable pest management practices that reduce unnecessary risks from pests and pesticides." [1] While IPM is a long-standing and well-researched paradigm for mitigating pests, relatively few focused funding sources are available for entomologists focused on this subject. As such, ESA encourages you to enable EPA to continue expanding its investment in IPM and other innovative programs for safely managing the use of pesticides through increased funding for such activities across the agency's research and regulatory portfolios.

ESA is in favor of increased funding for scientific studies of pollinator populations and health. Pollinators play a vital role in our nation's agriculture industry. Honey bees alone pollinate more than 90 crops in the U.S. and are essential to produce an estimated one-third of all the food we eat or export, contributing over $17 billion in annual crop and seed production in the U.S. alone. To ensure a healthy bee population, more research is needed to fully understand the diverse factors that endanger bee health. Pesticides represent just one potential risk to bees, but both the risks and benefits must be balanced, and they will vary between different crops and different crop-producing regions of the U.S. EPA is well-positioned to help identify methods for protecting bee health. The agency has previously awarded agricultural grants to three universities to aid in the development of IPM practices that lower pesticide risks to bees while protecting valuable crops from pests. For this reason, ESA supports EPA's participation in multi-agency efforts to investigate pollinator health and implement plans to prevent pollinator population decline.

The U.S. Forest Service sustains the health, diversity, and productivity of 193 million acres of public lands in national forests and grasslands across 44 states and territories. Serving as the largest supporter of forestry research in the world, the agency employs approximately 30,000 scientists, administrators, and land managers. In addition to activities at the federal level, the Forest Service provides technical expertise and financial assistance to state and private forestry agency partners.

The Forest Service's Forest and Rangeland Research budget supports the development and delivery of scientific data and innovative technological tools to improve the health, use, and management of the nation's forests and rangelands. Programs within Forest and Rangeland Research provide science-based approaches to reduce and prevent the spread of destructive insects, plants, and diseases that can have serious economic and environmental consequences for our nation. For example, Forest Service scientists are working to understand the impact of the mountain pine beetle (MPB) on U.S. forests. Since 2000, outbreaks of MPB have affected more than 10 million hectares of lodgepole pine forests, compromising long-term forest health while creating the potential for more dangerous wildfires, loss of wildlife habitat, poorer water quality, and soil erosion.[2] Such outbreaks are predicted to continue in the face of increased temperatures and drought associated with climate change. Funding for such studies will enable land managers to better predict and respond to ecosystem changes that occur following such outbreaks. ESA requests that Forest and Rangeland Research be funded at $313.5 million for FY 2022.

Also under the purview of the Forest Service is the Forest Health Management program, which conducts mapping and surveys on public and private lands to monitor and assess risks from potentially harmful insects, diseases, and invasive plants. The program also provides assistance to state and local partners to help prevent and control outbreaks that threaten forest health. According to a 2011 study, invasive forest insects cost local governments alone an average of over $2 billion per year; direct costs to homeowners from property loss, tree removal, and treatment averages $1.5 billion per year.[3] Initiatives within the Forest Health Management program can help control these costly pests. The program's "Slow the Spread" activities, for

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[1] https://www.epa.gov/pesp/pesticide-environmental-stewardship-program-grants

[2] Fettig, C.J., R.A. Progar, J. Paschke, F.J. Sapio. Forest insects. G. Robertson, T. Barrett (Eds.), Implications of Forest Disturbance Processes for Sustainability in the Western US. PNW–GTR–XX. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station, Portland, OR (2020). In press.

[3] Aukema, J.E.; Leung, B.; Kovacs, K.; [et al.]. 2011. Economic impacts of non-native forest insects in the continental United States. PLoS ONE 6(9): e24587.

example, have led to a 60 percent reduction in the rate of the spread of the gypsy moth, another invasive species, resulting in an estimated benefit-to-cost ratio of 3:1. Without the program, it is estimated that 50 million additional acres would have been infested by the moth.[4] Additionally, the southern pine beetle is the most destructive pest of pine trees from New Jersey to Florida and west to Texas. This beetle caused an estimated $1 billion in damage during an outbreak across the southern U.S., and it has since rapidly moved far further northward than previously thought possible.[5] The new northeast range of the southern pine beetle includes threatened and rare pine ecosystems, such as the pine barrens of New Jersey.[6] Funding for the Forest Health Management Program will support detection, monitoring, prevention, and management of this pest and slow its spread and limit its damage as it affects more and more of our country's forests. To support these important functions, ESA requests that the subcommittee provide no less than the FY 2020 enacted level of $100 million for Forest Health Management.

The National Invasive Species Council (NISC) coordinates policy, communication, and technology applications among 16 federal agencies involved in the shared task of invasive species control. NISC serves a vital function since the impact of invasive species is felt across a variety of sectors (agriculture, environmental protection, public health, etc.) that are not under the jurisdiction of one single agency. As an example, since 2014 spotted lanternfly has become established in Pennsylvania, Virginia, New Jersey, and Delaware. Its ability to disperse over broad geographic areas presents a particularly challenging problem to growers, homeowners, and forest managers, as does its unusually broad host range. It has been recorded feeding on more than 100 plants, including commercial crops such as hops, grapes, apples, and cherries.[7] In addition to damage caused directly by feeding, the spotted lanternfly inflicts indirect damage via coating plants and other surfaces in "honeydew" (urine), which encourages the growth of mold and fungi. To respond to such threats, NISC recently helped coordinate the development of a comprehensive system of environmental DNA (eDNA) Rapid Response, whereby cutting-edge molecular surveillance tools are used to detect invasive insects before they establish to minimize control and damage costs. Such methods can enable more effective early detection of invasive species and rapid response, potentially saving billions of dollars' worth of crops, safeguarding native ecosystems, and preventing the destruction of private property. As such, ESA requests that NISC be funded at no less than $2 million in FY 2022.

ESA, headquartered in Annapolis, Maryland, is the largest organization in the world serving the professional and scientific needs of entomologists and individuals in related disciplines. Founded in 1889, ESA has more than 7,000 members affiliated with educational institutions, health agencies, private industry, and government. Members are researchers, teachers, extension service personnel, administrators, marketing representatives, research technicians, consultants, students, pest management professionals, and hobbyists. Thank you for the opportunity to offer the Entomological Society of America's support for Forest Service and EPA programs.

[This statement was submitted by Michelle S. Smith, BCE, President.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY STUDY INSTITUTE

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony for the record in support of programs under the Subcommittee's jurisdiction that support climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) is a non-profit organization founded in 1984 on a bipartisan basis by members of Congress to help educate and inform policymakers, their staff, stakeholders, and the American public about the benefits of a low-emissions economy that prioritizes energy efficiency, renewable energy, and new clean energy technologies. In 1988, EESI declared that addressing climate change is a moral imperative, and that has since guided our work.

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[4] Forest Service FY 2017 Budget Overview: http://www.fs.fed.us/sites/default/files/FY-2017-FS%20-budget-overview.pdf.

[5] Nowak, J.; Asaro, C.; Klepzig, K.; [et al.]. 2008. The southern pine beetle prevention initiative: working for healthier forests. J. For. 106(5): 261–267.

[6] Dodds, K. J.; Aoki, C. F.; Arango-Velez, A.; [et al.]. 2018. Expansion of southern pine beetle in northeastern forests: management and impact of a primary bark beetle in a new region. J. For. 116(2): 178–191.

[7] https://entomologytoday.org/2020/09/10/list-known-host-plants-grows-invasive-spotted-lanternfly/

Climate adaptation and resilience work should complement and, when possible, contribute to a decarbonized, clean energy economy. From droughts to wildfires and hurricanes to extreme heat, different regions, states, and communities will experience different climate change—related threats. Communities need locally-tailored, accessible, and actionable data to make informed decisions to mitigate their climate risks and safeguard the ecosystems on which they depend.

This testimony is informed by EESI's 2020 report, A Resilient Future for Coastal Communities: Federal Policy Recommendations from Solutions to Practice.[1] This report is based on EESI's 16-part Congressional briefing series that featured 42 coastal resilience experts discussing federal, state, and local programs and policies conducting effective climate adaptation to coastal hazards. The programs outlined in this testimony are critical, and worthy of the Subcommittee's support.

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY CLIMATE ADAPTATION SCIENCE CENTERS

There is one National Climate Adaptation Science Center (CASC) and nine regional CASCs tasked with helping people and ecosystems adapt to a changing climate. Regional CASCs partner with a university to conduct and disseminate research and support community adaptation activities. Because of their regional focus, CASCs are able to develop regional—specific research and forge local partnerships, being more responsive to local needs—a valuable service given the scope and magnitude of climate challenges.

An example of the on-the-ground adaptation and science support that CASCs conduct involves the Northwest CASC and the University of Washington's Climate Impacts Group and their work with the Northwest and Great Basin Tribes to develop climate risk tools. Based on input from the 84 Tribes that chose to participate, they created an online tool that provides climate summaries and climate information specifically tailored to the needs of those Tribes. The information is provided in multiple formats—as a map, a graphic, text, and as downloadable, custom reports—that summarize all of the changes by geographic area. The tool has been successful because of the development process's heavy focus on soliciting iterative user testing, feedback, and revisions.

The Biden Administration's Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 budget proposal roughly doubles CASC funding, from $41,335,000 to $84,403,000. EESI supports the proposed funding level. In 2020, the United States experienced 22 billion-dollar weather and climate disaster events, the sixth consecutive year with 10 or more such events. The threat of climate change will necessitate spending to adapt and mitigate; however, these costs are overshadowed by the cost of doing nothing.

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE COOPERATIVE LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION

Collaborative, landscape-scale conservation brings people together across geographies, jurisdictions, sectors, and backgrounds to restore fragmented landscapes and safeguard the ecological, cultural, and economic benefits provided by intact and connected habitat. The Biden Administration's proposed FY2022 budget requests $18.8 million (an increase of $6.3 million) for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Cooperative Landscape Conservation (CLC) initiative via the Science Applications Program. EESI supports an additional $3 million for CLC to facilitate effective landscape conservation coordination between federal agencies and with state, tribal, and nongovernmental partners across the country.

An appropriation of $21.8 million is approximately the same annual funding level the Science Applications Program received when it facilitated the Landscape Conservation Cooperative Network from 2010 to 2017. The increased funding would support a new process to establish a durable, inclusive, and comprehensive national framework for coordinating landscape conservation and climate adaptation efforts. This new approach would improve outcomes, eliminate redundancies, create synergies, facilitate collaboration, and streamline the whole-of-government response necessary to conserve healthy and productive lands and waters that sustain natural and cultural resources.

Thank you for your consideration.

[This statement was submitted by Daniel Bresette, Executive Director.]

[1] Available online at https://www.eesi.org/papers/view/a-resilient-future-for-coastal-communities.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL OF THE STATES

Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) is the national nonprofit, nonpartisan association of state and territorial environmental agency leaders. For the Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) budget appropriations, ECOS requests $630.1M for three specific Categorical Grant programs, as well as continued support for other Categorical Grants and infrastructure investments as noted.

State environmental agencies are the engines of environmental progress in our nation. Under America's system of cooperative federalism, states exercise more than 90 percent of the delegable authorities under these and other federal laws. Through an ECOS resolution, states urge the U.S. Congress and EPA to financially support state implementation efforts commensurate with the complexity and breadth of federal requirements so we may fulfill our obligations to our communities. Please consider the following requests:

I. SUPPORT INVESTMENT IN CRITICAL WATER, WASTEWATER AND STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

States are keenly aware of the importance of infrastructure resiliency. During recent crises caused by winter storms, states offered technical assistance, outreach, and in some cases, brought critical supplies to local water systems. States also support funding for water and wastewater upgrades for cybersecurity and physical security. States work with water and wastewater systems facing enforcement actions and pilot creative solutions to infrastructure funding needs. As an example, in Oklahoma, its Funding Agency Coordination Team (FACT) streamlined the application process for infrastructure funding sources available to public water and wastewater systems. The FACT meets with eligible entities and works with them to develop the right funding package for their circumstances.

State Revolving Funds (SRFs) support critical state-level investments in local infrastructure that provide our citizens safe drinking water, sanitation, and clean aquatic environments. The American Society of Civil Engineers 2021 Infrastructure Report Card estimates that our nation faces more than $1,045 billion in drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure needs with a $434M funding gap.[1] EPA's assessment on drinking water infrastructure is even more staggering—its most recent assessment from March 2018 cites a $472.6 billion need. We encourage Congress to allow 2% of annual Clean Water SRF capitalization grant funds to go to technical assistance to small, disadvantaged, and underserved communities as is done with the Drinking Water SRF. This would provide much-needed support to communities that lack the professional expertise to build wastewater infrastructure. We also encourage you to consider recommendations in the April 13 letter from ECOS and other water associations to Congressional leaders regarding maximizing federal investment in water infrastructure as appropriate.

Since 2018, Congress has established and funded seven new STAG infrastructure assistance grants related to drinking water safety, totaling $139M as of FY21.[2] States encourage Congress to consider making these STAG infrastructure grants eligible for Performance Partnership Grants (PPGs) to minimize grant administrative burdens. While states share Congress' commitment to achieving the specific purposes of each of these grant programs, additional programs may increase administrative burden and many states already have a complex system of matchmaking to efficiently distribute funds to the communities in most need.

II. INCREASE STATE AND TRIBAL ASSISTANCE (STAG) CATEGORICAL GRANTS

STAG Categorical Grants fund a wide range of states' core regulatory work. But these critical programs face an equally wide range of increased pressures: to move to electronic permitting and remote public participation, to increase data transparency, to enhance compliance presence in communities overburdened by pollution, to address emerging contaminants, and other activities. In FY02, STAG Categorical Grants were $1.1 billion enacted and are at $1.1 billion enacted in FY21—nineteen

[1] Data taken from ASCE Failure to Act 2021 study. www.asce.org/failuretoact.

[2] New STAG infrastructure assistance grants: assistance for small and disadvantaged communities, reducing lead in drinking water, lead testing in schools, drinking water infrastructure resilience and sustainability, technical assistance for treatment works, sewer overflow control grants, and water infrastructure and workforce investment.

years later. ECOS encourages Congress to increase its funding of Categorical Grants, the most significant federal support to core delegated programs.

STAG Categorical Grant Funding History [3]

ECOS has documented that the federal government provides, on average, 27 percent of state environmental agencies' budgets. As program expectations expand with flat federal funding, fees (already our largest funding source comprising 61% of our budgets on average) have risen from $5.9B in FY2016 to $6.7B in FY2019, a 14% increase;[4] further fee increases are unsustainable. Even if fees were increased, this may not address program needs. For instance, in an April 2020 report, the Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies (AAPCA) notes that "[states] collect fees for pollutant emissions on a per-ton basis . . . , but have seen major decreases in revenue from the program as it meets its primary goal: driving emissions down to create better air quality." In addition to permitting work, state air agencies have seen increasing ambient monitoring infrastructure programs as well as State Implementation Plan (SIP)-related and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQs) related planning workload.

ECOS looked closely at three critical Categorical Grant programs: State and Local Air Quality Management (CAA § 103, 105, and 106); Pollution Control (CWA § 106); and Hazardous Waste Financial Assistance (RCRA § 3011). This review found that federal funding levels for these three grant programs have not meaningfully increased, or have decreased, since 2010. Between inflation and increases in the cost of administering regulatory programs over this period, states propose that a 1% compounding annual escalation is the minimum federal funding trajectory needed.

STAG Categorical Grant	State and Local Air Quality Management (CAA § 103, 105, and 106)	Water Pollution Control (CWA § 106)	Hazardous Waste Financial Assistance (RCRA § 3011)	11-year Enacted Level Increase	Total
FY10 Enacted [1]	$226.6M	$229.3M	$103.3M		$559.2M
FY21 Enacted [2]	$229.5M	$230.0M	$101.5M	$1.8M	$561.0M
FY21 if 1% Escalation started 2010	$252.8M	$255.8M	$115.2M		$623.3M
Delta: 1% escalation vs. FY21 enacted	$ 23.3M	$ 26.5M	$11.9M		$ 61.7M
FY22 Funding Request	$255.3M	$258.4M	$116.4M		$630.1M

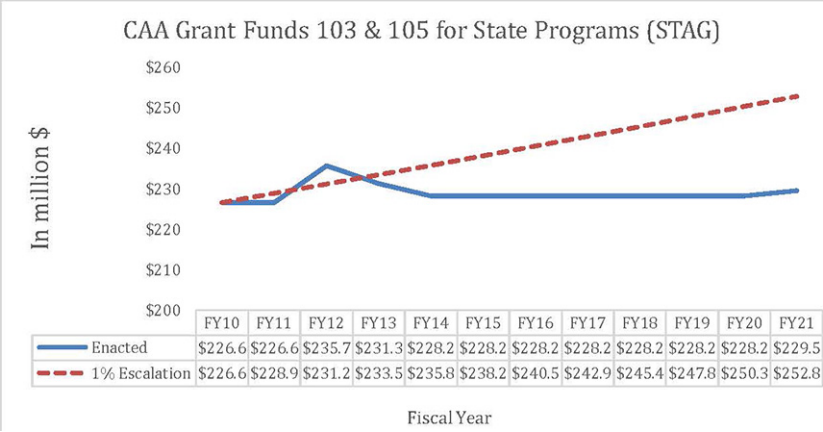
[1] Source: FY11 EPA Budget in Brief pg. 69
[2] Source: FY21 Omnibus

[3] Sources: FY2021 EPA Budget in Brief, p.89 and ECOS Green Report on Status of Environmental Agency Budgets, 2017, p.11.

[4] State environmental agency average excluding CalEPA. Source: ECOS Green Report: Status of State Environmental Agency Budgets Fiscal Years 2016 to 2019.

As noted in the above table, if a 1% compounding escalation had been implemented for these programs starting in FY10, this would amount to a $61.7M funding level increase by FY21. For FY22, ECOS requests that Congress consider enacting a combined $630.1M for these three programs as shown in the above table—$255.3M for air/105 and 103; $258.4M for water/106, and $116.4M for hazardous waste. As a further demonstration of a 1% compounding escalation, figure 1 shows this in greater detail for the air/105 and 103 program. Other charts may be shared if requested but are not included due to space constraints.

Figure 1. State and Local Air Quality Management (Sections 103, 105, and 106)



	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21
Enacted	$226.6	$226.6	$235.7	$231.3	$228.2	$228.2	$228.2	$228.2	$228.2	$228.2	$228.2	$229.5
1% Escalation	$226.6	$228.9	$231.2	$233.5	$235.8	$238.2	$240.5	$242.9	$245.4	$247.8	$250.3	$252.8

III. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

ECOS has testified in the past on a number of topics that remain important to state environmental agencies. These include:

1. Importance of Flexible STAG Multipurpose Categorical Grant. This is an important resource to enable nimble project deployment, and we hope Congress will continue and expand this resource and continue to provide states flexibility to use these federal funds to address local needs and priorities.
2. State Research Needs. In February, ECOS' affiliate the Environmental Research Institute of the States (ERIS) published responses from 43 states and territories of their research needs across all media, plus PFAS. ECOS urges Congress to provide funding to EPA to help meet these needs.
3. Oppose shift from 103 to 105 air funds. States ask that Congress push back against the proposed CAA § 103-§ 105 funding shift at states' expense.
4. Rescissions. States continue to oppose rescission of STAG Categorical Grant funds before a state receives them and appreciates Congress' diligence in preserving funds for their identified purposes.

ECOS thanks the subcommittee for considering the views of state environmental agencies as you prepare the FY22 budget for EPA. We would welcome further discussion with you about how federal funding can support state-level work to protect human health and the environment. Please do not hesitate to contact me or ECOS Executive Director Don Welsh at dwelsh@ecos.org.

[This statement was submitted by Patrick McDonnell, Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and President.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL LAW & POLICY CENTER (ELPC)

I am Howard Learner, the Executive Director of the Environmental Law & Policy Center (ELPC). ELPC is the Midwest's leading environmental legal advocacy and sustainability innovation organization. ELPC's staff is engaged in the Great Lakes states, in Washington D.C., and with Canada to protect the Great Lakes. Since 2008, we have participated with policymakers and colleagues to build, effectively implement, and expand the successful Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI).

Thank you Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and all members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to submit my testimony supporting an increased appropriation for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. GLRI is a program that works well and has demonstrated implementation successes. GLRI funds have been deployed to protect safe clean drinking water supplies, clean up toxic sites, protect wetlands and shorelines, help alleviate harmful algae outbreaks, hold off invasive species from entering the Lakes, and safeguard aquatic resources. Restoring the Great Lakes' vital natural resources creates very high leveraged value gained for environmental, public health and recreation benefits, and for overall economic growth.

The Great Lakes are a global gem, and they contain 21% of the planet's surface fresh water. 42 million people rely on the Great Lakes for safe drinking water supplies. The Great Lakes provide a rich aquatic habitat for many species, and they support a $7 billion annual fishing industry. Great Lakes recreation draws millions of tourists who boost the economies of shoreline communities. In short, the Great Lakes are where many millions of people live, work and play.

ELPC was pleased with the bipartisan Congressional support for the reauthorization of the GLRI program, which was signed into law earlier this year. The reauthorization ramps up funding to $475 million in 2026, thereby matching the GLRI funding received in its initial year. We request that the Senate Appropriations Committee fully fund the GLRI program with at least $375 million for FY 2022.

I'll make two points in support of fully funding the GLRI at its authorized amount for FY 2022:

First, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is vitally important and successful. This is a model federal program providing great benefits, and it is working well.

Second, the challenges the Great Lakes are facing, from increases in harmful algal outbreaks and climate change especially, justify full funding at least at the authorized $375 million for FY 2022.

1. The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is vitally important and successful. This is a model federal program providing great benefits, and it is working well.

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative has been a breakthrough program, injecting vital funding and structure that had previously hindered efforts to restore the Great Lakes. Over the past 12 years, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative has achieved strong results with sustained funding.

As the third GLRI Action Plan states: "the GLRI has been a catalyst for unprecedented federal agency coordination, which has in turn produced unprecedented results." The program supports shoreline and wetlands protection projects, keeping out invasive species, and reducing harmful algae blooms. Congress' recognition of the effectiveness of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is reflected in the bipartisan support for full authorized funding of $300 million for FY 2018 and 2019 and increased funding for FY 2020 and 2021.

The GLRI funds and supports thousands of projects across the Great Lakes states to:

—Improve water quality for safe drinking water supplies, fisheries, and aquatic habitats.
—Protect shorelines and restore wetlands.
—Protect and restore native habitats and species.
—Help prevent and control invasive species.
—Clean up toxic sediments on lake bottoms.
—Reduce nutrient runoff that causes harmful algal blooms.

The GLRI effectively creates a system of coordination among federal agencies, state entities and local partners to achieve outcomes. There are many examples of GLRI projects that deliver multiple benefits to the Great Lakes, from river and natural area restoration projects to addressing and ultimately delisting Areas of Concern, including:

—In Ohio, the restoration of Griswold Creek, which included removal of invasive species and restoration of habitat, and the restoration of Irwin Wet Prairie near Toledo. Both ultimately benefit Lake Erie.
—In Northern Minnesota, the Flute Reed Riverbank stabilization project keeps nutrients out of Lake Superior, improves flood plains, and creates habitat for fish.
—In Illinois, the Burnham Wildlife Corridor in Chicago restored natural areas with native species and wildlife habitats while helping slow down and filter water before it enters Lake Michigan, thereby reducing runoff pollution into the Lake.

These projects bring together a broad array of partners, working together to achieve the GLRI's goals and create jobs. The third GLRI Action Plan details work to address Areas of Concern, including those that are now delisted: Presque Isle Bay in Pennsylvania, and Deer Lake and White Lake in Michigan.

GLRI has broad regional economic benefits. A University of Michigan study showed that every $1.00 of funds spent on GLRI projects between 2010 and 2016 will produce $3.35 in additional economic activity in the Great Lakes region through 2036.

2. The challenges the Great Lakes are facing, from severe recurring harmful algal blooms and climate change especially, justify full funding at least at the authorized amount of $375 million for FY 2022.

While recognizing the GLRI's successes, the threats from climate change and severe recurring harmful algal outbreaks are getting worse.

ELPC commissioned 18 leading Midwest and Canadian scientists to write the state-of-the-science report, An Assessment of the Impacts of Climate Change on the Great Lakes, which we released in 2019 along with recommended policy solutions. The scientists concluded that climate change is causing significant and far-reaching impacts on the Great Lakes region, including increasingly extreme water level fluctuations—mostly higher, and occasionally lower—which wreak havoc on shoreline communities, homes, beaches, and businesses. Annual precipitation in the region has increased at a higher percentage than the rest of the country, and more precipitation is coming in unusually large events such as derechos and intense thunderstorms. Lake Michigan had record-high water levels in 2020, whipped by winds and waves that caused flooding and damaged the shoreline's built infrastructure.

ELPC is now preparing a report that looks at the risks of rising lake levels, extreme weather events, and flooding at several industrial facilities and contaminated sites along the western and southern shores of Lake Michigan in Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. Using data from the Digital Elevation Model prepared by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office for Coastal Management, the report visualizes the extent and severity of inundation at the sites and surrounding areas. One threat: potential inadvertent releases of dangerous pollutants into nearby communities and Lake Michigan.

Climate change impacts on the Great Lakes intersect with the growing problem of agricultural runoff pollution—mostly fertilizers and manure. These are the principal cause of severe recurring toxic algae outbreaks in western Lake Erie and other shallow water bays in the Great Lakes. The Ohio EPA concluded that agricultural runoff pollution accounts for about 90% of the phosphorus flow into western Lake Erie.

The Maumee River Basin, which flows into western Lake Erie, is among the priority watersheds included in the third GLRI Action Plan. ELPC used satellite imagery to count and measure Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) and to estimate the number of animals and amount of manure those facilities produce. The data shows that in 2018, alone, CAFOs produced over 3.5 million tons of manure.

The GLRI Action Plan provides a detailed look at strategies to reduce this harmful agricultural runoff pollution, noting that GLRI projects have kept more than one million pounds of phosphorous out of the lakes. But the threats from nutrient pollution from CAFOs to the Great Lakes and region remain and are amplified by changing rainfall patterns. On April 7–9, 2021, ELPC hosted our 6th Annual Great Lakes Science-Policy Confluence Conference, bringing together scientific experts and policy makers to focus on the growing threat of CAFOs and manure runoff pollution to the Great Lakes region. A more robust GLRI is an important part of addressing this problem.

In conclusion, the Environmental Law & Policy Center appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony in support of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and urge the Subcommittee to recommend to the full Senate Appropriations Committee an appropriation of $375 million for GLRI in FY 2022. GLRI is a successful program and a model for federal, state, and local cooperation.

[This statement was submitted by Howard Learner, Executive Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FEDERATION OF STATE HUMANITIES COUNCILS

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the nation's humanities councils. The state and jurisdictional humanities councils were authorized in the founding legislation for the National Foundation for the Arts and Humanities and are funded, in part, through the Federal/State Partnership line in the National Endowment for the Humanities

budget. As 501c3 nonprofit organizations, councils leverage, on average, $4 for every $1 of federal funding with support from state and local governments, foundations, private sector entities, and individuals. For Fiscal Year 2022 we are requesting $225 million for the National Endowment for the Humanities, including $70 million for the state and jurisdictional humanities councils through the Federal/State Partnership.

This is a busy and challenging—but in many ways—exciting and promising time for the state and jurisdictional humanities councils. Last year, in the CARES Act, $30 million was made available to the humanities councils for grants to local cultural organizations to help them survive the impacts of COVID–19. In a few months, councils made more than 4,500 awards throughout the states, territories, and DC. Councils were able to efficiently move money into communities where it could save jobs, help preserve local institutions, and respond to other immediate needs. However, the needs far exceeded the available funding. Consequently, the additional $51.6 million allocated to the councils through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act is a welcome addition to meeting the continuing needs of local cultural organizations and to enabling them to prepare for recovery.

In the instance of both CARES and ARP, the state humanities councils serve largely as a pass-through organization in order to move funds quickly to a large number of local organizations that put those funds to use both responding to lingering COVID issues and preparing for recovery. The councils are well positioned for this job—they know their states and institutions deeply and broadly, they are accustomed to making grants of a size that address the needs of smaller entities, and they understand the broader community and how their investments will fit into that environment.

What the emergency funds through CARES and ARP do not do, however, is contribute to the on-going operations and programming of the councils. In a year, humanities councils may partner with some 9,000 local organizations, sponsor more than 31,000 programs and reach as many as 270 million people in almost every Congressional district. To maintain and grow current activities and respond to the community needs and interests, we need additional funding in the Federal/State Partnership, which directly funds the state councils. This is money that comes directly to the states and local communities and ensures a wide availability of public humanities programming across the nation.

In a recent survey of state councils, it became clear that individual councils, in part driven by size, could immediately use another $300,000-$600,000 each. Almost all councils see a need for additional Grantmaking to cities and counties, urban and rural areas throughout their states. Grantmaking from the state councils allows communities to commemorate their history and heritage, reach out to new and underserved audiences, and address the many issues which demand urgent attention including equity and inclusion, reading and literacy, healthcare, civics education, international understanding, and preparation for the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Such funding would also help councils sustain and expand upon work with veterans, Native and indigenous communities, the incarcerated, and other groups. Councils also see a critical need to pursue additional discussion groups and conversations, bringing communities together to examine issues that divide us or that are changing the way we live, work and play. Finally, councils have remaining needs for infrastructure, for the technical tools that allow them to continue to serve their new virtual audiences and get out safely to every corner of their states with in-person programming.

To elaborate on the work of the councils and the impact of our work throughout the nation, I would now like to turn to two perspectives: First, a description of some of the existing programs that have left indelible imprints on communities throughout the nation and, second, some brief comments on the commanding opportunities that lie ahead.

For 50 years, humanities councils have developed and delivered programs that address issues of greatest concern to their communities, helping explore history and culture and sharing the stories of our multi-vocal nation. From innovative programs created in response to the pandemic like Humanities Washington's online discussion initiative, "Cabin Fever Questions" and its kid-friendly version "Cabin Fever Kids" to programs that facilitated connection and community during isolation such as Oregon Humanities' letter-writing program "Dear Stranger," councils seek out your constituents and work with them to provide programming, resources, and support where it is most needed. Actually initiated in 2014, "Dear Stranger" took on a new importance during the pandemic. Oregon Humanities also started its "Connect in Place" conversations in April, thus far sponsoring more than 40 sessions across the state to discuss community, safety, immigration, faith, race, and aging, among other topics.

Supporting Infrastructure.—The Pennsylvania Humanities Council, through its Chester Made program, works with local citizens and businesses to promote revitalization of a portion of downtown Chester. The project includes development of a story-based cultural map, launching of a Chester Made Exploration Zone, and the creation of maker space, videos celebrating local artists and history, pop-up art shows, workshops exploring history of the downtown area, artist exchanges, and youth summer camps. Properties along the Chester Corridor are now being purchased and renovated by residents, and a theater, art galleries, work spaces, restaurants, and shops are moving in.

In California, Legacies of the Street: Seeking Transportation Justice, a three-part public conversation supported by California Humanities, explores the racialized past and present of roads in San Francisco, Fresno, and Los Angeles, where communities of color suffered disproportionately from the creation of California's transportation infrastructure, as highways carved up urban communities to facilitate suburban commuting to employment hubs. California Humanities has also supported the LA River project, which included biking and walking tours and programs examining the River in history, literature, and film, as well as community forums and exhibits for BART train stations and riders of the Capitol Corridor train.

Providing Civic Education For decades, the state and jurisdictional humanities councils have actively conducted and supported nonpartisan programs, resources, and events providing civic education in support of our democracy. Nationally, the humanities councils are currently conducting programs in 43 states and territories as part of their "Why It Matters: Civic and Electoral Participation" initiative. These events provide free humanities programming to engage the public in collaborative, accessible, and thought-provoking dialogues on the importance of electoral and civic participation. Since 2018, nearly all state and jurisdictional humanities councils have conducted or supported programs as part of the Federation's Mellon-funded "Democracy and the Informed Citizen" national initiative, which focuses on the role of journalism and the humanities in a democratic society as well as on the ways citizens gather, assess, and share information to make decisions about the futures of their communities and nation.

In addition, councils provide programming on the history of women's suffrage, including the impact on and contributions of marginalized groups. From podcasts, such as Humanities New York's "Amended" program to film screenings and discussions like South Dakota Humanities' "Without a Whisper/Konnon;Kwe" on the "untold story of the proud influence of Indigenous women on the beginning of the United States women's rights movement," to interactive panels and lectures such as Florida Humanities' "100th Women's Suffrage Centennial: How Women of Color Helped to Win the Vote" and Connecticut Humanities' "The Fight for Women's Suffrage in Connecticut" that explores how Connecticut women fought for, and against, the right to vote, councils seek to explore America's complex stories and experiences of civic participation. Ohio Humanities is one of those councils who is currently offering civic reflection sessions through a special initiative entitled, "Justice Talking: The Meaning of Service," a collaboration with ServeOhio and AmeriCorps to prompt "thoughtful dialogue about service, justice, and civic engagement."

Serving Teachers & Students.—Support for our nation's educators and students has never been more important. Prime Time Family Reading has been a mainstay of Kentucky Humanities for many years. The program, which brings together children and their parents face to face with a scholar and storyteller, not only promotes reading but also introduces children to books which deal with issues such as honesty, bigotry and friendship. The Kentucky Humanities Book Festival is celebrating its 40th year, providing workshops, children's programs and special events with both national authors and poets and hundreds of Kentucky writers. Florida offers "English for Families" in partnership with the Orange County Library System, a program that utilizes award-winning children's books to engage the whole family. This leads to increases in English language acquisition, inspires thought and conversation, promotes critical thinking, and improves employment prospects and educational performance.

Rural Development.—For years, the state and jurisdictional humanities councils have focused programs on rural areas, often in concert with the Smithsonian traveling exhibits. To date, the humanities councils have been a large part of touring exhibitions, with topics from American food to water to change in rural America, and have served 1,600+ rural communities with an average population of 8,300. Bringing these exhibits to small towns prompts excitement, but also triggers a variety of programs and conversations that allow for the serious exploration of the exhibit's topics.

Racial Equity and Social Justice.—Programs such as Alabama Humanities Alliance's "Why It Matters: Black Alabamians and The Vote," explore race and electoral

participation in America. Minnesota Humanities Center partnered with Sweet Potato Comfort Pie to create "How Can We Breathe," a four-part community engagement initiative that amplifies the voices of African Americans through its programming.

Serving Native and Indigenous Populations.—Vermont Humanities is increasing its engagement with indigenous Vermonters, with several programs featuring Abenaki tribal members speaking on the importance of storytelling, maintaining native languages, and addressing the present day consequences of the Vermont Eugenics Movement in the1920s.

The Minnesota Humanities Center has also been active in reaching and serving Indigenous populations in their state, educating Minnesotans about the history and culture of the state's Indigenous people through such programs as the award-winning traveling exhibit, "Why Treaties Matter: Self Government in the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations," and the "Bdote Memory Map," a resource for teaching about the Dakota people's relationship to the people of Minnesota.

Environmental Humanities Environmental humanities programs use literature and history to make sense of the changing environmental concerns facing Americans. From hiking trails to canoe trips, water to forests, and sustainability to preservation, council programs address our sense of place and our shared responsibility for the future of the planet. Vermont Humanities will be hosting a conference this fall on the impact of the extended fire season on human communities in the western United States.

Healthcare and the Humanities.—Finally, councils are well positioned to support the medical community and play a prominent role in efforts to better position those in the field to deliver their services as well as to help individuals and their families manage the many aspects of their illnesses. Since 1997, when Maine Humanities Council created and piloted Literature & Medicine: Humanities at the Heart of Healthcare, a reading and discussion program for healthcare workers, the program has been a hallmark effort for many councils, including Arizona, California, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, South Dakota, and Vermont.

Maine and Vermont councils have also used the Literature & Medicine program in veterans' hospitals and facilities. Ohio Humanities awarded a grant to support "Not Far From Me: Stories of Opioids and Ohio," which included the publication of an anthology of more than 50 first-person accounts from addicts, their families, first responders, faith leaders, social workers, teachers, medical professionals, community leaders, and others impacted by opioids. This served as the basis for community discussions.

In conclusion, we believe the state humanities councils have a unique role moving our country forward. The humanities help the nation understand who we are, where we have been, and how we might begin to recover from the events of the past year. As the face of the humanities in their local communities, the state and jurisdictional humanities councils have the local and national networks to provide the programs and tools necessary to bring people back together and begin our collective healing.

In addition, the state councils share their own experiences and programming with each other, creating a rich, innovative and varied palate of public humanities options. Prime Time Reading and Literature & Medicine are long-standing programs in many states. Mississippi and Massachusetts recently partnered on a six-program series that explored the historical and cultural connections between the seemingly different states. People from both states as well as from around the country were involved in panels and conversations on such topics as literature, poetry, civil rights movement, school integration, coastal communities and Blues music.

As Americans awaken to the fact that this pandemic is not a "pause" from our "normal," but a new chapter that has and will continue to transform our world in ways we must all adapt to and wrestle with, humanities councils will best equip us to reimagine and recommit us to what makes us human. In the coming year, councils will gather their program participants together at newly configured in-person events as well as continue to serve their growing virtual audiences. They will create new civic education programs in the lead up to the 250th anniversary of the nation. Most importantly, they will respond to the crises of the present moment with lasting change and help us reimagine not only how we learn, teach, love, work, mourn, parent and partner, but also how we recommit ourselves to what we owe each other.

[This statement was submitted by Phoebe Stein, President.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FOND DU LAC BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA

Chairman Merkley, and respected members of the Committee, I am Kevin Dupuis, the Chairman of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. On behalf of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, I would like to thank you for inviting me to testify. We submit this testimony to urge Congress to increase, or, at the very least preserve, the federal funding levels for Indian programs.

As we talk about funding needs in Indian country, it is essential to keep in mind that the problems that face communities nationwide are far more severe for Indian communities, with tribes having far fewer resources to address problems like substance abuse, domestic violence, public safety, and homelessness. The Fond du Lac Band has worked, and will continue to work, to find solutions to problems of this kind. With seed money from federal funds, we have implemented innovative programs and measures to provide health, education, social services, public safety and other governmental services to our 4,200 members and the more than 7,300 Indian people who live on and near our Reservation. For example, Fond du Lac built the first-of-its-kind supportive housing programs in Indian country, and the first such supportive housing for Veterans. We have begun implementing best practices in health care, using a range of programs and services to aid our people.

We are proud of what we have accomplished, but more remains to be done. The investment of federal funds is key to that effort. It allows us to use Band resources and attract private partners so we can provide jobs, grow the local economy, educate our children, prevent crime, and care for our elders and infirm. We urge Congress to continue to fund these programs at least at the levels the President has requested.

BIA: Trust-Natural Resources Management.—There is nothing more important than preserving and protecting the territories and resources that our ancestors reserved for our people when they signed our Treaties with the United States. The Fond du Lac Band is committed to the management, conservation, and sustainability of the natural resources of the Fond du Lac Reservation and within our Ceded Territory, where we have Treaty rights to hunt, fish and gather. We appreciate Congress's decision to provide a $35 million increase in funding for BIA Trust-Natural Resources programs in FY 2021. We urge you to provide full funding for Trust-Natural Resources Management in FY 2022, including increased funding for Rights Protection and Implementation which will allow us to protect, enhance, and restore natural resources with our Reservation and Ceded Territory.

The Fond du Lac Reservation consists of 101,153 acres, including forests, lakes and rivers that must be managed and protected for the current and future generations. In addition, our Ceded Territory covers portions of Upper Michigan, Northern Wisconsin, and North Central Minnesota. The challenges to our natural resources across the region are diverse and complex, from species restoration and reintroduction to adaptation to climate change. But our members depend on our Treaty rights to put food on the table and for ceremonial practices that serve as the foundation for our culture. The stewardship of those natural resources—through scientific study, resource management, and enforcement of Band laws that regulate Tribal members who hunt, fish and gather those resources—is critical and is also an important source of employment for members.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).—We appreciate that Congress has continued to provide federal funds for EPA, but we ask that funding for EPA in FY 2022 be increased.

State and Tribal Assistances Grants (STAG).—We thank Congress for providing STAG funding in FY 2021. We strongly urge Congress to increase funding for this Program, which has not seen a substantive increase in years, yet the Band's responsibilities continue to grow as we work to protect our land, water and air in the face of increasing pressures and obstacles.

Water Quality.—We have a robust federally-approved water quality standards program. Given the current threats to water resources in our region, we urge that Tribal Section 106 funding be doubled so that we can do the work needed to protect our waters.

Air.—We have a long-standing air monitoring program that has faced a steady decline in federal funding. As the impacts of climate change continue to be felt in higher temperatures and more frequent heavy precipitation events, both indoor and ambient air quality concerns continue to impact Band members and their health. We request that air quality program funding for tribes be increased.

Wetlands.—One-half of our reservation is made up of wetlands. Proper management and restoration of this valuable resource is impossible without adequate and consistent federal funding. We request sustained wetland monitoring and protection program funding.

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.—The Band fully supports this initiative and asks that Congress maintain the $330 million level of funding for this initiative. This initiative has broad—reaching benefits to resources of importance for all stakeholders (state, tribal and private) in the Great Lakes region. This funding helps support our wildlife programs, including our ongoing wild rice and fisheries stewardship and restoration efforts on the Reservation and in our Ceded Territories.

BIA: Public Safety and Justice.—A significant part of protecting our homeland is having a fully staffed and trained law enforcement department. We appreciate Congress's decision to increase funding for BIA's Public Safety and Justice, including funding to solve Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women cold cases. The largest law enforcement problems we face are due to opioids and other substance abuse problems. Our law enforcement responds to a wide range of issues and calls, and the demand increases each year.

We address law enforcement by a combination of tribal and available federal funds and cooperative agreements with local law enforcement agencies, but more funding is needed. To meet need, we should have 25 full-time officers, but currently we only have funding for 18. We also have 2 administrative staff, but should have 2 more to ensure our department can effectively operate. Funding is also needed for training. Due to the COVID–19 pandemic and with an increase in the drug epidemic and related crimes, our officers need, but are not receiving, vital training, including for dealing with an increase of people with mental health issues. Budget constraints also restrict us from replacing essential equipment like patrol vehicles, cameras, and recorders.

Bureau of Indian Education.—With funding from the BIE and the Department of Education, we operate the Fond du Lac Ojibwe School serving an average of 220 children from pre-K through 12th grade. More than 90% of our students come from very low-income households, and 96% receive free or reduced-price lunch. We are slowly making progress in improving the outcomes for our students. While the high school graduation rates for American Indians in Minnesota is at 51%, we are now at 59%, which is still far behind the state-wide rate of 81%. BIE funding has never kept pace with need, which prevents us from providing the educational services needed for our students. We urge Congress to significantly increase federal funding for Indian education.

Indian Health Service.—We appreciate Congress's decision to maintain funding for IHS at the FY 2020 levels. But Indians at Fond du Lac, like Indians throughout the Nation, continue to face severe disparities across a broad range of health issues, including due to the COVID–19 pandemic and the opioid epidemic. We serve over 7,300 Indian people at our clinics, but the current funding level meets only 33% of our health care funding needs. To make progress in reducing the disparities in Indian health, we strongly support the Administration's $2.2 billion requested increase in funding for IHS programs, with the top priorities given to Hospitals & Health Clinics; Purchased/Referred Care; Mental Health; Alcohol & Substance Abuse; and Dental Health. Expanded resources for treatment and community education capacity are especially needed to combat the epidemic of drug abuse.

We support the Administration's proposal to provide advance appropriations for Indian Health Service starting in FY 2023. We also support the proposal to make both Contract Support Costs and the 105(l) leasing funding mandatory. This is an important first step in making all Indian Health Service funding mandatory. As many of my elders have said, we prepaid for our health care and this funding should not be subject to the discretionary appropriations process.

Miigwech. Thank you.

[This statement was submitted by Kevin R. Dupuis, Sr., Chairman.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FOUNDATION FOR RESILIENT SOCIETIES

Dear Senators:

We are writing to express our strong support for full funding of "Administration FY 2022 Request for USGS Geomagnetism Program to Protect Critical Infrastructure Against Solar Storms." This request would allow for an appropriation of $5,673,000 and 14 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions for the USGS Geomagnetism Program to further the magnetotelluric survey across the southern third of the United States, add observatories, and fund continuing operation of observatories. Each of these requests is critical to scientific understanding of the effect of solar storms and associated geomagnetic disturbance upon our nation's electric grid.

Geomagnetic disturbance caused by solar storms can cause cascading collapse of electric grids. An example of this hazard occurred in March 1989 when a relatively

small solar storm caused a blackout for the entire province of Quebec in only 92 seconds.

Solar storms can also cause high voltage transformers in critical locations to catch fire, melt down or explode. As a result, grid restoration could be prevented until these transformers are replaced. High voltage transformers could take 1–2 years to manufacture and are largely produced abroad. Thus, without further action to understand and monitor geomagnetic activity triggered by solar storms, the United States could face long-term blackouts.

We appreciate your attention to this important appropriation for better understanding of solar storm impacts on America's electric grid and for monitoring solar activity.

Sincerely,

Thomas S. Popik, Chairman and President
Mary Lasky, Treasurer and Secretary

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FRIENDS OF ALASKA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee:

This testimony is submitted on behalf of the Friends of Alaska National Wildlife Refuges, which was formed in 2005 to support all 16 Alaska National Wildlife Refuges. We appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on the FY 2022 Interior Appropriations bill.

The Alaska Friends is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization whose members reside primarily throughout the State of Alaska and in the other 49 States. We work on a volunteer basis to assist the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to accomplish its Congressionally mandated mission for the 16 Alaska National Wildlife Refuges, which encompass 77 million acres.

The Alaska Refuges serve many important functions for the people of Alaska. They provide vital subsistence resources for its many Alaska Natives and other rural residents. They offer extensive opportunities for wildlife viewing, photography, hunting, fishing, environmental education, and a wide variety of land and water recreation. Furthermore, their natural habitats and extensive wildlife populations provide essential opportunities for scientific studies of the changes produced by our warming climate. Alaska is on the forefront of climate change, whch is creating many challenges to the management and maintenance of their natural values and productivity for the many people and communities that depend on their resources.

The Alaska Friends works closely with 16 Alaska National Wildlife Refuges to assist them in maintaining and enhancing the many resources and other values to the Alaska community.

Overall, the National Wildlife Refuge System requires at least $900 million in annual Operations and Maintenance Funding to be considered "full funding", with all refuges staffed with adequate maintenance, biological monitoring and management, outdoor recreation, law enforcement, environmental education, and interpretation programs. We request that you work towards that overall goal of $900 million in annual funding by allocating $600 million in funding for Refuge System Operations and Maintenance for FY 2022. This request of $600 million, an increase of $112 million over FY 2011 appropriations, would greatly assist our refuges. The 16 National NWRs would be able to hire urgently needed staff, meet the increasing needs for adequate law enforcement, maintain environmental education programs, and develop methods and actions to mitigate the increasing effects of Alaska's rapidly warming climate on habitat, fisheries, and wildlife.

The 16 Alaska National Wildlife Refuges comprise approximately 83% of the lands in National Wildlife Refuge System, but they received only 10.4% of the FY 2021 budget for the Refuge System. Their $52.4 million FY 2021 funding represented a long-term decrease of 10.4% in real dollars relative to FY 2010 and is far less than needed to operate and manage the vast system of magnificent Alaska National Wildlife Refuges. We request that a substantial increase to $600 million in FY 2022 be the first step in reaching the goal of $900 million full funding, which would hopefully provide the opportunity for our 16 Alaska Refuges to obtain the additional funds they need to manage and maintain these national treasures.

Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to contact Dr. David C. Raskin, President of the Friends of Alaska National Wildlife Refuges at davidc.raskin@me.com.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FRIENDS OF THE BILL WILLIAMS RIVER AND HAVASU NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee:

This testimony is being submitted on behalf of the Friends of the Bill Williams River and Havasu National Wildlife Refuges, which was formed in 2012 to support the Lake Havasu National Wildlife Refuges Complex. We appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on the FY 2022 Interior Appropriations bill. Our interest is in the Refuge System Operations and Maintenance fund, which we respectfully request you fund at $600 million in FY2022.

The Havasu National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1941 along the lower Colorado River above the Parker Dam. It is roughly 38,000 acres and goes from Needles, CA south to Lake Havasu City, AZ. It extends a total of 30 river miles and has 300 miles of shoreline. A vast area to monitor and maintain. It is also part of the Pacific Flyway—a major north-south route for migrating birds.

In 1993, the Bill Williams River National Wildlife Refuge was designated as a separate NWR with 6,100 acres. This refuge holds one of the last stands of naturally regenerated cottonwood—willow forest along the lower Colorado River.

Now both the Havasu NWR and Bill Williams River NWR are considered as the Lake Havasu National Wildlife Refuges Complex.

The complex is home to threatened and endangered species such as the Southwest Willow Flycatcher, the Yuma Ridgway's Rail, Western Yellow-Billed Cuckoo, Razorback Sucker, and the Northern Mexican garter snake. There are many more species (including plants) that are monitored but not mentioned here.

The Friends of the Bill Williams River and Havasu National Wildlife Refuges was established as a non-profit, 501(c)(3) in 2012. Birders, fishermen, hunters, kayakers, boaters and nature enthusiasts came together to support and help with these two refuges in the Complex. At least 100,000 people live within an hour's drive of either refuge. With Lake Havasu located in between, parts of the refuges seem urban. This requires maintenance and upgrades that have not been possible lately.

Since the two refuges are close to populated areas, they provide opportunities for adults and for school children to learn. The Friends group in partnership with the Refuge staff have provided opportunities such as the Youth Duck Hunt, Teach-a-Child-to-Fish Day (in conjunction with Pondhopper Nation, a non-profit), Friends and Family Fun Day, Youth Bird Camp, as well as walking tours and school field trips.

Overall, the National Wildlife Refuge System requires at least $900 million in Operations and Maintenance Funding to be considered "full funding", which all refuges staffed, with adequate maintenance, biological, hunting, fishing, environmental education, and interpretation programs. We ask that you work towards that overall goal of $900 million in annual funding.

We request that this subcommittee allocate $600 million in funding for the Refuge System Operations and Maintenance fund for FY 2022.

This request of $600 million, an increase of $97 million over FY 2021 appropriations, would greatly impact our refuge. The Lake Havasu NWR Complex would begin plans to:

—Construct Nature trails in both Refuges
—Increase Maintenance staff
—Restore more habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife in areas damaged by wildfire, invasive species and drought.
—Provide adequate Law Enforcement
—Plan and provide public education programs and activities for local children
—Build a Visitor Center in Lake Havasu City for the Complex
—Build and maintain restroom facilities in high use areas
—Maintain fishing docks and boat launching areas in the Complex

Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to contact Jude Gilford, the President of the Friends of the Bill Williams River and Havasu National Wildlife Refuges at: judegilford@gmail.com.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FRIENDS OF BLACKWATER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, INC.

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee:

This testimony is being submitted on behalf of the Friends of Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, Inc. which was formed in 1987 to support the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge near Cambridge, Maryland. We appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on the FY 2022 Interior Appropriations bill.

WE REQUEST THAT THIS SUBCOMMITTEE ALLOCATE $600 MILLION IN FUNDING FOR THE REFUGE SYSTEM OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE FUND FOR FY 2022

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) was established in 1933 as a waterfowl sanctuary for birds migrating along the Atlantic Flyway. It is home to an incredible amount of plant and animal diversity in its three major habitats—forest, marsh and shallow water. The Refuge contains one-third of Maryland's tidal wetlands, which makes an ecologically important area within the state. These wetlands also provide storm protection to lower Dorchester County, including the city of Cambridge. Blackwater NWR is recognized as a "Wetland of International Importance" by the Ramsar Convention and was named a priority wetland in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. In addition, the Refuge has been designated as an Internationally Important Bird Area. Blackwater NWR is home to the largest natural population of formerly endangered Delmarva peninsula fox squirrels and is also home to the largest breeding population of American bald eagles on the east coast, north of Florida. Blackwater NWR encompasses over 33,000 acres, including an area believed to be the birthplace of Harriet Tubman.

The Friends of Blackwater NWR (FOB) assists the Refuge with its environmental education, recreation, biological and wildlife conservation programs in hopes of making the visitor experience the best that it can be. Over the past year, visitation increased over 27% to over 233,000 visitors! Along with volunteering, we provide annual bus transportation and supplies for the Refuge environmental education program for all 4th and 6th graders in Dorchester County's public schools. FOB supports the maintenance of four Refuge hiking trails and over 20 miles of water trails. FOB recently supported studies of deer and bat populations on the Refuge and provided funds for tree planting projects. We operate five web cameras overlooking a bald eagle nest, two osprey nests and two waterfowl impoundments. FOB supports the annual Eagle Festival, Kids Fishing Event, Junior Duck Stamp Competition, and a scholarship program. In recent years, the Refuge has sought support for other things out of the normal realm—like a mowing contract, new gutters on the environmental education building, a cleaning contract for the Visitor Center and Headquarters buildings, and an intern for the Visitor Services program. In the 17 years I've been volunteering at Blackwater NWR, I've watched the Refuge workforce continue to shrink along with the budget. The backlog of maintenance projects continues to grow. This is not the way to run the business of taking care of our public lands.

While overall, the National Wildlife Refuge System requires at least $900 million in Operations and Maintenance funding to be considered "full funding", a $600 million allocation for FY 2022 will go a long way and move us in the right direction to allow our Refuge managers to take care of our public lands and wildlife in a responsible manner.

Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to contact: Richard Abend, President of the Friends of Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, Inc., at 1111 Taylors Island Rd., Madison, MD 21648, email rdabend@yahoo.com.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FRIENDS OF EASTERN NECK

Chairwoman Pingree, Ranking Member Joyce, and Members of the Subcommittee:

This testimony is being submitted on behalf of the Friends of Eastern Neck, which was formed in 1997 to support the Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge. We appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on the FY 2022 Interior Appropriations bill. We request that this subcommittee allocate $600 million in funding for the Refuge System Operations and Maintenance fund for FY 2022.

Eastern Neck NWR is an island of 2800-acres off Maryland's Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay. It is an important waystation and winter home for migratory waterfowl, as well as having a diverse woodland, field and marsh environment and its own resident population of wildlife. The Friends of Eastern Neck is a totally volunteer organization with a dedicated board of directors and over 150 memberships. Friends' volunteers do projects for the Fish and Wildlife Service, staff the Visitor Center and Bookstore on the Refuge, and maintain what many consider to be one of the best butterfly gardens in Maryland.

During my time volunteering in the Eastern Neck NWR Visitor Center I have met a diverse group of people from all over the world. These visitors are important to the Refuge, but also to a small town near the Refuge. This is Rock Hall, which is home to a community of waterman. The seafood industry in the Chesapeake Bay has been adversely affected by pollution, climate change and regulations attempting to conserve the fish, crab and oyster populations. The closure of restaurants during

the Covid-19 pandemic has further devastated the market for these products. The 100,000 visitors a year to the Eastern Neck Refuge have become critical to the economy of the town as well as to that of Kent County. There is an active boating season in the summer that brings visitors, but the Refuge keeps visitors arriving to view the birds that winter there. The Eastern Neck Refuge has been blatantly understaffed and underfunded by the Fish and Wildlife Service, even though In the past the refuge had five staff members. The situation got so bad that from 2018 to 2020 there were no resident FWS staff on the island. In 2018 the FWS Regional Administration suggested "shuttering" the Refuge. It was only after intense lobbying by the Friends of Eastern Neck, community outrage, pressure from the citizens of Kent County and help from Senator Chris Van Hollen that a position was opened and a solitary biologist took up his post on the island at the end of 2020.

The scientific program, educational programs and maintenance have all declined. By the time of the Covid lockdown in 2020 all outreach programs by FWS had ended, and the annual deer and youth turkey hunts were all that remained. The "Winter Bird Walks", which continued, were run solely by Friends volunteers. Because of the lack of funding FWS has become dependent on the Friends for funding of maintenance activities including the rebuilding of observation areas such as the Tundra Swan Boardwalk, repairs to the roof of the Visitor's Center and paying for the painting of the staff housing on the Refuge. Signage and interpretive signs which have deteriorated over the years need replacement. Eastern Neck NWR is emblematic of the funding issues facing the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Overall, the National Wildlife Refuge System requires at least $900 million in Operations and Maintenance Funding to be considered "full funding", with all refuges staffed, with adequate maintenance, biological, hunting, fishing, environmental education, and interpretation programs. We ask that you work towards that overall goal of $900 million in annual funding.

This request of $600 million for FY 2022, an increase of $112 million over FY 2021 appropriations, would greatly impact our refuge. The Eastern Neck NWR would be able to hire staff, begin to address the maintenance backlog, and restore outreach and education programs. Most importantly it would secure the scientific program and fund invasive species control beyond the barebones efforts that are at present.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of increasing FWS funding so that our precious natural resources are protected and that the mission of the Fish and Wildlife Service can be sustained.

Please feel free to contact me, Cecelia Trainor by email at cecetrainor@gmail.com.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FRIENDS OF HART MOUNTAIN NATIONAL ANTELOPE REFUGE

Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee:

This testimony is submitted on behalf of Friends of Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge (FOHM), a nonprofit organization founded in 2003 with a mission of supporting the conservation purposes of our namesake refuge. We appreciate the opportunity to offer input to the FY 2022 Interior Appropriations bill. Your deliberations can address a critical need and opportunity to conserve imperiled species, enhance wildlife corridors and protect cultural resources on millions of acres of public lands by increasing funding for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to administer the National Wildlife Refuge System to $600 million, including $15.7 million for the Conservation Planning subaccount.

The National Wildlife Refuge System is the only network of federal lands and waters dedicated specifically to wildlife conservation. The guiding purpose and historic legacy of the System are vital to ensuring that imperiled species and diverse wildlife populations in North America are secure and thriving. Not only is the System essential to biodiversity conservation and climate resilience, but it also provides innumerable recreational and educational opportunities for wildlife watchers, sportsmen, scientists and outdoor enthusiasts. Public use of our refuges supports more than 35,000 jobs nationwide and generates billions of dollars in local, sustainable economic revenue.

Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge, located in the northern Great Basin, is an exceptional unit of the Refuge System. Established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936, Hart Mountain has become a success story in conserving and restoring wildlife habitat and biodiversity in the Sagebrush Sea. The more than 270-thousand-acre refuge is home to the fleet-footed pronghorn, colorful native fishes, melodious songbirds, rocky draws filled with quaking aspen, resplendent desert

wildflowers and serves as a vital stronghold for the charismatic but imperiled greater sage-grouse. Within its boundaries, Hart Mountain also harbors a rich history of human habitation, preserving ancient petroglyphs and indigenous artifacts. The refuge attracts thousands of visitors annually to enjoy an array of recreational offerings, generating sustainable annual revenue to surrounding communities.

Based in southeastern Oregon, FOHM invests substantial resources into educating and promoting Hart Mountain Refuge to a public increasingly interested in Oregon's high desert and the wildlife that depend on it. The organization works closely with the Service on a variety of planning and management activities to protect and restore this vital wildlife reserve.

Proper conservation and maintenance of public values on Hart Mountain and the rest of the 850-million-acre Refuge System requires at least $900 million annually for the Operations and Maintenance Fund. This amount would provide "full funding" for the Service to administer all 568 refuges with sufficient staff, adequate conservation planning, comprehensive management, and provision of biological, hunting, fishing, environmental education, and interpretation programs. We urge you to work towards this long-term goal of $900 million in annual funding.

This year, we request that your Subcommittee allocate $600 million for the Refuge System Operations and Maintenance Fund for FY 2022. As part of this amount, we urge you to allocate $15.7 million for Conservation Planning (account 1265) to support planning on national wildlife refuges. Both the $600 million overall and the $15.7 million request are an amount nearly equivalent to the sum appropriated for Refuge Operations and Maintenance and Conservation Planning, respectively, in FY 2010, when adjusted for inflation. Both would greatly benefit Hart Mountain Refuge.

Planning for the National Wildlife Refuge System has fallen behind schedule, depriving managers, partners and the public of the latest science and best practices for conserving wildlife, providing for habitat connectivity and climate resiliency, and welcoming the American public to our national wildlife refuges. Updating the 27-year-old management plan for Hart Mountain Refuge (which even predates the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997) should be a priority for how it could advance biodiversity protection and climate adaptation across a vast and fragile landscape, while supporting continued public enjoyment and local economic benefits derived from this iconic refuge. In fact, the Service began revising the Hart Mountain Refuge plan in 2012 as the top priority for planning in U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Region 1, but the effort was deferred due to budget and other constraints.

Updating the management plan for Hart Mountain would help ensure this refuge contributes to national conservation goals by continuing to provide for its important natural resources, while meeting the challenges posed by climate change, supporting habitat connectivity, protecting cultural resources and bolstering sustainable economies in the region.

Thank you for your consideration of our request, and for your important work on the Subcommittee. Please feel free to contact me at jenny@keatingeconservation.com or Jesse Laney, President of the Board of Directors of Friends of Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge, at jessealaney@gmail.com if you have any questions.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FRIENDS OF HEINZ REFUGE

Dear Chair Merkley and Ranking Member Murkowski:

This provides testimony on behalf of the Board of Directors and Members of the Friends of the Heinz Refuge (FOHR), which was formed in 1997, to support the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge. We appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on the FY 2022 Interior Appropriations bill.

The FOHR is a non-profit charitable organization to work in partnership with the Refuge. The Refuge and FOHR work to connect people with nature, and promote a culture of environmental stewardship through education for all that also reaches children from low-income communities, outreach, service, and nature-based recreation for the conservation of wildlife and habitat.

The John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum Marsh (JHNWR) is in the nexus of the Delaware River, Schuylkill River, and Tinicum Marsh—the largest remaining tidal marsh in Pennsylvania. It provides key environmental services by absorbing water during storm surges, which otherwise would make the area completely unlivable, and which would otherwise flood the Philadelphia International Airport. It also provides cleaner air, watershed protection, maintenance and stabilization of ecological processes, and enhancement of biodiversity. It provides safe forage and breeding areas for migrating birds along the Atlantic Flyway, and other

birds and wildlife, such as this year's breeding eagles and owls, who call it home. The increased funding from FY 2022 appropriations would greatly impact our Refuge by allowing them to hire needed staff, repair infrastructure damage from storms, restore the confluence wetlands of the Delaware River watershed, and build out their environmental education programs.

The ten miles of hiking trails in the Refuge remained open for outdoor nature experiences for visitors during the covid-19 pandemic, which was so severely needed and for which we are all very grateful. People flocked in record numbers to the Refuge during the pandemic. Before the pandemic, about 350,000 people visited the Refuge in 2017, and provided environmental and natural resource goods and services to people in the categories of:

1. Maintenance and conservation of environmental resources, services, and ecological processes,
2. Protection of natural resources such as fish, wildlife, and plants;
3. Protection of cultural and historical sites and objects;
4. Provision of educational and research opportunities; and
5. Outdoor and wildlife-related recreation.

IN SUMMARY

Overall, the National Wildlife Refuge System requires at least $900 million in Operations and Maintenance Fundings to be considered "full funding", for Refuge staff to provide adequate maintenance, and biological, hunting, fishing, environmental education, and interpretation programs. We ask that you work towards that overall goal of $900 million in annual funding. The Refuge System needs an increase to at least $600 million, and without it, it leaves the system in a critical situation as the Refuges become open to tragic loss of native plant and animal species, wetlands become further degraded, pollution builds up on both land and water, and staff morale degrades.

During the frequent and severe hurricanes and tropical storms of the past few years, the JHNWR sustained major damage to its hard structures, while the plantings survived, showing the importance of natural processes in becoming resilient to climate change. This refuge has geothermal facilities, and solar panels that were undamaged and also reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service work efficiently, consistently, and untiringly in their mission to provide all of this to the American people.

However, their efforts require more support from Congress to enable them to recover from the damage caused by increasingly intense storms, because at the same time, they are stabilizing the region in the face of these storms. The Refuge System has accumulated (1) needs for repairs from storms and heavy public usage, and (2) pro-active work to become more resilient to climate change. They have been undestaffed and undermaintained, and are desperately in need of funding. The requested large increase in funding is critical to the health and capabilities of the Refuge System, and retention of staff.

Economically, the JHNWR also makes local contributions through economic output to resident and non-resident visitors, jobs, job income, and state and local tax revenue (cf The Economic Contributions of Recreational Visitation at John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum, May 2019, Div. of Economics, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.)

Wildlife refuges are economic engines for their communities, yet the biggest challenge facing the Refuge System is a lack of funding. Each Refuge requires tailored management to protect its rich and diverse wildlife habitat, but faces a stark lack of staff. Since FY2010, when the budget was the same ($503 million) as it is today in FY2021, 3,500 staffers worked to maintain and protect the Refuge System. Today, that number is under 2,500, an enormous 30% loss in capacity.

Due to years of low budget allocations, the funding gap has degraded critical wildlife habitat and imperiled important species. The number of wage grade staff have declined by 50% in the last 20 years to a level of just 500. These staff move the water, maintain the roads, and support all the infrastructure involved in Refuge management. Without them, roads are not repaired, trails are lost, wetlands do not receive the necessary water to grow food for migratory birds, invasive species management is neglected, and buildings (fishing piers, bridges, etc.) fall into disrepair.

Refuge staff are working with escalating urgency to try to compensate for the lack of staffing, maintenance, and operations support, as they are incredibly stoic and are dedicated to their purpose with a great deal of grit. However, those of us who support the Refuges, can see the desperate situations they are in.

Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to contact the President of the FOHR.

Sincerely, on behalf of President Jaclyn Rhoads and the full FOHR Board, Carol L. Armstrong, Board Secretary

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF FRIENDS OF MALHEUR NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Members of the Committee:

This testimony is being submitted on behalf of the Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), which was formed in 1999 to support Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon. We appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on the FY 2022 Interior Appropriations bill.

I serve as president of the Friends of Malheur NWR, which has a membership base of over 700 and over 13,000 fans following our social media pages. This large, 187,000-acre, very rural and remote Refuge is very important to the American people and to the fish and wildlife it supports. It is one of the "jewels" of the refuge system and it provides multiple environmental services that are of high value to the American people.

Overall, the National Wildlife Refuge System requires at least $900 million in Operations and Maintenance (O&M) funding to be considered "fully funded", which would allow all refuges to be fully staffed, with adequate maintenance, biological, hunting, fishing, environmental education, and interpretation programs. We ask that you work towards that overall goal of $900 million in annual funding. We request that this subcommittee allocate at least $600 million in funding for the Refuge System Operations and Maintenance fund for FY 2022. Much more funding is needed which would better serve the public and would yield net economic benefits.

Fully funding the needs of the National Wildlife Refuge System is a very good investment. The 2019 Banking on Nature Report—a survey of the economic values of refuge visitation, estimated that "In FY 2017, 53.6 million people visited refuges. Their spending generated $3.2 billion of sales in local economies. As this spending flowed through the economy, over 41,000 people were employed and $1.1 billion in employment income was generated." The report also shows that in FY2017, Malheur NWR supported 210,340 visits which generated $30,679,300 in economic benefits and supported $8,261,800 in employment income. Money spent on National Wildlife Refuges is a fantastic investment for the American People!

As a refuge Friends organization, we have witnessed the effects that years of underfunding have had on our National Wildlife Refuge System, especially at Malheur NWR. Underfunding has caused a huge maintenance backlog there which has reduced the area of wetlands that can be provided for migratory birds, therefore limiting the ability of the refuge to fulfill its mission to benefit wildlife. It also has caused cutbacks in visitor services and degradation of visitor facilities, lowering the quality of visitor experiences at this jewel of the Refuge System. Malheur National Wildlife Refuge staff is down to only 11 permanent full-time equivalents (FTEs) from a full workforce of 30 FTEs. Also, as you should be aware, Malheur NWR was severely impacted by the effects of the illegal occupation of refuge headquarters in 2016 and the severe damage done to the facilities on the refuge. The repair costs of several million dollars took funding away from the Refuge System, further setting back progress on meeting the needs of refuges. Our organization donates approximately 10,000 hours of volunteer service to Malheur annually; however, our volunteer force cannot meet all the unfunded needs of this vast 187,000-acre refuge.

This pattern of chronic underfunding is not sustainable. Despite the hard work of our volunteers, volunteer efforts cannot equal the knowledge and expertise of FWS staff. Our request of $600 million for the Refuge System's O&M accounts will allow the Refuge System to make up its more than 400 staff position lost since FY11, including those at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge.

This request of $600 million, an increase of $112 million over FY 2011 appropriations, would greatly benefit our refuge and the economically depressed local community. Malheur NWR would be able to hire more staff to meet its mission and purpose and to restore wetland vitality, repair damaged infrastructure needed to manage wetlands, build out our environmental education programs, and further engage the broad collaborative partnership Malheur is involved with in the local community to improve wetlands and wildlife habitat conditions.

Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to contact me, Gary Ivey, the President, of the Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge at friends@malheurfriends.org (web page: MalheurFriends.org).

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FRIENDS OF THE MID-COLUMBIA RIVER WILDLIFE REFUGES

Chairwoman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee:

This testimony is being submitted on behalf of the Friends of the Mid-Columbia Wildlife Refuges. Our organization was formed in 2001 to support the 7 separate refuges and one national monument in our area that are managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We thank you for your support of the National Wildlife Refuge System, and would like to request an increase in funding for Refuge System Operations and Maintenance to $600 million in FY2022.

All of our activities are done to support work of our local US Fish and Wildlife Service personnel. We provide opportunities for people to connect with nature through projects, programs and events. Consistent with what many psychologists have observed, our organization feels that interacting with nature produces more well-rounded and healthy individuals, be they adult or child. We also feel that the resources within the Refuges in our region, and the activities of the Refuge staff, provide this interaction for many in our community.

Our region, like others, has been greatly affected by the pandemic and mandated isolation. During this time, we have noted that many people have been visiting the Mid-Columbia Refuges not just to hunt, but simply to walk or observe wildlife. We have had an annual visitation of 150,000 including 30,000 hunt visits Despite this heavy use, the 4 refuges of the Mid-Columbia Refuges have lost 20% of their staff over the past 2 years with no funding to replace them. Our local refuges have become a much needed refuge for people as well as wildlife, and our bi-county health district has strongly encouraged these activities as a way of coping with the isolation and depression associated pandemic restrictions.

Recent development and construction in our area has resulted in the loss of much valuable habitat and similar issues on a national level are resulting in a reduction in the population of many species. Our Refuges provide habitat for hundreds of thousands of waterfowl, endangered salmon, and rare/declining species including the burrowing owl, long-billed curlew, and ferruginous hawk. It is our feeling that the Refuge system can continue to play a role in turning around national trends but if we do not act now, we will lose much that we hold precious and valuable.

Friends of the Mid-Columbia River Wildlife Refuges are proud to have worked closely with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff on many projects, including:

—Remediation of critical habitat for both migratory and residential birds, many large and small mammals, and a plethora of other species. This is critical because, as noted above, our region is undergoing very fast growth with the habitat loss characteristic of such rapid development.

—Prior to the pandemic, we worked with Refuge staff on guided field trips aimed at providing opportunities for people to view, photograph, study, research and learn about the flora and fauna of the Mid-Columbia Refuges. While many programs were for adults, a good number were tailored to the age group of visiting school children.

—We have helped Refuge staff with trail maintenance, increasing accessibility for walking (with disabled access), hiking on soft trails, biking, horse-riding, kayaking and canoeing. These and associated activities allow many local residents of all ages to get outdoors for exercise and to explore a world of wildlife while doing so.

—Our organization and Refuge staff have had 'citizen science' projects that support biologists studying local fauna and flora, with our members often being on hand to answer questions from the public and contact for assistance

—In conjunction with a wildlife rehabilitation facility in Oregon, we have had programs that educate the public about returning injured wildlife to their natural environment by releasing them on our Refuges.

—Because many of the visitors are from our region, our Refuges offer fishing and hunting opportunities relatively close to home thus obviating the need to drive long distances for outdoor recreational activities. This reduction in drive-time supports the State of Washington's goal to reduce its carbon footprint.

We agree with the National Wildlife Refuge Association which estimates that at least $900 million is needed for full funding and that supporting the 2022 Refuge System Operations and Maintenance Fund at $600 million is the first step to reaching that long term goal. This increase over the FY 2021 appropriation would have a strong positive impact for the Mid-Columbia Refuges by allowing them to fill vacant staff positions, to continue with much needed habitat restoration and to support their many environmental education programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. Please feel free to contact our organization at mcnaryedcenter@gmail.com

[This statement was submitted by Carl Berkowitz, Secretary.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FRIENDS OF MIDWAY ATOLL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee:

This testimony is being submitted on behalf of the Friends of Midway Atoll NWR, which was formed in 1999 to support the Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge and Battle of Midway National Memorial (MANWR). We appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on the FY 2022 Interior Appropriations bill.

Located approximately halfway between Honolulu and Tokyo on the far northwestern end of the Hawaiian archipelago, Midway Atoll forms part of the Northwest Hawaiian Islands Important Bird Area (IBA), designated as such by BirdLife International because of its seabirds and endemic land birds. The atoll is a critical habitat in the central Pacific Ocean which includes breeding habitat for 17 seabird species. Midway Atoll is host to the world's largest albatross colony, including over 70% of the world's nesting population of the Laysan albatross and almost one third of the world's Black-footed Albatrosses. In breeding season there can regularly be over a million albatross nesting on the Refuge's 2–1/2 square miles of land.

Midway Atoll is not only home for the Laysan and Black-footed albatross but for other rare and endangered species as well, such as the Laysan Teal, green sea turtles, spinner dolphins, and the critically endangered Hawaiian monk seal (the most endangered marine mammal found wholly in US waters). Since 2011 the islands of Midway have also been the only US location where successful nesting of the critically endangered Short-tailed albatross has occurred. The surrounding marine seascape also is unique, with coral reefs that are home to a high percentage of endemic fish species.

Midway is perhaps best known for the pivotal role it played in a June 1942 naval battle that turned the tide of World War II in the Pacific and was one of the most significant naval battles in our human history. The battle is commemorated by the Battle of Midway National Memorial that was established in 2000. The U.S. Navy recognized the Battle of Midway as one of the two most significant dates in naval history. The Memorial was established so that the heroic courage and sacrifice of those who fought against overwhelming odds to win an incredible victory will never be forgotten.

Being halfway between the mainland US and Asia, commercial air carriers (and their US based manufacturers) rely on Midway's existing FAA approved runway as an emergency diversion point. Henderson Airfield on the Refuge is certified as emergency diversion point for ETOPS (Extended Range Twin Engine Operations) operations.

The need to maintain an operational airfield along with the designation as a National Memorial (with no additional funds for the latter) places an unusual burden on the USFWS. MANWR is like no other Refuge in the US, where in addition to its normal charge of conserving, protecting, and enhancing the flora and fauna, the USFWS staff on this refuge is also responsible for maintaining the historic structures and managing for the Battle of Midway National Memorial, all while operating Henderson Field to FAA standards. In addition, MANWR because of its existing runway, is also the only true entryway (window) into the largest contiguous fully protected conservation area under the U.S. flag, the Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument (PMNM). Importantly, PMNM, is inscribed as a mixed (natural and cultural) World Heritage Site by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) and is the only designated mixed World Heritage site in the US. Finally, the high number of endangered or threatened species living at MANWR makes initiating and completing just about any project on the Refuge much more expensive often times due to Federal endangered species regulations and concerns.

Despite inflation and aging infrastructure, overall funding for MANWR has been unchanged for the past decade. This in part, has resulted in a long-term inability of the USFWS to adequately address many of the refuge's infrastructure needs including needs of some of the historical buildings. Over the years flat budgets have led to increasing deferred maintenance backlogs on many facilities and structures on the refuge, and since November 2012 a cessation of the public visitor program.

Overall, the National Wildlife Refuge System requires at least $900 million in Operations and Maintenance Funding to be considered at "full funding", which allows

all refuges to be staffed and with adequate funds for maintenance, biological, hunting, fishing, environmental education, and interpretation programs. We ask that you work towards that overall goal of $900 million in annual funding.

We request that this subcommittee allocate $600 million in funding for the Refuge System Operations and Maintenance fund for FY 2022.

This request of $600 million, an increase of $112 million over FY 2011 appropriations, would greatly impact our refuge. The Midway Atoll NWR and Battle of Midway National Monument would be able to hire needed staff positions that are now vacant, begin to address the deferred maintenance backlog, and potentially reestablish a public visitation program allowing Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge, Battle of Midway National Memorial and Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument to again be accessible to the American people.

Finally, Midway Atoll NWR along with this country's 567 wildlife refuges are a national treasure. They provide clean air and water, a haven for wildlife, and a place for people to connect with nature

Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to contact Wayne Sentman, the President of the Friends of Midway Atoll NWR at friendsmidway@gmail.com.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FRIENDS OF NEAL SMITH NWR, PRAIRIE CITY, IOWA

Chairwoman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee:

This testimony is being submitted by Board Member, James Johnson, Friends of Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge, Prairie City, Iowa.

HISTORY AND MISSION

The Walnut Creek National Wildlife Refuge was created in 1990 by an act of Congress primarily through the efforts of Congressman Neal Edward Smith, Democrat, Iowa, 4th and 5th districts, an environmentalist with family roots in farming. The land was destined by its owners, Redfield Electric, to become a nuclear power plant but public opinion following nuclear accidents at Three Mile Island and Chernobyl together with geologic studies coalesced opinion that it was not a good idea. Congressman Smith, hearing the land was to be sold, found funding for the initial purchase of 3,000 acres and the land became the fifth national wildlife refuge in Iowa

In 1997, the name of the Refuge was changed to Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge in honor of Congressman Smith. This year, in March, Mr. Smith celebrated his 101st birthday and he, as health permits, remains active in the affairs of the Refuge and the Friends organization supporting the Refuge. That same year, 1997, the 40,000 sq. foot Prairie Learning Center which houses a visitor center, displays, education laboratories, classrooms, a theater and the refuge staff was opened to the public. The Neal Smith Refuge with a congressionally—defined boundary containing approximately 11,000 acres is home to the largest contiguous, public, tallgrass restoration effort in the United States. Nearly 6,500 acres have been returned to tallgrass prairie, the threatened oak savanna and wet sedge meadows. NSNWR is classified as an urban refuge being just 13 miles from the Des Moines metroplex of some 15 cities and a population exceeding 750,000. Neal Smith NWR has as its mission to actively protect, restore, reconstruct and manage the diverse native ecosystems of tallgrass prairie, oak savanna and sedge meadow and to develop a citizenry that through environmental education understands the importance of conservation and our nation's natural resources.

TALLGRASS PRAIRIE VALUE

So why reconstruct a tallgrass prairie? Both agriculture fields and prairies are valuable commodities. Tallgrass prairies were the environments in which our central prairie state's livelihoods developed from the 1840s for a hundred years or more. The prairie remnants and restorations preserve the natural, cultural, and historical environments in which many of our fathers and grandfathers and families grew up. Historically and traditionally, Native Americans relied on prairie plants for food, medicine, shelter and clothing. Bison bison, the American megafauna species and National mammal, numbered in the 40s of millions and were an important source of food, tools and clothing. European-American settlers learned much about these life supporting attributes of prairies from the Native Americans but brought their own ways and means forever changing the landscape, the flora, and the wildlife existing thereupon.

So to, from research, we know the prairie can continue to benefit mankind. The deep root systems, reaching depths of fifteen feet and more below the surface, an-

chor soils helping to prevent erosion. Brome and native, but invasive, canary grass monocultures, commonly planted as buffers along roadsides and streams, are less efficient than native prairie in erosion prevention and do not provide a habitat for diversity and abundance of wildlife. The deep roots of prairie plants act as filters, absorbing agriculture runoff nutrients to improve water quality downstream. Research studies initiated at Neal Smith NWR have demonstrated that strips of prairie plants separating agriculture fields and impeding surface runoff reduce nitrates and phosphates leaving the fields by over 90% relative to the typical brome and canary grass buffer strips planted as study controls. Prairies are efficient carbon storage and oxygen production entities. They build up quality soils and provide habitat for wildlife. People enjoy the colorful beauty of the prairie landscape while participating in outdoor activities such as nature photography, hunting, and wildlife observation. Prairies serve as the homes for pollinator species. These species enable a 12 billion dollar agricultural industry in the USA. Also, the 400–500 tallgrass prairie plants species provide a vast set of genes from which we may be able to derive new medicines, improve plant growth characteristics and yields, or even develop entirely new products for mankind.

FRIENDS OF NEAL SMITH NWR

The supporting Friends organization formed in 1992 in support of the Walnut Creek National Wildlife Refuge, near Prairie City, Iowa. The Friends of Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge, consisting of 267 members, supports the mission goals and objectives of the Refuge with programs, activities, education, human resources, and with a coalition of partners we purchase and hold land within the projected Refuge boundaries and affect easements on lands adjacent to the Refuge boundaries. Our effort and that of the Refuge may be stated as the attempt to restore fields of corn and soybeans into tallgrass prairie that existed in Iowa in the 1840s before settlements arrived and modern farming modified the landscape. In the entire tallgrass prairie region of the United States just 0.1% of native tallgrass prairie remains yet it was responsible for the creation of the world's most productive crop lands and the multi-billion dollar industry that agriculture is today. The Friends mission is to bring together the public and a thriving wildlife refuge valued by all. Our vision as Friends is to bring this story of the Prairie to as many people as possible. To this end we create programs, host speakers, participate in partner events, lead interpretive walks, raise funds through memberships and events, design and participate in workdays, serve as teachers, support education of students, create curriculum, seek grants, identify and purchase lands for the FWS, provide academic scholarships, commission research studies, support Refuge interns, support community projects, assist with plantings and seed collections, maintain a Prairie Point Nature bookstore and serve as hosts for the 250,000 yearly visitors. We support children's education through grants for busing that bring nearly 8,000 school children to the Refuge each year. Volunteers provide approximately 15,000 yearly service hours to Refuge operations but it is never enough to accomplish needed, ongoing projects. With the recent FWS budget cut backs, the Friends have supported Refuge goals with purchases of seeds, supplies and equipment for the development and management of areas. But we can do only so much as our Friends budget has been severely curtailed due to the pandemic. The two principal sources of income, our Prairie Point Nature store and memberships and donations have been deeply affected by the pandemic. Yet the overall need for our service has drastically increased because Neal Smith NWR has had an influx of over 92,000 more visitors than the previous year when 250,000 visitors use the tours and trail system.

CHALLENGES AND NEEDS

Staff

At one point NSNWR had a full time staff of twelve with another twelve student interns provided by funds from the Friends. Today, there are just seven full time staff and no interns to meet the mission, goals and objectives of the Refuge. Adequate funding is critically important for this restoration project. Just one refuge operations staff member exists to maintain infrastructure and support habitat management. He cannot keep up with needs. Visitor services have had critical needs for staff for several years. With the estimated 340,000 visitors in 2020 and maintenance, infrastructure and services being just a shadow of what they have been, we are desperate. The Refuge needs to have the twelve staff persons and several contiguous years of full funding to begin to achieve the objectives in the NSNWR 15 year Comprehensive Plan begun in 2013.

Burn group

Native and non-native invasive plant species are a critical threat to prairie restoration projects. Chemicals, selective mowing and burns are the principal means to control invasives and support native prairie species. NSNWR has invasives that are best controlled by burns. In fact, about one fourth of the restored acres (2,000) need to be burned each year. NSNWR does not have a Burn Team and the Regional burn unit is usually unavailable during opportune times. We have brought Burn Units from other regions but the costs and scheduling are prohibitive and difficult, respectively. A second Regional mobile Burn Team with equipment would make prairie burns more effective as they could be scheduled in the spring or fall. There have, as of this writing, been no burns since the fall of 2019 and the invasives such as black locust and willow along with the lespedeza sericea species are being found in many areas. This is tragic. Funds for the return of prescribed burns to an adequate level are critical in establishment of prairies and controlling invasive species.

Roads

The gravel roads through the prairie are in need of repair especially after each winter when ruts make some spots unpassable and even dangerous. County roads are maintained by county equipment but at the Refuge roads see much more service and require more maintenance. New gravel is needed and equipment is needed to spread and move gravel to the road crowns. Funding for agreements with counties increasing repair and maintenance for roads is needed but is nonexistent.

Bison

Diversity of the American National Animal, Bison bison, requires a breeding/husbandry program for the approximately 35,000 genetically pure animals remaining. This is accomplished through multiple federal, state and other pasturing sites and transport of appropriate animals to minimize inbreeding. NSNWR is one of these pasturing sites and participates in the Bison program with approximately 50—66 bison on 800 acres. In support of the program, plans to increase the acreage to 1,600 acres holding 100–110 bison have developed but are on hold because of costs. High tension wire fencing costs estimated at $100,000 per mile not including installation have made this improvement impossible under the current budgeting situation. The Friends have not found a grant resource or have not been successful in developing partnership funding for the needed support.

Service/Education

Visitor services are the heart and soul of the Refuge. Four staff members and four interns together with volunteer teachers were employed in visitor services to teach, educate, develop curriculum, answer visitors' questions, to plan and arrange meetings and group visits, and develop plans to bring the nature and scope of the Refuge to the eyes of the public. Visitor Services, now, has only two positions, there are no interns, and volunteers from the Friends provide much of the visitor interactions. The Friends provide six or more educational programs during the year and the Refuge visitor services created additional programs while hosting 60 to 150 school classroom visits involving 8,000 children on a yearly basis. Many volunteers were involved in these activities. Interpretive hikes and classroom sessions were a major and very well appreciated activity developed through Visitor Services. Community outreach was a vigorous part of Visitor Services. Education is a major objective in the Refuge's 15 year Comprehensive Plan. Educational objectives in the Plan will not be met without continuous and adequate funding. After Covid-19 the Friends group and volunteers will again do what they can, smoothing out the inconsistencies and gaps and providing financial support, but volunteers and part-time staff are not a sustainable model for the NSNWR or the Refuge system's needs.

Prairie Learning Center

The Prairie Learning Center is the focus of the Refuge and contains education, administrative, and visitor information and displays. It is twenty five years old and its needs are many. HVAC is a continuous problem, rain exposes many roof leaks, communication links are problematic, water and plumbing issues create unusable restrooms, and the classrooms, and teaching laboratory have ancient or non-existent teacher support equipment. The 12,000 sq. feet of displays have not been updated in 25 years. The Friends looked into a major display update and found that 1.2 million dollars would be required for significant display improvements. An outdoor amphitheater with seating for 250–300 has been on the list of needs for eight years.

Land Acquisition

Neal Smith NWR boundary encloses about 8,500 acres and with purchase of 2,500 acres could achieve its defined boundaries. Because of shortfalls in the FWS budget,

land, when it becomes available in the defined area, may be purchased by the Friends through negotiations with owners and agents then sold to the FWS or its agent when federal money becomes available. By this means we have increased by several hundred acres the protected areas of the refuge this past year. To fully expand the Refuge to its defined limits, more than 17 million dollars would be needed. Federal acquisition money has been sporadically available; therefore, the Refuge and Friends try to negotiate easements with local landowners to protect interests of the Refuge.

NATIONAL FUNDING

Very simply the Board members of the Friends of Neal Smith NWR and I request that your subcommittee allocate the full 600 million for the Refuge System Operations and Maintenance fund for the 2022 fiscal year. The NSNWR would be able to

—Hire staff and support interns
—Support the restoration with prescribed burns to reduce invasives
—Develop and maintain roads and trails
—Support the populations and genetics of Bison bison
—Construct a needed amphitheater for meetings events and education
—Enhance and develop hands-on environmental education
—Restore habitat, monitor and protect threatened species such as the Grasshopper sparrow
—Conduct research with colleagues to study solutions to National problems such as farm runoff of nitrogen and phosphorus and topsoil losses
—Improve the public's understanding of the Tallgrass prairie through improved displays and
—Provide for land acquisition and restoration and maintenance of the Prairie Learning Center.

Our Nation's refuges are the face of environmentalism for the public and a source of pride for the Country. We must recognize the intrinsic value of our refuges and provide maximum funding to insure protection, accessibility, stewardship, and stability of the refuge system now and for the next generations.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FRIENDS OF SHERBURNE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (NWR)

Chairwoman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee:

This testimony is being submitted on behalf of the Friends of Sherburne NWR, which was formed in 1993 to support the Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge. We appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on the FY 2022 Interior Appropriations bill. We request that this subcommittee allocate $600 million in funding for the Refuge System Operations and Maintenance fund for FY 2022.

WHO WE ARE

Friends of Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that nurtures an appreciation for and the conservation of Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge through education, volunteerism, and philanthropy. With more than 450 members, we support the refuge in providing education for children in nature's classroom, furnishing information and facilities for refuge visitors, and ensuring family events like Wildlife Festival remain free and open to all. Our members are passionate about conserving wildlife and wild places, especially at Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge

IMPORTANCE OF SHERBURNE NWR

Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge provides important resources and services to the community and beyond: 1) maintenance and conservation of environmental resources, services, and ecological processes; 2) protection of natural resources such as fish, wildlife, and plants; 3) protection of cultural and historical sites and objects; 4) provision of educational and research opportunities; and 5) outdoor and wildlife-related recreation. Major ecological contributions of the refuge are watershed protection, maintenance and stabilization of ecological processes, and the enhancement of biodiversity.

OVERVIEW OF REFUGE AND PROGRAMS

The 30,700-acre Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge is in central Minnesota and predominantly composed of oak savanna. Sherburne supports a wide variety of wildlife, including state threatened Blanding's turtles, and is a fall staging area for greater sandhill cranes, with a record number of over 11,000 cranes estimated to be roosting on the refuge in recent years. The land is also managed to promote the health and well-being of migratory birds and their habitat.

Oak savanna habitat, traditionally found in Minnesota and the Midwest, has largely disappeared from the landscape due to plowing and development. Only about 0.02 percent of this habitat remains. The refuge strives to maintain, enhance, and restore this landscape for the benefit of a wide variety of species, including the red-headed woodpecker.

The refuge is an asset to local communities, providing recreational opportunities for residents and for those traveling through these communities. Many visitors enjoy the scenery and wildlife that can be spotted on the refuge's three hiking trails, the Prairie's Edge Wildlife Drive, or from a canoe or kayak on the designated canoe route along the St. Francis River.

A hotspot for photographers and birders, Sherburne NWR draws many visitors from the Twin Cities and across the country. Among hunters, we are known for deer, small game, and migratory bird hunting. Anglers are commonly spotted at the various fishing access points spread across the refuge.

The refuge hosts environmental education programs throughout the year for local elementary and intermediate schools, both on and off site. The refuge has a partnership with two schools that receive volunteer or staff-led programming and offers self-led opportunities for other neighboring school districts. Further, it provides a variety of interpretive programs and events throughout the calendar year. The refuge has an active volunteer program, with more than 200 passionate and dedicated individuals donating their time and expertise, some for more than two decades.

NATIONAL FUNDING AND THE SHERBURNE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Overall, the National Wildlife Refuge System requires at least $900 million in Operations and Maintenance Funding to be considered "full funding," meaning all refuges staffed, with adequate maintenance, and support for biological, hunting, fishing, environmental education, and interpretation programs. We ask that you work towards that overall goal of $900 million in annual funding.

We request that this subcommittee allocate $600 million in funding for the Refuge System Operations and Maintenance fund for FY 2022.

This request of $600 million, an increase of $112 million over FY 2011 appropriations, would greatly impact our refuge. With adequate funding, Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge would be better able to hire the staff and cover expenses to:

—Restore and maintain oak savanna critical for support of species dependent on the habitat
—Provide maintenance of wetlands to support migrating waterfowl
—Provide increased capacity for biological research, surveys, and monitoring
—Control invasive species to benefit a diversity of fish and wildlife
—Have an adequate level of law enforcement for natural resource protection and public safety
—Further build out our environmental education programs
—Increase capacity to reach communities of diverse backgrounds
—Construct and operate the long-awaited Visitor Center

Just as Sherburne NWR is the face of public lands for people from the north metro of the Twin Cities to St Cloud, Minnesota, all national wildlife refuges are there for communities across the country. We need full funding to ensure that they stay protected, accessible, and stewarded for the generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

For more information, please feel free to contact Steven Chesney, President of the Friends of Sherburne NWR, at FriendsofSherburne@gmail.com.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FRIENDS OF TUALATIN RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE COMPLEX

Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee:

I appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony on behalf of the Friends of Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge Complex, near Portland, Oregon. Friends

of Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge is a 501 (C) (3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote the conservation and welfare of the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge for all dependent species and to enrich the lives of citizens through education and experience. Our organization has approximately 300 members. I am a member of the Board of this organization. We thank you for your support for the National Wildlife Refuge System and for the opportunity to offer comments on the FY2022 Interior Appropriations bill, most importantly regarding funding for the Refuge System Operations and Maintenance Fund, which we respectfully request you fund at $600 million in FY2022.

Just over a year ago, when the pandemic quickly shutdown most federal, state, and local parks, our beloved Oregon Coast beaches and other public lands in the Portland area, there was one place where visitors could go and safely drink in nature while masked and socially distanced. That place was Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge. Although the Visitor Center and restrooms and even the parking lot were closed, we flocked there by the thousands to soak up our much-needed ration of the outdoors.

As more and more people "discovered" the Refuge as a respite in a very stressful time, there has been a heightened public awareness of the refuge as a valuable resource to our community. But, with increased awareness and usage comes increased need for upkeep and protection. Our Fish and Wildlife Staff has done a stellar job of preserving the habitat of the refuge, but they are working at a great handicap. Staff has not increased while an entire new refuge was added to their care in 2013 and is now being prepared for opening to the public.

The completely inadequate budgets fail to cover the cost of maintaining the incredibly rich and diverse wildlife habitats that make up the Refuge System. Our refuges are being loved to death.

The funding gap that has arisen due to low budget allocations over the last decade has degraded critical wildlife habitat and imperiled important species. Although the FY2020 appropriations bill injected a much needed additional $14 million into the budget, funding levels remain below the high of $503 million in FY2010, with the shortfall becoming more acute every year. We must change this trajectory.

National Wildlife Refuges are currently funded at 59 per acre per year. Compare that to funding for National Park Service at $30 per acre per year.

The Refuge System cannot fulfill its obligation to the American public, our wildlife, and 59 million annual visitors (in FY2019) without increases in maintenance and operation funds. Even with the gains in FY 2020, overall funding for the Refuge System has declined substantially over the last twelve years. Funding in FY2010 was $503 million—$598 million in today's dollars with inflation and salary increases. This difference of $95 million has forced the Service to cut back on programs and create efficiencies whenever possible—efficiencies that are sometimes harmful or even dangerous. For example, many refuges, such as Tualatin River, have been placed into complexes, where staff travel sometimes large distances to juggle duties on multiple refuges.

Current funding is nowhere near the at least $900 million needed for full funding. Our goal is to reach that figure in the next three years, and funding the Refuge System Operations and Maintenance Fund at $600 million is a step to reaching that goal.

The number of annual Refuge System visitors jumped by 13 million over the last few years. More people are looking to recreate on wildlife refuges, yet understaffed refuges struggle to provide those opportunities. Reductions in visitor services can be extremely limiting for constituencies who want to visit. Equally troubling is a 15% drop even before the pandemic in the number of volunteers since FY2011. At a time when record numbers of Americans are retiring and have the capability and desire to give back, the Service's ability to oversee their efforts has been curtailed. Volunteers provide an additional 20% of work on our national wildlife refuges, yet they are being turned away when the System needs them the most.

The Refuge System is bare bones right now and increased growth in urban spaces and outdoor recreation, and the impacts of climate change, place additional stress on the System. Every year, more and more refuges are closed to the public, habitat degrades, and visitors are turned away.

The Friends of Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge Complex appreciates the Subcommittee's consideration of our request of $600 mil for the refuge system operations and maintenance budget for FY2022 We look forward to working with Congress to accomplish this goal and appreciate your consideration of our requests. Please let me know if you have any questions.

[This statement was submitted by Cheryl Turoczy Hart, Board Member.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

SUMMARY

The Geological Society of America (GSA) recommends that Congress provide $1.75 billion for the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in Fiscal Year 2022. We thank Congress for the investments made in FY 2021 and encourage a path of increased investment to build USGS capabilities. As one of our Nation's key science agencies, the USGS plays a vital role in understanding and documenting mineral and energy resources that underpin economic growth; researching and monitoring potential natural hazards that threaten U.S. and international security; informing communities about the impacts of a changing climate; determining and assessing water quality and availability; and assessing risk of COVID–19 spread to new species. Approximately two thirds of the USGS budget is allocated for research and development. In addition to supporting the science activities and decisions of the Department of the Interior, this research is used by communities across the nation to make informed decisions in land-use planning, emergency response, natural resource management, engineering, and education. GSA believes that it is important to grow the USGS budget to address past shortfalls in staffing, facilities, and research, given the importance of its many activities that protect lives and property, contribute to national security, and enhance the quality of life.

The Geological Society of America (GSA) is a scientific society with members from academia, government, and industry in more than 100 countries. Through its meetings, publications, and programs, GSA enhances the professional growth of its members and promotes the geosciences in the service of humankind. GSA encourages cooperative research among earth, life, planetary, and social scientists, fosters public dialogue on geoscience issues, and supports all levels of earth science education.

The Geological Society of America (GSA) appreciates the increase to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) budget in FY 2021 and thanks the Committee for recognizing the importance of the work of the agency to protect lives, property, and national security. GSA urges Congress to build on these investments and provide USGS $1.75 billion in Fiscal Year 2022. This increase will allow the USGS to implement new initiatives, maintain the base funding for critical research and monitoring, fill many vacant positions, and update and maintain its facilities.

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATIONAL SECURITY, HEALTH, AND WELFARE

The USGS is one of the nation's premier science agencies, with a distinctive capacity to engage interdisciplinary teams of experts to gather data, conduct research, and develop integrated decision support tools. Approximately two thirds of the USGS budget is allocated for research and development. In addition to underpinning the science activities and decisions of the Department of the Interior, this research is used by communities and businesses across the nation to make informed decisions regarding land use planning, emergency response, natural resource management, engineering, and education.

USGS research addresses many of society's greatest challenges for national security, health, and welfare. Several are highlighted below.

—Natural hazards are a major cause of fatalities and economic losses. NOAA found that in 2020 alone, there were 13 severe storms, seven tropical cyclones, one drought, and one wildfire that resulted in a cost of $95 billion and 262 deaths. An improved scientific understanding of geologic and atmospheric hazards will reduce future losses by informing effective planning and mitigation.

—Decision makers in many sectors rely upon USGS data to respond to natural hazards. For example, USGS volcano monitoring provides data to enable decisions on aviation safety. NOAA depends on USGS products and data that are reliable, timely, and accurate to issue flood, drought, and tsunami warnings. USGS is a key partner in obtaining data necessary to predict severe space weather events, which affect the electric power grid, satellite communications, and navigation systems. The Promoting Research and Observations of Space Weather to Improve the Forecasting of Tomorrow Act (PROSWIFT Act), which was signed into law in October of 2020, highlights a path forward for USGS research to meet these objectives.

—The recent enactment of several bills illustrates the bipartisan, bicameral support of hazards research and GSA recommends adequate funding to implement these bills. For example, the National Landslide Preparedness Act was signed into law earlier this year, which expanded the existing Landslide Hazards Program within USGS and also authorized a 3D elevation program to update and coordinate the collection of elevation data across the country using enhanced,

high-resolution surveys. Directives to USGS include identifying, mapping, assessing, and researching landslide hazards, responding to landslide events, establishing working groups with state offices, and developing landslide guidelines for geoscientists, emergency management personnel, and land-use decision-makers.

—GSA urges Congress to continue supporting efforts for USGS to modernize and upgrade its natural hazards monitoring and warning systems, including additional 3–D elevation mapping and earthquake early warning systems, while maintaining fundamental research and monitoring.

—There is a vital need to understand the abundance and distribution of critical mineral resources, as well as the geologic processes that form them, both within the United States and globally, as articulated in the Energy Policy Act of 2020. Achieving this goal will require expanded collection and analysis of geological, geochemical, and geophysical data.

—GSA supports increases in minerals science, research, information, data collection and analysis that will allow for more economic and environmental management and utilization of minerals. In addition, GSA supports increases in funding for research to better understand domestic sources of energy, including conventional and unconventional oil and gas and renewables. GSA appreciates congressional support for the EarthMRI program, which will provide new resources and leverage current data to accelerate geological and geophysical mapping, identify critical mineral sites for further scientific review, among other safety, security, scientific, and industrial uses.

—Improved fundamental understanding of the quantity, quality, distribution, and use of water resources through monitoring and research by the USGS is necessary to ensure adequate and safe water resources for the health and welfare of society. Improved representation of geological, biological, and ecological systems—including underlying physical and chemical processes and their interactions-is needed. In addition to maintaining current monitoring capabilities, new hydrologic data are required to improve the reliability and reduce the uncertainty of scientific analyses that support water resources management and policy decisions.

—USGS research on climate impacts is used by local policymakers and resource managers to make sound decisions based on the best possible science. In addition to fundamental, long-term climate change research, the USGS provides scientific information necessary to anticipate, monitor, and adapt to the effects of climate change at regional and local levels, allowing communities to make smart, cost-effective decisions. For example, the Alaska Climate Adaptation Science Center (CASC) has conducted research on the relationship between wildfire and other ecological disturbances, such as drought, which will help resource managers plan for and adapt to the evolving threat that fire poses to humans, infrastructure, and ecosystems. Across the country, the Southeast CASC is working with local stakeholders to protect cultural resources in the face of a changing climate.

Activities from hazard monitoring to mineral forecasts are supported by Core System Sciences, Facilities, and Science Support. These programs and services, such as geologic mapping, data preservation, and satellite observation, provide critical information, data, and infrastructure that underpin the research of the USGS. Stagnant funding has created backlogs in the posting of available jobs, the hiring of new scientists, and the dissemination of data to new stakeholders; increased investment is needed to fill these critical roles. GSA appreciates the committee's recent investments in Facilities to address many deferred maintenance issues and encourages continued investment in this area. GSA recommends long-term funding and support for the USGS library, which is used by both federal scientists and external researchers. The Library houses more than 1.5 million volumes and more than three million maps, photographs and field records, with much of the information unique to the USGS or available from very sources worldwide.

The Landsat satellites have amassed the largest archive of remotely sensed land data in the world, a tremendously important resource for natural resource exploration, land use planning, and assessing water resources, the impacts of natural disasters, and global agriculture production. GSA supports interagency efforts for future support of Landsat. The recent National Academy of Sciences' Earth Science and Applications from Space (ESAS) Decadal Survey report notes,

> *"Earth science and applications are a key part of the nation's information infrastructure, warranting a U.S. program of Earth observations from space that is robust, resilient, and appropriately balanced."*

Knowledge of the Earth sciences is essential to scientific literacy and to meeting the environmental and resource challenges of the twenty-first century. Investments in these areas could lead to job growth, as demand for these professionals now and in the future is assessed to be high. Strong investments in geoscience research are needed to prepare citizens for these job opportunities. These investments will also allow for the recruitment and training of a diverse STEM pipeline, paving the way for increased equity, inclusion, and accessibility within the field of Earth sciences.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony about the U.S. Geological Survey. For additional information or to learn more about the Geological Society of America—including GSA Position Statements on climate change, water resources, mineral and energy resources, natural hazards, and public investment in Earth science research—please visit www.geosociety.org or contact GSA's Director for Geoscience Policy Kasey White at kwhite@geosociety.org.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE GREAT LAKES INDIAN FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION (GLIFWC)

1. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, OPERATION OF INDIAN PROGRAMS

a. Trust–Natural Resources Management, Rights Protection Implementation (RPI), Great Lakes Area Resource Management—$8,185,186 ($1,129,000 above FY2021 allocation) an increase of 16%, equivalent to that proposed by the Administration for the Department of the Interior. GLIFWC supports full expansion of the RPI line item to meet treaty obligations and fulfill federal court orders.

b. Trust–Natural Resources Management, Tribal Management/Development Program (TM/DP): At least the $13,387,000 provided in FY21 and the TM/DP requests of GLIFWC's member tribes.

c. Trust–Natural Resources Management, Invasive Species: At least $10,776,000, the amount provided in FY21.

Funding Authorizations.—Snyder Act, 25 U.S.C. s. 13; Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, (P.L. 93–638), 25 U.S.C. ss. 450f and 450h; and the treaties between the United States and GLIFWC's member Ojibwe Tribes.[1]

2. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

a. Environmental Programs and Management, Geographic Programs, Great Lakes Restoration: At least $330,000,000, the amount provided in FY21, including no less than $16,500,000 for the Distinct Tribal Program (DTP) ($15,000,000 base program plus a proportional increase of the overall GLRI).

b. State and Tribal Assistance Grants, Categorical Grants, Tribal General Assistance Program: At least $66,250,000, the amount provided in FY21.

Funding Authorizations.—Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. s. 1268(c); Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act, Pub. L. 114–322 s. 5005; and treaties cited above.

These programs fulfill federal treaty, trust, and contract obligations to GLIFWC's member tribes, providing vital resources to sustain their governmental programs. We ask that Congress maintain and enhance these programs in proportion to recently proposed or enacted increases.

GLIFWC'S FY 2022 FUNDING REQUEST HIGHLIGHTS

1. GLIFWC and its member tribes are seeing the resurgence of an old challenge—combatting the racism that plagued the years after the tribes' rights were reaffirmed, and a new one—understanding the ongoing impact of climate change on their treaty protected resources. Increased funding, described in more detail below, is needed to address these issues.

2. Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding of no less than $330,000,000, with no less than $16,500,000 for the Distinct Tribal Program.

3. Full funding for contract support costs, as required by the ISDEA Act.

4. Sufficient funding in the Tribal Management and Development line item for GLIFWC's member tribes to fulfill their needs for reservation—based natural resource programs and to fund the Circle of Flight wetlands program.

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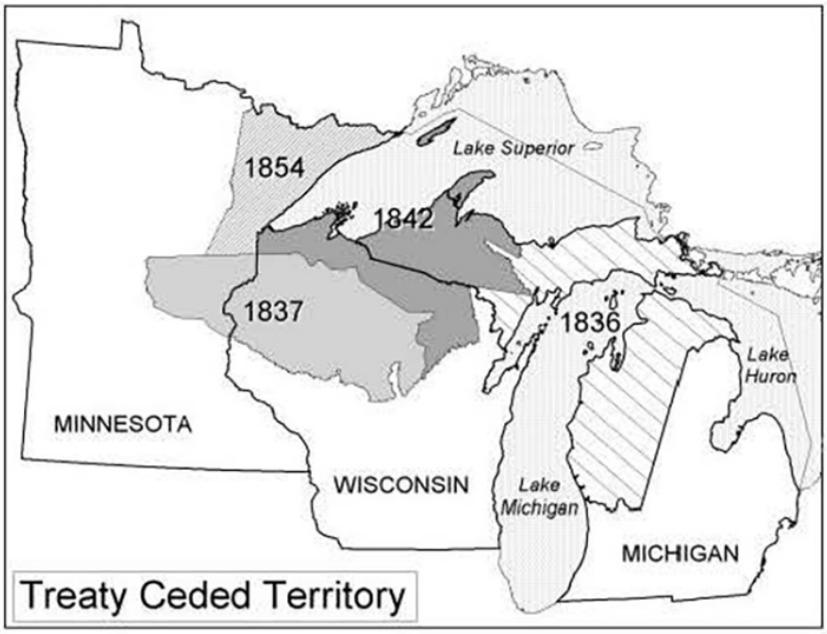
[1] Specifically, the Treaty of 1836, 7 Stat. 491; Treaty of 1837, 7 Stat. 536; Treaty of 1842, 7 Stat. 591; and Treaty of 1854, 10 Stat. 1109. The rights guaranteed by these treaties have been affirmed by various court decisions, including a 1999 US Supreme Court case.

GLIFWC'S GOAL—A SECURE FUNDING BASE TO FULFILL TREATY PURPOSES AND LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

For over 35 years, Congress has funded GLIFWC to implement comprehensive conservation, natural resource protection, and law enforcement programs that: 1) ensure member tribes are able to implement their treaty reserved rights to hunt, fish, and gather throughout the ceded territories; 2) ensure a healthy and sustainable natural resource base to support those rights; 3) protect public safety; and 4) promote healthy, safe communities. These programs also provide a wide range of public benefits, and facilitate participation in management partnerships in Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota.



GLIFWC'S PROGRAMS—PROMOTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES AND EDUCATING TRIBAL MEMBERS THROUGH TREATY RIGHTS EXERCISE

Established in 1984, GLIFWC is a natural resources management agency of eleven member Ojibwe Tribes with resource management responsibilities over their ceded territory (off-reservation) hunting, fishing and gathering treaty rights. These ceded territories extend over a 60,000 square mile area in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan.[2] GLIFWC employs over 80 full-time staff, including natural resource scientists, technicians, conservation enforcement officers, policy specialists, and public information specialists.

GLIFWC strives to implement its programs in a holistic, integrated manner consistent with the culture and values of its member tribes, especially in light of tribal lifeways that the exercise of treaty rights supports. This means not only ensuring that tribal members can legally exercise their rights, but supporting community efforts to educate them about the benefits (physical, spiritual, and cultural) of harvesting and consuming a more traditional diet, as well as promoting intergenerational learning and the transmission of traditional cultural and management practices.

[2] GLIFWC's programs do not duplicate those of the Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority or the 1854 Treaty Authority. GLIFWC also coordinates with its member tribes with respect to tribal treaty fishing that extends beyond reservation boundaries by virtue of the Treaty of 1854 and the reservations' locations on Lake Superior.

GLIFWC and its member tribes thank Congress, and particularly this Subcommittee, for its continuing support of these treaty obligations and its recognition of the ongoing success of these programs. In addition to continuing to support allocating increases to the RPI line item in the historically proportionate amounts, GLIFWC's FY 22 funding request includes two main elements:

1. BIA Great Lakes Area Management (Within The RPI Line Item): $8,185,186 An Increase In Glifwc's Allocation Within The Overall Line Item Is Needed To Address Two Primary Issues: 1) The Need For Additional Education And Sustained Partnerships To Combat Racism Toward Tribal Citizens And Misconceptions About Their Treaty Rights, And 2) The Effects Of Climate Change On Treaty Protected Resources. Addressing These Issues Effectively Will Require Glifwc To Sustain And Build Upon Partnerships That Have Already Established It As A Trusted Cooperator In Numerous Arenas.

With an increase to its base budget of 16%, GLIFWC could:

—restore the buying power it has lost since 2018 (approximately $356,500),
—secure funding for a full-time position in GLIFWC's Public Information Office to mitigate racism by enhancing educational efforts at all grade levels, including adult education (approximately $100,000),
—evaluate the impacts of changing habitat conditions including climate change on walleye, tullibee and other species in Mille Lacs Lake, Minnesota, an important fishery resource for both tribal and non-tribal fishers (approximately $275,000),
—conduct fisheries assessments near the Keweenaw Peninsula as a way to monitor stressors (including climate change) on the fishery (approximately $125,000), and
—solidify its harvest monitoring and enforcement activities and develop and sustain law enforcement partnerships to mitigate racism and social conflict (approximately $272,500).

The past year has seen unprecedented challenges and has exposed the need to redouble efforts to educate non-tribal communities about tribal treaty rights. GLIFWC and its member tribes have worked hard to ensure the public is aware of treaty harvesting activities, but even with additional support from the State of Wisconsin, that awareness has resulted in many of the old, anti-Indian misconceptions being recirculated in social media as well as at harvesting locations. Harvester harassment during the spring fishing season appears to be increasing. GLIFWC proposes to enhance its enforcement presence and partnerships, and to fund a full-time staff employee within its Public Information Office. Both efforts will enable greater outreach to citizens and students at all education levels, including adult education, so that understanding about treaty rights is sustained from an early age, and current misconceptions can be addressed.

Climate change is impacting the health of natural resources and requiring adaptation by people accessing those resources. These changes can exacerbate negative feelings. Continued research into climate change and its impacts, as well as dedicated and focused outreach about these issues, can help address some of these concerns and misconceptions.

2. EPA Great Lakes Restoration Initiative: $330,000,000. Distinct Tribal Program: $16,500,000. GLIFWC supports continued funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) as an important non-regulatory program that enhances and ensures coordinated governance in the Great Lakes, fulfillment of international agreements, and substantive natural resource protection and restoration projects. GLIFWC supports the continuation of GLRI funding at no less than $330 million.

GLIFWC appreciates the directive that EPA should follow the guidance in House Report 116–100, which directs the EPA and other federal agencies to fund tribal activities at not less than $15,000,000. Unfortunately, this amount is being treated as a ceiling rather than a floor. As implementation proceeds, an increasing number of tribes have shown interest in the GLRI, and as the program expands, the BIA must increase its capacity to administer it. Funds for administration are currently taken from Distinct Tribal Program (DTP) funds. GLIFWC and tribes have proposed that, should overall GLRI funding increase, the DTP should increase as well. To that end, a continued 5% commitment to this program for amounts over and above $300 million would allow additional tribes to implement their highest priority programs and allow for necessary capacity increases within the BIA.

RESULTS AND BENEFITS OF GLIFWC'S PROGRAMS

1. Maintain The Requisite Capability To Meet Legal Obligations, To Conserve Natural Resources, and To Regulate Treaty Harvests: At its most basic level, GLIFWC's programs support tribal compliance with court decrees and intergovernmental agreements that govern the tribes' treaty—reserved rights. Funding for

science and research enhances GLIFWC's ability to undertake work and participate in partnerships to address ecosystem threats that harm treaty natural resources, including those related to climate change.

2. Remain A Trusted Management and Law Enforcement Partner, and Scientific Contributor In The Great Lakes Region: GLIFWC has become a respected and integral part of management and law enforcement partnerships that conserve natural resources and protect public safety. It brings a tribal perspective to interjurisdictional Great Lakes management forums and would use its scientific expertise to study issues and geographic areas that are important to its member tribes but that others may not be examining.

3. Maintain The Overall Public Benefits That Derive From Its Programs: Over the years, GLIFWC has become a recognized and valued partner in natural resource management. Because of its institutional experience and staff expertise, GLIFWC has built and maintained numerous partnerships that: i) provide accurate information and data to counter social misconceptions about tribal treaty harvests and the status of ceded territory natural resources; ii) maximize each partner's financial resources and avoid duplication of effort and costs; iii) engender cooperation rather than competition; and iv) undertake projects that achieve public benefits that no one partner could accomplish alone.

4. Encourage and Contribute To Healthy Tribal Communities. GLIFWC works with its member tribes' communities to promote the benefits of treaty rights exercise. These include the health benefits associated with a more traditional diet and the intergenerational learning that takes place when elders teach youth. In addition, GLIFWC sponsors a camp each summer where tribal youth build leadership skills, strengthen connections to the outdoors, and learn about treaty rights and careers in natural resource fields.

[This statement was submitted by Michael J. Isham Jr., Executive Administrator.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HOPI TRIBE

Greetings Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Honorable Members of the Senate Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies. My name is Timothy Nuvangyaoma and I have the honor of serving as Chairman of the Hopi Tribe. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on priorities for Fiscal Year 2022. My testimony will focus on the need for funding to address the arsenic contamination in our water supply, as well as the need for funding to improve our education system.

The Hopi Reservation, located in the Northeast corner of Arizona, is approximately 2,500-square-miles. The Tribe has more than 14,000 enrolled tribal citizens, over half of whom reside in one of the Reservation's 12 villages. Unfortunately, the residents of the Reservation suffer from a 60% unemployment rate due, in large part, to the lack of economic development opportunities caused by the remote and landlocked nature of the Reservation. The Hopi Reservation is the only reservation in the United States to be completely surrounded by another reservation. This makes it even harder to access markets and opportunities outside of the reservation.

I. UPDATE ON THE HOPI ARSENIC MITIGATION PROJECT (HAMP)

The Hopi Tribe has suffered with arsenic contamination in its water supply since the 1960s when the BIA first installed its drinking water system. The water for eight of the Tribe's villages is contaminated with high levels of naturally occurring arsenic. These levels exceed the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) safe drinking water standards by as much as three times the allowable contaminants.

This troubling situation led the Hopi Tribe to create the Hopi Arsenic Mitigation Project (HAMP) whose mission is to find a solution to the arsenic contamination. The HAMP has two phases. The first phase of HAMP only delivers water to Hopi villages, and the second would increase the system capacity of the initial phase through the construction of water main extensions and pressure upgrades to increase the range of pumped water.

The HAMP was ranked as a priority project by the Indian Health Service (IHS) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This designation provided full funding for Fiscal Year 2020 and Fiscal Year 2021 through Safe Drinking Water Act program allocations. The total IHS and EPA contribution for the basic HAMP is approximately $20 million, which is sufficient to complete the project. The HAMP construction contractor mobilized on April 1, 2020, with an anticipated completion date of approximately one year.

The Tribe is also encouraged by recent developments on the Keams Extension Project (KEP), which is the planned and approved regional water transmission system project designed to expand the capacity and extend the length of HAMP to serve additional Hopi families, schools, and institutions of Eastern First and Second Mesa, which were excluded in the HAMP. The BIA contributed an additional $5 million for KEP in November 2020, bringing the total funding for the project to $7.6 million. This segment of the planned regional water system is under final design and permitting phase. An additional $10 million is needed to complete the Keams Extension Project.

II. HOPI SCHOOLS

The Hopi Tribe asks that the Subcommittee prioritize funding for the BIE school construction program, as we are dealing with significant health and safety issues at several Hopi schools. In addition, this program is so underfunded that even when tribal schools are placed on the priority list, it can take a decade or more before a school is actually built.

The Hopi Tribe has two tribally controlled schools willing to consolidate into one school-Hopi Day School ("HDS") and Hotevilla Bacavi Community School ("HBCS"). The Hopi Day School ("HDS") is over 100 years old, with most of the building made from logs. As you can imagine, there are significant structural issues that require constant upkeep and repairs. Further, the HDS does not have an adequate HVAC system. Despite the poor condition of the HDS, it is not even on the BIA's school construction priority list. HBCS is over 50 years old, and relies heavily on the use of portable modular buildings due to safety concerns in the original structures of the school. HBCS is being considered for the BIA's school replacement list, but is not on it yet.

The Keams Canyon Elementary School ("KCES"), which was built in 1935, has major health and safety concerns, including cracked walls, a leaking roof, and retention walls that need major repairs. There are also water quality concerns at the KCES due to high arsenic concentrations. The KCES was on the BIA's school replacement priority list in 2004, but it was not re-built.

The Moencopi Day School ("MDS") is over 50 years old. The school relies heavily on the use of portable modular buildings due to safety concerns in the original structure of the school. MDS is currently on the BIA's priority list.

The Tribe also requests the Subcommittee's support as we work to unify our seven Tribally Controlled Schools under a single school district on the Hopi Reservation. This effort represents a major transformation for our schools and will provide improved educational opportunities for our youth, better administrative efficiency and management of school resources, and increased accountability and support for our educators and staff. The unification will also allow increased focus on Hopi culture and language throughout the educational system.

Funding is needed to provide a Central Administration Office that will be home to most administrative staff for the new Hopi School System, including the superintendent, curriculum and instruction specialist, food services director, human resources director, specials needs education director, and transportation director. We have already identified the site for the building and estimate and request the total construction costs at $3,000,000 for an 8,000 square foot building and site work.

The Tribe also needs funding for the transition to our new unified Hopi School System, which will continue over the next two years concluding in 2023. This transition funding is a critical part of creating a successful unified school system, and includes the hiring of our superintendent, business manager and office secretary, which will cost $305,230. In the following year, the staffing costs will increase to $2,695,752 to hire the rest of the Central Office staff (about 30 employees).

The Hopi Tribe requests that no cuts be made to our administrative cost grant during this process. The Tribally Controlled Schools Act provides administrative funds to tribes by applying an administrative cost grant formula. 25 U.S.C. § 2008. Once the Hopi Tribe unifies our school system, as currently implemented, the administrative cost formula could result in the loss of over $1 million dollars to Hopi schools. Section 2008(h) provides an exception to this calculation. However, the Appropriations bill language for BIE limits tribes who can make use of this exception. We ask that the Subcommittee change the "grantees" eligible to use "the distribution formula based on section 5(f) of Public Law 101–301" from "fiscal year 2003 or 2004" to "fiscal year 2023 or 2024." This will ensure that the Hopi Tribe is able to receive the same funding it currently receives, and this change will not disturb funding for any other tribes' schools.

Finally, Our Hopi schools need housing units for our teachers and staff. The lack of adequate housing prevents us from attracting and retaining quality teachers and

staff. We request that Congress appropriate funding for new housing needed for staff and teachers for our Central Administration Office and our schools. Our current analysis shows that we need at least 10 housing units at an estimated cost of $300,000/house = $3,000,000.

Thanks again for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding the Hopi Tribe's priorities for Fiscal Year 2022. We urge the Subcommittee to increase funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs' School Construction and Environmental Quality Projects accounts.

[This statement was submitted by Timothy Nuvangyaoma.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE FUND

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony on matters of importance to our organizations and to our millions of supporters. We thank you for the support and investment in animal protection in the Subcommittee's Fiscal Year 2021 appropriations bill. We appreciate your continued consideration in Fiscal Year 2022 and urge you to address the following requests in the FY22 Department of Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies budget:

—EPA new approach methodologies development and implementation: strong funding
—BLM, Wild Horse and Burro Program: $150,000,000, contingent on immediate implementation of a management program based on four prongs detailed below
—USFS, Wild Horse and Burro Program: FY21 enacted language to protect USFS wild horses and burros from slaughter
—FWS, Multinational Species Conservation Fund: $30,000,000, with no funds to promote or facilitate trophy hunting, trade in animal parts, or other consumptive uses of wildlife
—FWS, Office of Law Enforcement: $115,000,000
—FWS, Office of International Affairs: $30,000,000
—FWS, Wolf Livestock Loss Demonstration Project Prevention grant: at least $1,000,000

We also request that the budget exclude any language that would: relax regulations on imports of sport—hunted trophies; impede the success or expansion of wildlife corridors, including through grants to tribes; or undermine the integrity, efficacy, or purpose of the Endangered Species Act. We additionally request that the budget include language to prohibit FWS from using appropriated funding to authorize imports of sport—hunted trophies of species listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA. Finally, we echo the requests for increased funds for FWS, BLM, and USFS to implement the ESA detailed in letters, signed by us and more than 170 other organizations, to Appropriations Committee leadership.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY—NEW APPROACH METHODOLOGIES DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Thousands of chemicals are currently used, and hundreds of new ones are introduced each year, for which EPA must conduct risk assessments. The EPA is also tasked with evaluating and registering pesticides and evaluating chemicals for possible endocrine activity. In addition, since 2016, EPA has had a mandate to develop and implement non-vertebrate test methods for chemical safety evaluation under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA). The EPA outlined its commitment to this goal in its 2019 announcement that it plans to reduce by 30% the number of studies that require the use of mammals by 2025, and to halt reliance on such studies completely by 2035. Additionally, in its Budget Justification Request for FY21, EPA notes that it will continue efforts to develop alternative methods to whole animal toxicity testing on the effects of pesticide active ingredients on terrestrial and aquatic vertebrates.

To address these needs, EPA must shift significant focus to new approach methodologies (NAMs)-defined by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) as "any non-animal technology, methodology, approach, or combination thereof that can be used to provide information on chemical hazard and risk assessment." When evaluating NAMs to replace vertebrate testing, EPA must also ensure they provide information of equivalent or better scientific quality and relevance that will support regulatory decisions under the revised TSCA. The EPA's National Center for Computational Toxicology (NCCT), in collaboration with NIEHS, the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, and the Food

and Drug Administration, has developed an extensive database of chemical safety information, is screening thousands of chemicals using high—throughput non-animal methods, and is developing and improving models for estimating exposure. Although these newly developing NAMs are beginning to reduce animal use while improving the speed and accuracy of chemical evaluations, further development and implementation is needed to effectively carry out EPA's mandates.

As such, we support strong funding of NCCT and other EPA Office of Research and Development programs focused on NAMs development and implementation in order for EPA to fulfill its commitment to end reliance on mammal studies and assure a more efficient and relevant chemicals risk assessment process.

The EPA's FY21 budget justification also notes that the agency awarded five grants under the Request for Applications (RFA) titled, "Advancing Actionable Alternatives to Vertebrate Animal Testing for Chemical Safety Assessment." These awards aim to develop and apply alternative test methods to replace, reduce, and refine vertebrate animal testing. Similarly, in 2019, EPA announced an RFA titled "Advancing Toxicokinetics for Efficient and Robust Chemical Evaluations." This initiative aims to advance development of chemical toxicokinetic tools and approaches for broader applicability during chemical evaluations, especially NAMs. Additionally, EPA's FY22 budget request of $22,229,000 for computational toxicology—an increase of $742,000 over FY21 enacted—underscores the agency's desire to increase development and implementation of cutting-edge technologies that can reduce and replace its animal testing. We recommend supportive funding for these and similar NAMs-focused grant programs.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT AND FOREST SERVICE—PROHIBITION OF DESTRUCTION OF HEALTHY WILD HORSES AND BURROS

We request FY22 inclusion of language mirroring the language in the FY21 appropriations bill, barring BLM and USFS from sending any wild horse or burro to slaughter or selling/transferring any horse or burro in a manner that results in its destruction, and barring any federal, state, or local government that receives any wild horse or burro transferred from BLM or USFS from doing likewise. (See P.L. 116–260, Sec. 419(d)-(e).)

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT—WILD HORSE AND BURRO PROGRAM

We appreciate Congress's increase in funding for FY21 and applaud the report language directing BLM to "institute an aggressive non-lethal population control strategy" with strict compliance with the agency's Comprehensive Animal Welfare Program protocols, as it will help ensure gathers are conducted as humanely as possible (FY21 Division G Report language, pp 13). We request $150 million for FY22 to fund BLM's immediate implementation of a sustainable management program applying the four key management concepts previously highlighted in FY21 report language:

1. Conduct targeted gathers and removals at densely populated Herd Management Areas (HMAs) to reduce herd size in the short term.
2. Treat gathered horses with fertility control prior to returning to the range. This program should continue until 90% of the mares on the range have been treated and continued consistent fertility control is implemented.
3. Relocate horses in holding facilities, and those taken off the range, to large cost-effective pasture facilities funded through public-private partnerships.
4. Promote adoptions to reduce captive populations and costs.

A large coalition including animal welfare groups, cattlemen, state and local land managers, and groups focused on rangeland health support this request. Additionally, the Western Governors Association supports additional funding to implement this management program.

With regard to fertility control, in FY20 the BLM only administered 735 doses—a fraction of what is needed to curb the on-range population. While we have seen promising signs from BLM that it intends to administer fertility control vaccines at levels that will impact population growth (i.e., giving it to 80–90% of the mares they turn back onto the range) as reported in their FY21 Gather Schedule, they are a long way from administering the number of vaccines that will impact the overall population. Thus, it is imperative that Congress provide continued oversight and funding to ensure BLM revamps this program in a sustainable and humane way.

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE—MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION FUND

We urge the Subcommittee to appropriate $30 million in FY22 for the MSCF, which supports critical conservation programs for some of our world's most iconic

species: African and Asian elephants, rhinos, tigers, great apes, and sea turtles. The HSUS joins a broad coalition of organizations in support of the MSCF and additionally asks that the sales of semi-postal stamps benefiting this program be authorized to continue supplementing these programs above annually appropriated levels.

While we wholeheartedly support continued funding for MSCF, we remain opposed to any use of funds from these conservation programs to promote trophy hunting, trade in animal parts, and other consumptive uses—including live capture for trade, captive breeding, entertainment, or for the public display industry—under the guise of conservation. The use of MSCF grants must be consistent with the spirit of its authorizing law.

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE—OFFICE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

We urge the Subcommittee to fund OLE at $115 million and to continue appropriating funds to support activities investigating wildlife crimes and enforcing wildlife laws. OLE serves an integral role in ongoing efforts to both combat the global crisis of wildlife poaching and trafficking and to prevent zoonotic disease outbreaks. The conditions for zoonotic viruses to emerge and be transmitted to humans exist in legal and sustainable trade, and in markets with common wildlife species as well as in markets with illegal and/or unsustainable trade. As one of the world's largest consumers of illegal wildlife, the U.S. must invest in rigorously enforcing existing laws, regulations, and international treaties that combat the illegal trade in wildlife.

One of OLE's most effective tools is the deployment of attachés to targeted U.S. embassies in countries where wildlife trafficking is a serious problem. Attachés have provided extensive support to local authorities engaged in wildlife trafficking investigations and vital access to FWS resources such as the National Fish and Wildlife Forensic Laboratory and the Digital Evidence Recovery and Technical Support Unit. Several investigations of transnational organized crime networks involved in trafficking elephant ivory, rhino horn, reptiles, and other wildlife and wildlife parts between Africa and Asia have been initiated as a direct result of attaché intervention, and attachés have assisted extensively in fostering intelligence sharing and investigative support between affected nations. Here at home, the 2020 confiscation of 1,400 shark fins in Miami illustrates OLE's effectiveness.

Increasing funding for OLE and the attaché program will support efforts to maximize the scope and effectiveness of FWS response to the international wildlife trafficking crisis, ensuring OLE has an adequate number of law enforcement agents deployed to enforce laws against wildlife trafficking in the U.S. and around the world.

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE—OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

We request that you appropriate $30 million for OIA, whose programs provide critical resources to help stakeholders on the ground fight wildlife trafficking and poaching as well as to provide frontline protection against zoonotic disease by supporting programs that can help prevent conditions in wildlife trade that lead to spillover events. It is critical that the U.S. increase investment in global conservation, including work supported by OIA programs that mitigate and prevent global crises like pandemics and biodiversity and habitat loss by promoting conservation and restoration of forests and other wildlife habitats, monitoring wildlife health, promoting alternatives to wildlife as a protein source, and combating wildlife trafficking.

Importantly, we request that none of these funds be used to support or carry out trophy hunting activities or programs. In both FY20 and FY21, Congress expressed doubt over the conservation efficacy of the current FWS "policy to evaluate applications for importing trophies for elephants and lions on a case-by-case basis", stating it "may not adequately determine whether a country has proper safeguards in place to protect species vulnerable to poaching. Population counts continue to decline causing concern that the current policy is detrimental." The Service failed to comply with policy review and reporting directives set forth in FY20 and FY21 accompanying reports, demonstrating a dire lack of transparency that necessitates a thorough review of FWS's current trophy—import policies and their compliance with determination requirements under the ESA. Consequently, we also request that the import of sport—hunted trophies of species listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA be halted until a transparent permitting scheme is established that demonstrably benefits the species' survival, is biologically sustainable, and does not contribute to corruption or undermine rule of law in range countries.

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, U.S. FOREST SERVICE—ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT IMPLEMENTATION

In 2019, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services released a groundbreaking assessment warning that roughly one million species are at risk of extinction. Myriad taxa—level studies showing steep populations declines, for example of monarch butterflies and North American birds, underscore the biodiversity crisis. We therefore echo the requests for increased funding for FWS, BLM, and USFS to implement the ESA detailed in NGO coalition letters to Appropriations Committee leadership that we and more than 170 other organizations signed (FWS letter dated March 2, BLM/USFS letter dated April 13).

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE—WOLF LIVESTOCK LOSS DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

We urge the Subcommittee to provide at least $1 million for the Prevention grant of the Wolf Livestock Loss Demonstration Project. This grant assists livestock producers in undertaking proactive, nonlethal activities to reduce the risk of livestock loss due to predation by wolves.

[This statement was submitted by Jocelyn Ziemian, Senior Legislative Specialist, Humane Society Legislative Fund.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee: Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on the FY22 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) has 15 offices globally and works in more than 40 countries around the world. IFAW takes a holistic approach to innovating solutions for tough conservation challenges like conflicts between humans and wildlife, and illegal wildlife trafficking. Recognizing the unbreakable link between animals and human wellbeing, we support and empower communities to coexist with and value native wildlife and help those communities develop tools to protect their wild heritage. IFAW is grateful for this Subcommittee's championship of strong conservation funding for the current fiscal year (FY21), and requests your continued support for these programs in FY22. Specifically, we request the $30 million for the Multinational Species Conservation Funds, $30 million for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Office of International Affairs, $115 million for the FWS Office of Law Enforcement, and $592.1 million for Endangered Species Act (ESA) implementation across five programs. IFAW also requests the Subcommittee deny support for any projects that seek to circumvent the ESA or National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Finally, we urge the Subcommittee to prioritize infrastructure projects that are sustainable and resilient.

The year 2020 was marked, as was the year before it, by ever-more disturbing news about the state of our natural world. It was the second hottest year on record, knocking 2019 to the third hottest year in Earth's history.[1] Changing climate conditions spurred storms and other natural disasters of increased frequency and severity: hurricanes, cyclones, flash floods, and wildfires wreaked havoc in communities around the world with deadly results.[2] Trafficking in wildlife and wildlife parts remained the fourth most lucrative criminal enterprise worldwide with an estimated annual revenue of $20 billion—add in illegal logging and fishing, and that number skyrockets to $1 trillion or more.[3] And we all suffered the effects as a deadly zoonotic pandemic caused by human interference with wildlife, COVID–19, forced world-wide lockdowns, sickening more than 175 million people to date, and causing millions of deaths around the globe.[4]

The environmental, biodiversity, and pandemic crises we continue to face are not the product of bad luck; they are the direct results of human activities. On June 10, 2021, a report on Biodiversity and Climate Change was released on a workshop co-sponsored by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)—the first ever collaborative workshop co-sponsored by the two organiza-

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[1] https://www.noaa.gov/news/2020-was-earth-s-2nd-hottest-year-just-behind-2016

[2] https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/slideshows/here-are-10-of-the-deadliest-natural-disasters-in-2020

[3] http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/482771571323560234/WBGReport1017Digital.pdf

[4] https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/world/mapping-spread-new-coronavirus/?itid=sf__coronavirus__sn__mapping-spread-new-coronavirus__2

tions.[5] This peer reviewed report warns that "changes in climate and biodiversity, driven by human activities, have combined and increasingly threaten nature, human lives, livelihoods and well-being around the world. Biodiversity loss and climate change are both driven by human economic activities and mutually reinforce each other. Neither will be successfully resolved unless both are tackled together."[6]

Fortunately, as we have been the architects of our current crises, it is within our power to change our shared trajectory, and this Subcommittee has jurisdiction over critical programs that can help to do just that. Given the severity of the challenges we face, IFAW respectfully asks the Subcommittee to exert its leadership in order to reverse the alarming and interrelated climate and biodiversity emergencies by making substantial increases in funding for the important conservation programs within your purview. Doing so will help to protect biodiversity, and will in turn have significant protective effects against future wildlife—borne diseases entering the human population, promote healthy ecosystems, fight climate change, improve climate resilience, and safeguard human health and wellbeing.

No NEPA or ESA Waivers.—IFAW urges this Subcommittee to consider the health of wildlife and the environment in all of its actions. At a minimum, no federally-supported construction projects, including disaster remediation projects, should be exempted from such fundamental laws as the ESA and NEPA. NEPA and ESA analyses protect against substantial social, environmental, and economic harm. These reviews allow construction projects to move forward while ensuring full disclosure of potentially harmful outcomes, informed decision-making, effective design, and risk mitigation. There has been a distressing trend toward exempting projects from NEPA, ESA, or other environmental reviews and we urge the Subcommittee to reverse this trend by denying funding for any plan that does not include a commitment to bedrock conservation laws and environmental reviews.

Infrastructure.—As Congress moves to address our aging infrastructure, we have an unparalleled opportunity to invest in environmental safeguards and conservation innovations that will ensure American wellbeing and security, and create jobs and prosperity for the citizens of today and for many future generations. IFAW urges this Subcommittee to review any infrastructure plans within your jurisdiction through the lens of wildlife conservation and environmental sustainability. We advocate prioritizing funding for projects that: rely on sustainable or natural materials to increase infrastructure resiliency and longevity; reintroduce or preserve native flora; create resilient and sustainable water and waste management systems, particularly through implementing natural alternatives to traditional water and wastewater management systems like wetlands, dune restoration, and natural vegetation buffers. Over time, these modalities can increase resilience while saving scarce taxpayer dollars. A single acre of wetlands can hold up to 1.5 million gallons of rain or melting snow. For less than $300,000, it's possible to construct an artificial wetland that can intercept 3.25 million gallons of stormwater otherwise destined for the sewer.

We also urge the Subcommittee to prioritize funding for infrastructure projects that reduce wildlife conflict using wildlife corridors and crossings. Every year in the U.S. there are an estimated 1–2 million collisions that occur between motorists and large animals.[7] These collisions result in 200 human deaths and more than 26,000 injuries, at a cost to Americans of more than $8 billion annually.[8] A 2011 study by the insurance industry estimated that over $1 billion dollars per year is spent on property damage due to wildlife vehicle collisions while the total annual cost to American taxpayers is nearly $8.4 billion.[9] In addition, walls, fences, roads, and dams impede migratory routes, cut off food and water supplies, and otherwise disrupt important wildlife habitats. We can and must improve safety and safeguard biodiversity and ecosystem health by creating and protecting habitat connectivity, wildlife corridors, and crossings for wildlife.

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[5] https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/2021-06/20210609_workshop_report_embargo_3pm_CEST_10_june_0.pdf

[6] https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/2021-06/20210606%20Media%20Release%20EMBARGO%203pm%20CEST%2010%20June.pdf

[7] Huijser, M.P., P. McGowen, J. Fuller, A. Hardy, A. Kociolek, A.P. Clevenger, D. Smith and R. Ament. 2008. Wildlife-vehicle collision reduction study. Report to Congress. U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Washington D.C., USA.

[8] Id.

[9] Putting a Dent in the Cost of Wildlife—Vehicle Collisions, Defenders of Wildlife Blog, September 20, 2011, https://defendersblog.org/2011/09/putting-a-dent-in-the-cost-of-wildlife-vehicle-collisions/

US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE PRIORITY PROGRAMS

Endangered Species Act.—The biodiversity crisis represents an existential threat to humanity. Ecosystems require healthy biodiversity and wildlife in order to remain healthy. As native species decline, ecosystems weaken, and can even collapse, and may no longer have the capacity to provide the services upon which we all rely: among them drinking water, clean air, and productive soil.

The Endangered Species Act, remains our nation's most important conservation law, and has been successful in protecting 99% of listed species from becoming extinct. Saving species from extinction is about more than just preserving iconic wildlife for generations to come. We are also protecting integral parts of the ecosystem that provides the air we breathe, the water we drink, the parks we enjoy, and the medicine we need. The Endangered Species Act protects wildlife within the United States, and species around the globe by requiring agencies to ensure that federally supported international activities protect species survival and preserve important habitat and by generally prohibiting the import of listed species.

While the ESA remains popular among Americans regardless of political party, with an approval rating of around 90%, it continues to face attacks through spending riders, authorizing legislation, and administrative action. IFAW thanks this Subcommittee for its efforts to fend off appropriations riders in past bills, and asks that any riders aimed at undermining the ESA—including legacy riders—be excluded from the FY22 Act.

As species face ever—mounting pressures from climate change, habitat loss, and other factors, funding for the ESA has not kept pace with the need. Furthermore, there remains a backlog of species awaiting consideration for protections under the Act, as well as listed species in need of additional resources to promote recovery. IFAW requests $592.1 million across the following five programs to make up for lost ground and put species on the path to recovery:

—Recovery Program: $240.3 million
—Planning and Consultation Programs: $149 million
—Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund: $125.6 million
—Listing Program: $63.7 million
—Conservation and Restoration Program: $13.5 million

FWS International Affairs.—The FWS International Affairs (IA) program is tasked with coordinating domestic and international efforts to protect and restore wildlife and ecosystems. By overseeing domestic conservation laws and international conservation treaties, including the Convention in International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the IA program has become a keystone of U.S. leadership on the international stage. Importantly, the IA program supports transboundary regional projects as well as those that focus on target species, promoting habitat conservation and restoration in areas where wildlife is most at risk from habitat loss. IFAW requests $30 million for this important program in FY22.

Multinational Species Conservation Fund (MSCF).—IFAW is part of a diverse coalition of groups, including animal welfare, environmental, sporting, and industry organizations, that support the MSCF. These funds protect tigers, rhinos, African and Asian elephants, great apes, and marine and freshwater turtles and tortoises, all of which are in constant danger from illegal poaching and wildlife trafficking, habitat destruction, climate change, and other pressures. Wild members of these species may live outside our borders, but these iconic animals remain important to the American people. None of us wants this to be the generation to preside over the extinction of elephants or tigers in the wild. MSCF programs have helped to sustain wildlife populations by funding groundbreaking projects that combat poaching, reduce human—wildlife conflict and protect the vital habitat of priority species. By promoting community engagement and combatting trafficking, the MSCF programs also promote the rule of law abroad and contribute to our domestic security. These programs are highly efficient, with low administrative costs ensuring that more than 95% of appropriated funds were distributed through grants in FY17. The MSCF is authorized at $30 million, but it has never been fully funded. Meanwhile, pressures on these species continue to increase around the globe. IFAW requests that $30 million be appropriated for the MSCF for FY22.

Office of Law Enforcement.—The Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) within the FWS is on the front lines of wildlife crime, inspecting wildlife shipments, conducting investigations, and enforcing federal wildlife laws to protect fish, wildlife, plants, and ecosystems. The OLE combats poaching and wildlife trafficking, breaking up international criminal rings that not only harm wildlife, but may also engage in other illicit activities. Among other things, the small but mighty force at OLE sends experienced FWS attachés to strategic regions where they combat wildlife trafficking by supporting and advising foreign partners. And, as the world confronts a

novel coronavirus with origins in wildlife, the OLE's inspection and enforcement responsibilities take on even greater import. This program is critical both to domestic and international conservation efforts and to national health and security. IFAW requests $115 million in FY22 for OLE.

In closing, thank you for the opportunity to share IFAW's funding priorities to promote conservation in the FY2022 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. Wildlife and their habitats are more than our national heritage; they are essential to human health and welfare, and to domestic and international security. We appreciate the continued leadership of this Subcommittee on conservation efforts globally and within the United States. With your support, we can reverse the tide of extinction, protect human health, and promote a better future for generations of wildlife lovers and Americans yet to come. Thank you.

[This statement was submitted by Kate Wall, Senior Legislative Manager.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE INTERSTATE COUNCIL ON WATER POLICY

SUMMARY OF COALITION'S REQUESTS FOR FY 2022:

Federal Priorities Streamgages is $28.7 M
Cooperative Matching Funds for Streamgage Network is $33.0 M
NGWOS and Data Delivery Modernization is $28.1 M

COALITION SUPPORTING USGS STREAMGAGE NETWORKS & MODERNIZATION

As leaders in the undersigned organizations, we urge your support to enable the US Geological Survey (USGS), an agency in the Department of Interior (DOI), to fully support its streamgaging networks. These vital networks, managed within the USGS Groundwater and Streamflow Information Program, provide critical, life-saving information and serve the national interest with continuous streamflow information at over 8,400 locations. Due to inadequate funding, gages supported by these necessary USGS programs are being discontinued annually, and our coalition is particularly concerned with the impact of the lack of resources over many years on the Federal Priority Streamgage network (details below). Maintaining and adding to the streamgaging networks is paramount to adequately quantify and manage the nation's critical water supplies and infrastructure. The members of our organizations rely on the streamgage data and science that USGS produces and many of us represent active, cost-share partners in funding the data collection that Congress and the federal agencies require. Data from streamgages provides necessary trend information and is the basis for understanding climate science and for making modeling and forecasted predictions about how climate change may impact our nation's total water supply and timing of its availability. Streamgage information is also critical for natural resource decisions made on U.S. Indian Reservations and for determining environmental impacts to disadvantaged communities throughout the nation.

Data and information from these valuable streamgages are utilized by emergency responders, water supply managers, water quality administrators, recreationists, consulting engineers, and many others in forecasting and response during floods, droughts, and other extreme events, design of bridges and other infrastructure, energy generation, management of federal lands, design and operation of federal reservoirs and navigation infrastructure. These networks provide critical information to other agencies of the DOI and to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA, FEMA, EPA, USDA, and other federal agencies, as well as providing information essential to Congressional oversight and revision of many federal laws, including the Clean Water Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, Endangered Species Act, and many interstate river basin compacts and international treaties.

Federal Priority Streamgage (FPS) Network (formerly referred to as the National Streamflow Information Program, "NSIP").—Authorized by Congress in 2009, to operate and maintain a stable "federal backbone" network of streamgages to meet five specific national needs for streamflow information at (1) interstate and international boundaries, (2) National Weather Service flood forecast sites, (3) outflows of major river basins, (4) "sentinel watersheds," needed to evaluate and anticipate the potential consequences of ongoing changes in American land use, water use, climate etc., and (5) national priority water—quality monitoring sites. Our national ability to collect sufficient water data at the needed locations to answer the necessary federal, state, tribal, local, business and NGO questions is seriously compromised by the insufficient funding for the FPS Network.

The budget for the FPS Network has been flat since 2016, yet operational costs of the network nationwide have grown by approximately 1%-3% per year since 2016

due to increases in salary, travel, equipment, and communication costs. Historically, these cost increases have been covered by 1) USGS partners, where gages are jointly funded, or 2) delaying planned network enhancements. Network enhancements include cyclical upgrades to equipment (e.g. for monitoring, telecommunication, and data transmission) to ensure sites meet requirements for successful data collection and transmission, as well as activities to flood—harden existing FPS sites. However, after 5 years of flat funding, the USGS reached a tipping point where network enhancements could no longer be delayed and operational costs continued to increase another 1%-3%. With these considerations in mind, the shortfall of approximately $0.5M between the FPS funding needed to cover costs in 2021 ($25.2M) over what was available in the enacted 2021 funding levels ($24.7M) resulted in 29 gages being discontinued. If no increase is made in the program's budget for FY2022, another 33 additional gages (62 total) will be at risk for being discontinued. Of our requested amount for the FPS, $1.25 M is based on the need to re-instate these lost gages ($20K/gage x 62 gages lost).

Also, contemporary water management issues such as ecological flows were not considered when the original national criteria were developed for the Network. Additional funding would begin to meet these needs. Today, only 25 % of the Federal Priority Streamgages are fully funded by the federal government. The USGS is unable to complete development of the Network, as Congress directed in 2009, without additional funding. Full implementation of the Federal Priority Streamgage Network is estimated at $130M. Requested Funding Level for Federal Priorities Streamgages is $28.7 M for FY 2022 to begin to address the critical shortfall for the FPS network and to reinstate gages discontinued since 2016.

Cooperative Matching Funds.—The USGS works with over fourteen hundred partners nation-wide (federal, state, tribal, local, and NGO) using Cooperative Matching Funds to jointly support USGS streamgages, many of which meet the criteria of the FPS Network. This matching program, which began as a 50–50 program, has seen the federal cost-share contribution decrease from 50 % to less than 30 %. Given the ability for this program to enable and encourage the expansion of vitally needed streamgages on a two for one (or greater) cost basis, an increase over the FY2021 level of $29.6 M will allow for an expansion beyond the 5,273 streamgages currently covered under this program. Requested Funding Level for Cooperative Matching Funds for Streamgage Network is $33M for FY2022.

Related Programs within the USGS Water Mission Area—Next Generation Water Observation System (NGWOS) and Modernization of the Networks and Data Delivery.—Our coalition very much appreciates Congress' recent support of NGWOS and modernization efforts. Build-out of this innovative program will provide focused monitoring in ten basins nationwide to better calibrate modeling, thus improving the ability to estimate water supply in the nation's many ungaged areas. Additional gaging stations added in the NGWOS basins supports the goals of increasing gages nationwide under the FPS Network and through Cooperative Matching Funds. We are supportive of the modeling and predictive analytical work being developed by the USGS. A robust network of physical gages is crucial to the calibration of many models (including NOAA's National Water Model and those developed by others); however, this coalition's primary support remains directed toward adequately supporting, invigorating and expanding the real-time stream gages across the U.S. A recent quote from USGS is illustrative on the continued need for physical streamgages to calibrate innovative modeling efforts:

> *"Looking nationwide, there are about 10,000 streamgages, but that is only about three one hundredths of one percent of the Nation's stream reaches. When we talk about groundwater, it is even more sparse. As models and predictive capabilities have advanced over the years, we're starting to exceed in the modeling what we have observations to support. The density of observations starts to get too low to calibrate and validate the new high-fidelity models that we need to project what water will look like in the next few weeks to the next few years."*

Requested Funding Level for NGWOS and Data Delivery Modernization is $28.1 M to enable additional pilot basins to be added to the NGWOS program and to allow USGS to continue to modernize water data delivery systems that benefit all water users across the nation. An increase of $3.6M in FY2022 over FY2021 amount of $24.5 would allow USGS to stay on the planned NGWOS implementation track—Operation &Maintenance for the Delaware River Basin network, complete capital monitoring investments in the Upper Colorado River basin, implement about 65% of monitoring investments in Illinois River basin, begin preliminary work in Basin #4 and continue critical NWIS modernization activities

For additional, independent analysis of the USGS' needs for supplying the nation's water science, we encourage you to review the recently released "U.S. Geologi-

cal Survey (USGS) Streamgaging Network: Overview and Issues for Congress" Report (R45695) by Anna Normand at the Congressional Research Service (released March 2, 2021). The report provides many more funding details and ramifications in its 28 pages, including impacts to the streamgaging program budgets in nominal dollars. The full Report can be found at: https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R45695

With your help and continued support, Congress can enable the USGS to fulfill its Water Resources Mission Area goals, including working toward full implementation of the Federal Priority Streamgage Network, adequately funding the Cooperative Matching Funds for streamgaging and moving water science into the 21st century through much needed modernization upgrades. Meaningful climate change and adaptation work cannot be completed without the hydrologic knowledge gained from our Streamgage networks.

We are happy to answer your questions or provide additional information; please contact any of us or Sue Lowry at the Interstate Council on Water Policy (Sue@ICWP.org).

84 Organizations Signing on to FY 2022 Streamgage Support Letter (April 14, 2021)

Organization	Signor	Title
American Fisheries Society	Drue Winters	Policy Director
American Rivers	Ted Illston	Senior Director-Policy
American Society of Civil Engineers	Thomas W. Smith	Secretary & Exec. Dir.
American Water Resources Association	Dresden Farrand	Executive VP/CEO
American Water Works Association	Tracy Mehan	Exec. Dir./Gov't Affairs
American Whitewater	Mark Singleton	Executive Director
Appalachian Mountain Club	Susan Arnold	VP for Conservation
Association of American State Geologists	Rich Ortt	President
Association of California Water Agencies	David Reynolds	Director/Federal Relations
Association of Clean Water Administrators	Tom Stiles	ACWA President
Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies	Jennifer Mock Schaeffer	Gov't Affairs Director
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies	Diane VanDe Hei	CEO
Association of State Dam Safety Officials, Inc.	Lori C. Spragens	Executive Director
Association of State Floodplain Managers	Chad Berginnis	Executive Director
Association of State Wetland Managers	Marla J. Stalk	Executive Director
Bear River Commission	Don A. Barnett	Engineer-Manager
Big Hole Watershed Committee	Pedro Marques	Executive Director
Big Horn River Alliance	Anne Marie Emery	Executive Director
California Sportfishing Protection Alliance	Bill Jennings	Executive Director
Cascade Water Alliance	Ray Hoffman	CEO
CDM-Smith	Timothy D. Feather	Vice President
Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority	Glenn M. Page	General Manager
Colorado Lake & Reservoir Management Assn.	Kate Dunlap	President
Colorado River Salinity Control Forum	Don A. Barnett	Executive Director
Delaware River Basin Commission	Steven J. Tambini	Executive Director
Environmental Defense Fund	Steve Cochran	Assoc. VP/Coastal Resilience
Fly Fishers International	Patrick Berry	President & CEO
Freshwater Mollusk Conservation Society	Jeremy Tiemann	President
Great Lakes Observing System	Kelli Paige	CEO
Henry's Fork Foundation	Brandon Hoffner	Executive Director
Hydrological Services America	Peter Ward	General Manager
Idaho Rivers United	Nic Nelson	Executive Director
Idaho Water Users Association	Paul L. Arrington	Executive Director
Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin	Michael Nardolilli	Executive Director
Interstate Council on Water Policy	Kirsten Wallace	ICWP Chair
Kansas-Oklahoma Arkansas River Compact Comm.	Earnie Gilder	Federal Chair
KISTERS North America, Inc.	Becca Emery	Business Develop. Mngr.
Madison River Foundation	Jonathan Malovich	Executive Director
Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District	Katherine Zitsch	Director
Missouri Department of Natural Resources	Jennifer Hoggatt	Director/Water Res. Center
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Ann Pierce	Director/Ecol. & Water Res.
Montana DNRC	Anna Pakenham-Stevenson	Director
Montana Trout Unlimited	David Brooks	Executive Director
Montana Watershed Coordination Council	Ethan Kunard	Executive Director
North American Lake Management Society	Lisa Borre	President
Nat'l. Assoc. Flood & Stormwater Management Agencies	Susan Gilson	Executive Director
National Assoc. State Boating Law Administrators	John Fetterman	Director/Law Enforcement

84 Organizations Signing on to FY 2022 Streamgage Support Letter (April 14, 2021)—Continued

Organization	Signor	Title
National Audubon Society	Julie Hill-Gabriel	VP/Water Conservation
National Drought Mitigation Center	Dr. Mark Svoboda	Director
National Ground Water Association	Terry S. Morse	CAE, CIC, CEO
National Hydrologic Warning Council	Bruce Rindahl	President
National Hydropower Association	Malcolm Woolf	President and CEO
National Society of Professional Surveyors	Curtis Sumner	Executive Director
National Water Resources Association	Ian Lyle	Executive Vice President
National Water Supply Alliance	Dave Mitamura	Executive Director
National Wildlife Federation	Melissa Samet	Sr. Water Res. Counsel
Nebraska Department of Natural Resources	Thomas E. Riley	Director
New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Comm.	Susan J. Sullivan	Executive Director
Ohio R. Valley Water Sanitation Commission	Richard Harrison	Executive Director
Oklahoma Water Resources Board	Julie Cunningham	Executive Director
Oregon Water Resources Congress	April Snell	Executive Director
Phycological Society of America	Eric W. Linton	President
Red River Compact Commission	Sue Lowry	Chairman
Republican River Compact Commission	Thomas E. Riley	Nebraska Commissioner
Rivers Alliance of Connecticut	Alicea Charamut	Executive Director
Society of Wetland Scientists	Loretta L. Battaglia	President
Susquehanna River Basin Commission	Drew Dehoff	Executive Director
The Nature Conservancy	Jimmy Hague	Sr. Water Policy Adv
Three Rivers QUEST	Melissa O'Neal	Associate Director
Tri-State Water Resource Coalition	Gail Melgren	Executive Director
Trout Unlimited	Steve Moyer	VP/Gov't Affairs
Upper Colorado River Commission	Amy Haas	Exec. Director/Secretary
Upper Mississippi River Basin Association	Kirsten Wallace	Executive Director
Upper Missouri Watershed Alliance	Sherry Meador	Board Chair
Washington State Water Resources Association	Tom Myrum	Executive Director
Water Environment Federation	Walter Marlowe	Executive Director
West Virginia Rivers Coalition	Angie Rosser	Executive Director
West Virginia Water Research Institute	Paul Ziemkiewicz	Director
Western Landowners Alliance	Lesli Allison	Executive Director
Western States Water Council	Tony Willardson	Executive Director
Wild Salmon Center	Caylin Barter	Water Policy Pgm. Mngr.
Wyoming State Engineer's Office	Greg Lanning	State Engineer
Wyoming Water Association	Jodee Pring	President
Xylem Analytics	Timothy A. Grooms	Marketing Director

Prepared Statement of the Interstate Mining Compact Commission

My name is Thomas L. Clarke and I serve as Executive Director of the Interstate Mining Compact Commission (IMCC). My address is 437A Carlisle Drive, Herndon, VA 20190. My phone number is 703 709 8654. My email is tclarke@imcc.isa.us. We request that $68.59 million be provided in the budget of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) of the Department of the Interior for State and Tribal regulatory grants under Title V of the Surface Mine Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022.

I appreciate the opportunity to present this statement conveying the views of IMCC's member States on the FY 2022 budget for OSMRE. IMCC is comprised of 26 States that together produce over 98% of the Nation's coal, as well as other important minerals. Among the Compact's purposes are to advance the protection and restoration of land, water and other resources affected by mining through the encouragement of programs in each of the party States that will achieve comparable results in protecting, conserving and improving the usefulness of natural resources.

States are given exclusive regulatory jurisdiction over the environmental impacts of coal mining under Title V of SMCRA. This means that the core regulatory functions under this federal law are being carried out at the state level by IMCC member States. Primacy states perform all the duties mandated by SMCRA, including inspection and enforcement, ensuring that timely reclamation occurs following mining, designating lands as unsuitable for mining and issuance of permits that impose site—specific environmental protection requiremeents. In addition to performing the

regulatory work Congress required in SMCRA, States pay a significant portion of the cost of meeting this mandate. Half of the cost of regulation on non-federal lands is borne by the states. In the aggregate the States are paying approximately 46% of the total cost of SMCRA regulation (all of the cost of regulation on federal lands is borne by the federal government). In addition to the fact that States bear a large part of the cost of regulation, another feature of state regulation that makes it cost-effective is lower personnel cost. The biggest single category of program expense is payroll and state pay scales are, for the most part, lower than those of the federal government. Accordingly, fulfilling the federal mandate for effective environmental regulation of coal mining impacts comes at a bargain to the federal government.

It is no secret that coal production in America has declined. Instead of simplifying the regulatory challenge for States, the effect of this decline has been the opposite. The challenge of effectively regulating the environmental impacts of an industry in decline is much greater than when its markets were robust. Not only do States have the challenge of gaining compliance from mine operators who face declining cash flow, they also have the challenge of navigating their way through complex, high-stakes bankruptcies. Meanwhile, the number of permits that States must inspect has not declined at anywhere close to the falling rate of coal production. Adequate funding for protection of people and the environment from the adverse impacts of coal mining is more important than ever. Continued appropriation of adequate funding for state regulatory programs is essential if these programs are to achieve the objectives Congress established for them.

Congress has appropriated $68.59 million in federal funding for State and Tribal SMCRA Title V regulatory programs in each of the last six fiscal years.[1] This has been done in the face of administration budgets that would have gutted appropriations for state regulatory programs, cutting them by as much as $25 million per year (proposed budget FY 2021). Congress has wisely rejected these proposed cuts and continued a much-needed trend of appropriating an amount for state regulatory grants that aligns closely with the States' demonstrated needs. President Biden's proposed budget for FY 2022 includes slightly less than this for State grants, $65 million. The States are grateful that this Administration recognizes the need to devote significant funding to the environmental regulation of coal mining. However, its proposal falls just a little short of our need. We urge Congress to provide the full $68.59 million for State grants, as it consistently has in the recent past.

The total grant requests for all State and Tribal Title V regulatory programs combined have consistently exceeded $70 million per year. See, Grants Resources (osmre.gov). For FY 2016–2021, State and Tribal Title V budget requests ranged from a low of $70.38 million for FY 2017 to a high of $76.24 million for FY 2020. In the current Fiscal Year, 2021, State and Tribal grant requests totaled $72.75 million. This is the amount the States believe they will need from the federal government to operate their regulatory programs.

The amount the States have been able to actually spend for operation of these regulatory programs has averaged $63 million per year. Importantly, the gap between actual expenditures and the States' projected funding needs has been closing. The State's actual expenditures are on an upward trend. A variety of factors have prevented the States from spending all of their budgeted funds. These generally include the time it takes to fill vacancies under state personnel procedures, state-wide hiring and/or spending freezes imposed when States face budgetary issues and state revenue shortages that affect a state's ability to match federal dollars for program operation. State primacy under the SMCRA regulatory program dates to the early 1980's. As this regulatory program reached maturity in recent years, employees who began their careers when the state programs began have reached retirement age and moved on. When these senior employees have retired, they have often been replaced from within by a less senior employee. Less senior employees have often been replaced by junior employees, who have been replaced by new hires. It is not unusual for a State to go through the hiring process three times to fully eliminate the vacancy caused by a single retirement. During the time such vacancies persist, the money budgeted for the positions necessarily is not being spent. Because personnel costs are the biggest single cost driver for most state programs, vacancies are among the biggest of the challenges that a state program faces in operating according to budget. As the declining gap between the States' budget needs and actual expenditures may demonstrate, the States are nearly past this wave of retirements and the multiple vacancies that have resulted from them. Multiple vacancies should pose less of a budgetary challenge in the future, so the States' future needs from the federal government should be closer to their projections.

[1] Grant funding for the Tribes' regulatory effort also comes from this appropriation. As appropriate in context, references herein to "States" should be read to include the Tribes.

With many States now in a position to utilize more of their full grant amount, it is imperative that funding be maintained at a level that meets the estimates of program needs the States made in their budget requests. Those requests reflect the ongoing work associated with state program implementation including permit reviews, inspections and enforcement at all inspectable units. Even with the decline in coal production, the States' workload has not correspondingly decreased—and in many cases has increased given the tenuous condition of some coal companies. Higher levels of vigilance are necessary to ensure contemporaneous reclamation and abatement of violations.

This calls for vigilance by Congress. Inflation and other costs beyond the control of the States cannot be allowed to undermine state efforts to realize needed program improvements and enhancements or, more importantly, to jeopardize their efforts to minimize the potential adverse impacts of coal extraction operations on people and the environment. Our analysis of state program funding needs for FY 2022 based on recent estimates indicate that a full federal appropriation of $68.6 million will be required for the existing State and Tribal programs. This represents a good middle ground figure that balances the need to assure that adequate funds will be available to enable the states to perform this vital work with the recognition that factors beyond state control may continue to have some effect on States' ability to spend the entirety of their projected budget needs.

We acknowledge that over the course of many years, the gap between States' actual program expenditures and the amount of their budget requests for regulatory grants caused a balance of approximately $30 million in unspent funds to accumulate. This was primarily the result of two factors: 1) the fact that federal appropriations for state regulatory grants are treated as two-year money, thereby providing flexibility for the use of these moneys, and 2) a few tough years where states faced particular challenges in obtaining state share match moneys and/or expending grant funding before the end of the federal fiscal year. Now, however, this accumulated balance has been all but eliminated. As adopted, the Fiscal Year 2021 funding bill (H.R. 133) rescinded $25 million of this balance. Having this small remaining cushion of available carryover funding provides the certainty and confidence that both OSMRE and the States require in managing funding for these critical programs. Congress should specifically mandate through report language that all carryover funds from past fiscal years can only be used to fund state regulatory program needs. It would also be beneficial to state program implementation if OSMRE was authorized to utilize these carryover funds for state program enhancement activities (without requirements for state matching funds) for such critical program topics as electronic permitting, mine mapping, and benchmarking workshops.

Clear indications from Congress that reliable, consistent funding will continue has done much to stimulate support for these programs by state legislatures and budget officers who, in the face of difficult fiscal climates and constraints, have had to deal with the challenge of matching federal grant dollars with state funds. This is particularly true for those States whose match is partially based on fees from the mining industry, where significant reductions in mining and permitting activity translate to lower revenue (but not reductions in the volume of regulatory work for state agencies). Recall that any cut in federal funding generally translates to an additional cut of an equal amount for overall program funding for States, especially those without federal lands, since these States can generally only match what they receive in federal money.

For all the above reasons, we urge Congress to approve not less than $68.59 million for State and Tribal Title V regulatory grants in FY 2022, the same amount enacted by Congress over the past few fiscal years. In doing so, Congress will continue its commitment to ensuring the States have the resources they need to continue their work on the forefront of environmental protection and preservation of public health and safety.

A couple of forward-looking observations about future federal budgets should be made. The first concerns the potential impact of actions to eliminate emissions of greenhouse gasses that may be under consideration. As a compact of States with diverse interests, we take no position in support of or in opposition to any such action. We only wish to point out that a foreseeable collateral impact of greenhouse gas regulation may be the reduction or elimination of revenue from the coal industry the States use for operation of their SMCRA regulatory programs. If this happens, the States are likely to need a significant increase in future funding from the federal government for the regulatory effort that will be necessary to assure that the environmental impacts of existing mines are effectively addressed. The second concerns SMCRA Title V primacy being sought by the State of Tennessee. Tennessee has applied to OSMRE for primacy. Tennessee currently projects that this approval will come late in federal Fiscal Year 2023. For FY 2023 and thereafter,

OSMRE budgets will need to include additional money for the federal share of the costs of operation of a state regulatory program in Tennessee.

In addition to state regulatory grants, the States have a great degree of interest in the appropriations for OSMRE's National Technical Training Program (NTTP) and Technical Information and Professional Service (TIPS). The States rely heavily on the NTTP and TIPS training classes for their new employees and for refresher courses for more seasoned employees. These training programs are especially important as States find themselves at a point where many of their employees are finishing careers and must be replaced with less experienced people. Any adjustments to these two programs should involve the States working through the NTTP/TIPS Steering Committee.

With regard to funding for State Title IV Abandoned Mine Land (AML) program grants, the States and Tribes should receive the mandatory appropriation of $155 million (before sequestration) in FY 2022. We also strongly support appropriation of $165 million for AML economic revitalization (AMLER) projects, as the President's budget proposes. This funding is targeted for economic and community development and reuse goals. We strongly support continued funding from the General Fund for these "pilot" projects. We also recommend concerted action to reauthorize fee collection under Title IV of SMCRA. IMCC also supports a continuation of funding for the watershed cooperative agreements at $1.55 million. Much valuable work has been accomplished through this program, especially given the matching funds that come from other sources besides OSMRE's share for these worthwhile projects.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit this statement on OSMRE's budget for FY 2022. We also endorse the statement of the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs (NAAMLP), which goes into greater detail regarding the implications of OSMRE's funding for the States and Tribes related to the AML program. We would be happy to answer any questions.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA

The Izaak Walton League of America appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony for the record concerning appropriations for fiscal year (FY) 2022 for various agencies and programs under the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee. The League is a national, nonprofit organization with 40,000 members and 200 local chapters nationwide. Our members are committed to advancing common sense policies that safeguard wildlife and habitat, support community—based conservation, and address pressing environmental issues. The following pertains to programs administered by the Departments of the Interior, (Refuge System Operations and Maintenance at $600 million, State and Tribal Wildlife Grants at $73 million, North American Wetlands Conservation Fund at $60 million, Chesapeake Watershed Investments for Landscape Defense at $15 million), and Environmental Protection Agency (Great Lakes Restoration Initiative at $375 million, Chesapeake Bay Program at $90 million, South Florida Geographic Initiative at $6 million, and Non-Point Source Grants at $250 million).

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM

The League joins other members of the Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (CARE), a diverse coalition of 22 wildlife, sporting, conservation, and scientific organizations representing approximately 15 million of members and supporters, in requesting $600 million for operations and maintenance of the National Wildlife Refuge system in FY 2022.

The League and CARE groups appreciate the importance of fiscal discipline and making strategic spending decisions. CARE annually develops an estimate of the operations and maintenance budget that is necessary to effectively provide visitor services and law enforcement as well as conserve and manage fish, wildlife, and habitat across the refuge system. CARE estimates operations and maintenance needs total $900 million annually. Although our long-term goal is to make steady progress toward a budget that more accurately reflects demands on the ground, the FY 2022 request balances fiscal responsibility with pressing resource conservation, visitor services, and law enforcement needs.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, STATE AND TRIBAL WILDLIFE GRANTS

The League urges the Subcommittee to provide at least $73 million in FY 2022 for State and Tribal Wildlife Grants. This amount equals what was appropriated for

FY 2021. State Wildlife Grants support proactive conservation projects aimed at preventing wildlife from becoming endangered. Experience shows that efforts to restore imperiled wildlife can be particularly contentious and costly when action is taken only after species are formally listed as threatened or endangered pursuant to the Endangered Species Act. State Wildlife Grants augment state and community—based efforts to safeguard habitat and wildlife before either reaches the tipping point. The federal investment leverages significant funding from private, state, and local sources.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, NORTH AMERICAN WETLANDS CONSERVATION FUND

The League asks that the Subcommittee provide the fully authorized amount of $60 million for the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund for FY 2022. The North American Wetlands Conservation Act conserves North America's wetlands and habitat for waterfowl, fish and wildlife while producing a variety of environmental and economic benefits. Its success is driven by partnerships involving federal, state and local governments, as well as non-profit organizations and community groups. Each federal dollar must be matched at least one to one, but funds are often doubled or tripled at the local level. In fact, NAWCA grants totaling more than $1.6 billion have leveraged over $4.68 billion for NAWCA projects through matching and nonmatching funds. Since its inception in 1989, more than 2,833 NAWCA projects have contributed to the conservation of almost 29.8 million acres of wetlands across North America.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, CHESAPEAKE WATERSHED INVESTMENTS FOR LANDSCAPE DEFENSE

The League asks for the fully authorized amount of $15 million in FY 2022 for the Chesapeake Watershed Investments for Landscape Defense program. We supported the authorization of this new program as part of the America's Conservation Enhancement Act last fall. Designed to support local restoration efforts that improve the health of our streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay, this program was not authorized in time to be considered in the FY 2021 Omnibus.

Throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed are iconic species that help shape the identity and culture of our communities, and drive the outdoor economy. By assisting local partners with on-the-ground work to enhance progress toward Bay watershed—wide goals like strengthening riparian forest buffers, restoring vital habitat for fish and wildlife, and improving water quality, this grant program will have an incredible impact on the environment and economy of the Bay and the 64,000 square mile watershed.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE

The League supports providing $375 million for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative in FY 2022. The Great Lakes provide drinking water to 35 million people and support jobs and recreational opportunities for millions more. However, the health of the Great Lakes is seriously threatened by untreated sewage, toxic pollution, invasive species, and habitat loss. The eight states that border the Lakes and many non-governmental organizations have invested significant resources to safeguard these national treasures. Sustained federal investment at a significant level is also needed or the problems will only get worse and cost even more to fix.

Cleaning up the Great Lakes will provide many benefits, including economic development in the region. Great Lakes restoration efforts produce at least $2 in economic return for every $1 invested. Restoration projects create jobs for engineers, landscape architects, and construction workers and improve water quality, support outdoor recreation, and reestablish healthy fish and wildlife habitat. These results lay the foundation for long-term prosperity in the region.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM

The League asks that the Subcommittee to fund the Chesapeake Bay Program at $90 million in FY 2022, matching last year's Chesapeake Bay Program reauthorization. The Chesapeake Bay is the largest estuary in the United States and one of the largest in the world. More than 16 million people live within the Bay watershed. The Bay is a critical economic, environmental, and recreational resource for these residents and the entire nation. However, the productivity and health of this nationally significant resource remain seriously impaired by nutrient pollution from multiple sources throughout the watershed.

The EPA and states have launched a significant and rigorous effort to cut pollution and improve water quality. Few would argue that implementing the total maximum daily load (TMDL) will not be challenging or not require significant investment to reduce point and non-point source pollution. However, the president's budget request is inadequate and fails to support states, local governments, and other partners as they implement the TMDL. The League believes it is essential to provide technical and financial assistance to achieve results on the ground and secure a foundation for sustained pollution reductions over the long-term.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, SOUTH FLORIDA GEOGRAPHIC INITIATIVE

The League respectfully requests the Subcommittee appropriate $6 million for the South Florida Geographic Initiative for FY 2022. This amount matches last year's appropriation and is needed to reduce polluted discharges from leaking septic systems and other toxic cesspits, adequately monitor seagrass levels, assess efforts to restore the Everglades, and protect drinking water for 8 million Americans living in Florida. Economic benefits that would come from restoration of the Everglades are astronomical. Gains in biodiversity, groundwater purification and aquifer storage, increasing property values, park visitation, carbon sequestration, and improved fish and wildlife habitat that would come from a full restoration of the Everglades, as described in the Army Corps' Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, would drive an economic increase of $46.5 billion. The EPA investment in the restoration of south Florida and the Everglades is an important piece of the strategy to restore traditional water flows, protect drinking water, and conserve biodiversity.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, NON-POINT SOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 319)

The League is concerned that the FY 2021 omnibus provided only $177 million for EPA's Section 319, the Non-Point Source Management Program. The EPA and many states report that non-point source pollution is the leading cause of water quality problems, including harmful effects on drinking water supplies, recreation, fisheries and wildlife. Based on the pressing nature of the problem, it makes sense to invest resources that help states and local governments more aggressively tackle non-point source pollution. The League urges the Subcommittee to increase funding for Section 319 to $250 million for FY 2022.

The Izaak Walton League appreciates the opportunity to testify about these important issues.

[This statement was submitted by Jared Mott, Conservation Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE JAMESTOWN S'KLALLAM TRIBE

On behalf of the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, I am pleased to submit this written testimony on our funding priorities and requests for the Fiscal Year 2022 Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) and the Indian Health Service (IHS) budgets.

We commend the Biden's Administration's FY2022 proposed budget for Indian Country and urge Congress to enact similar funding levels to support strong Tribal governments, economies, and communities. Providing steady, equitable, non-discretionary base funding directly to Tribal Nations to support core government programs and services is an integral component of the Federal trust and treaty obligations. Tribes relinquished their lands and resources in exchange for funding and services from the Federal government in perpetuity and that obligation has not changed with time. It is solidified in our Constitution, Treaties, Executive Orders, and countless legal opinions. The Federal government, however, has never fully executed its responsibilities. It is time for the Federal government to honor those promises made nation-to-nation.

Over the past few decades, Tribal Nations have resumed exercising our inherent sovereignty and Self-Governance authority to develop sophisticated governmental systems that allow us to create comprehensive approaches to implementing programs and services at the local level that address our Tribal citizens and community's critical needs and align with our unique culture, traditions, and institutions. Self-Governance empowers Tribes to employ holistic techniques, develop innovative solutions, leverage the Federal dollar, and enter successful partnerships that allow us to realize a greater return on the Federal investment. The success we have attained demonstrates that continued Federal support is invaluable to growing sustainable Tribal economies that will enable us to attain our goal of self-sufficiency.

Tribal Top 5 Priorities and Recommendations for the BIA/BIE and IHS:

1. Advanced Appropriations for Tribal Programs and Services
2. Increase Funding for Tribal Base Budgets/Recurring Programs
3. Mandatory Appropriations for Section 105(l) Leases and Contract Support Costs
4. Fully Fund Tribal Fixed Costs/Pay costs
5. Invest in Tribal Infrastructure

Advanced Appropriations for Tribal Programs and Services.—Tribal Nations are resilient, however, the persistent delays and/or lapse of Federal funding disrupts our governmental programs and services and attenuates our ability to protect the health and well-being of our communities and citizens. In addition, the 35-day government shutdown of 2018–2019 put our Treaty rights at risk jeopardizing the survival of our resources, inhibited our economic development potential, stifled our ability to recruit and retain staff, delayed the process for the reacquisition of our Tribal homelands and, most significantly, jeopardized our sovereignty and culture. Providing appropriations one year in advance for the BIA, BIE and IHS will mitigate the adverse financial effects of Federal budgetary uncertainties and allow Tribes to engage in more effective strategic planning, spend funds more efficiently, grow our Tribal economy and businesses and increase the quality of care and well-being of our Tribal citizens and community.

Increase Funding for Tribal Base Budgets/Recurring Programs.—We urge Congress to appropriate funding to support Tribal base budgets by increasing funding for Tribal Priority Allocations and other Recurring Programs. For decades, in order to pay for tax cuts, wars, natural disasters and technology upgrades, funding for Tribal programs and services has been reduced or permanently rescinded. As funding for Tribal programs decreased, inflationary rates grew resulting in greater financial repercussions at the local level. There has been a growing trend among agencies to fund Tribal programs and services with grant dollars rather than providing base and recurring funding. Grant funding is incongruent with the trust and treaty resources and impose extensive regulations and reporting requirements, it is competitive short-term funding which creates uncertainty in planning and restricts the use of indirect costs.

Mandatory Appropriations for Section 105(l) Leases and Contract Support Costs.—Separate, indefinite accounts that were established to support Section105(l) leases and Contract Support Costs (CSC) has allowed Tribes to recoup funding that is owed to them, but it has resulted in the unintended reduction of funding for Tribal program lines in the IHS, BIA and BIE budgets. The agencies are legally required to compensate Tribes for Section 105(l) lease obligations and CSC in accordance with the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) but these obligations have grown tremendously since their inception. It is therefore incumbent upon the agencies and Congress to establish a permanent full funding solution that does not implicate current budget lines and services to Tribes.

Fully Fund Tribal Fixed Costs/Pay Costs.—The Federal government's failure to fund Tribal fixed costs and pay costs has financially devastated Tribal governmental operations resulting in significant job losses. Our Federal counterparts consistently receive annual increases to their fixed costs rates to account for inflationary costs associated with fringe benefits and pay costs. Similar concessions must be extended to Tribal governments to preserve jobs at the local level.

Invest in Tribal Infrastructure.—Increased Federal funding and investments could effectuate Tribal infrastructure development and, in turn, promote Tribal economic growth and self-sufficiency. Tribal governments and their citizens face profound infrastructure challenges that are acute and longstanding. Decaying, unsafe infrastructure is not only a public health issue but an impediment to economic development and job growth and reflects a failure of the Federal government to uphold its trust obligations. The breadth and severity of the unmet infrastructure needs must be addressed.

Tribal Priorities & National Requests and Recommendations for the BIA:

1. Trust Natural Resources
—$66 million BIA Rights Protection Implementation
—$17.1 million Western WA Fisheries Management
—$15 million Wildlife & Parks
2. $25 million Economic Development TPA
—$25 million Indian Guaranteed Loan Program/Surety Bonds
3. Human Services
—$70 million Social Services
—$100 million Welfare Assistance
—$30 million Indian Child Welfare Act

$66 million—BIA Rights Protection Implementation.—Rights Protection implementation is essential to preserve our Tribal treaty rights through resource manage-

ment activities. The vitality and sustainability of our Natural Resources is integral to the health and welfare of our Tribal citizens, communities, culture and religious practices and economies. Our Tribal Treaty Rights are at risk. Climate change is having a profound impact on Tribal communities, lands, resources and infrastructure and degradation of our natural environment is happening faster than we can restore it in the Northwest. The Federal investment in Tribal Natural Resources is essential to restore ecological functions, healthy habitats, and protect our resources. This investment also fosters Tribal self-sufficiency and supports Tribal economies by allowing us to cultivate cross jurisdictional partnerships with state and local governments that create jobs and promote and advance trade. It also allows us to preserve for future generations important cultural and religious practices.

$17.1 million—Western WA Fisheries Management.—This critical funding supports Tribal co-management activities of their treaty resources with the state of WA. These obligations include planning, regular assessments of resources, data gathering and other natural resource management requirements. This funding is critical to support day to day activities and monitoring of endangered habitat and fish stocks. Increased commercial and recreational activities coupled with the severe consequences of climate change has increased the urgency and costs associated with protecting our treaty resources.

$15 million Wildlife & Parks.—Funding supports our hatchery operations that harvest salmon, oysters and other fish and shellfish stocks. Our Tribal culture and traditions, ceremonies and subsistence is dependent on the survival of these species.

$25 million-Indian Guaranteed Loan Program/Surety Bonds.—Loan guarantees are an attractive financial tool because Tribes can leverage limited Federal funding in a prudent budgeting effective way and promote economic growth by investing in projects that can generate their own revenue streams. The Federal government is in a unique position to help advance Tribal projects and provide sustainable economic opportunities for Indian businesses and Tribal governments through the Indian Loan Guarantee Program and Surety Bonding for Indian contractors.

Human Services.—Our social service programs cater to the needs of our most vulnerable populations by providing critical services to our elders, children, and Tribal families. We focus on opportunities for personal growth through education, training, and employment through structured programs that are designed with the goal of developing self-reliance, self-sufficiency and developing strong Tribal citizens and community members. The success of our human services programs is demonstrated through the high number of Tribal citizens and descendants entering higher education learning and earning degrees, our 80% hiring rate and growing workforce of Tribal citizens, descendants and other Natives, our cultural preservation classes that create marketable products that can be sold through the Tribe's retail outlet and our flourishing language program. We lead our citizens down the path of self-sufficiency by developing their leadership skills, educational skills, job skills, fostering health and well-being in a culturally appropriate way.

Tribal Priorities & National Requests and Recommendations for the IHS:

1. $337 million to Support Current Services
2. $460.3 million for Purchased and Referred Care
3. $150 million Opioid Funding

$337 million to Support Current Services.—Maintaining current services is a priority for Tribal governments and more vital now as we try to mitigate the impacts of the public health crisis on our communities. It is critical that the IHS budget honors and respects the Federal trust obligation by investing heavily in our healthcare systems. To maintain current services, factors such as the inflationary rate, pay costs, contract support costs, population growth and staffing needs for recently constructed facilities all need to be fully funded. When these mandatory factors are not funded, Tribes must supplement programs with their own limited revenue, or chose between limiting services or shutting down services completely. The COVID–19 pandemic exposed what Tribal leaders have been stating for decades; the severe and persistent underfunding of Tribal healthcare programs and services has resulted in underlying inequalities that cross a wide spectrum of areas leaving Tribes and their citizens vulnerable to deadly diseases and social and economic devastation. While Indian country was included in COVID Relief Legislation, the disproportionate impacts of the pandemic on Tribal communities require significantly more resources to preserve human life.

$460.3 million Purchased and Referred Care (PRC).—Most IHS and Tribally operated direct care facilities do not provide the required emergency specialty care services, so Tribes are forced to turn to the private sector to fulfill this need. PRC funds are used to purchase essential health care services, including inpatient and outpatient care, routine emergency ambulatory care, transportation, and medical sup-

port services, such as diagnostic imaging, physical therapy, laboratory, nutrition, and pharmacy services. When PRC funds are depleted, services are denied to Tribal patients.

$150 million Opioid Funding.—The opioid epidemic has devastated Tribal communities with American Indian/Alaska Native opioid related deaths exceeding three times the rate of non-Indians. We believe a holistic service delivery approach is most effective with those suffering from opioid addiction. Tribal governments must be included in any funding allocated for treatment and prevention.

The Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe continues to support the requests and recommendations of our Regional and National Indian Organizations. Thank you.

[This statement was submitted by The Honorable W. Ron Allen, Tribal Chairman/CEO.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE KENTUCKY CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

Dear Chairman Merkley and Ranking Member Murkowski:

We are writing to express our support for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program. We appreciate your past support and hope that you will make funding for this program a priority. The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program, now in its twentieth year, provides a critical investment that is necessary to sustain our nation's biodiversity. In FY2021, $72.4 million was appropriated to the program, benefiting every state, territory, the District of Columbia and Indian tribes. These funds leveraged tens of millions in state and private funds. We ask that you provide the most robust funding possible for the program in FY2022.

The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program is the nation's core program to prevent fish and wildlife from becoming endangered. The program provides funding for priority conservation work aimed at preventing and recovering endangered species. The program is saving taxpayer dollars by supporting interventions before federal listing is required for many species, cutting down on endangered species controversies. Successes in every state, territory and the District of Columbia are highlighted in a new report by the US Fish and Wildlife Service that documents 20 years of success for the program.

The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program funds on-the-ground conservation work such as invasive species control, habitat management, land protection, species reintroduction, disease abatement, research, and monitoring needed to conserve over 12,000 animals identified as Species in Greatest Conservation Need in State Wildlife Action Plans. These plans were developed by each state, territory and the District of Columbia using the best available science and with input from farmers, ranchers, business-owners, conservationists, and the public.

The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program directly benefits over 100 million people who depend on healthy fish and wildlife and habitat for birding, hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, photography, hiking and other forms of wildlife-dependent recreation. The program is important to sustaining the $460 billion outdoor recreation economy and helps states meet their statutory responsibility for conserving fish and wildlife for future generations.

Again, we appreciate the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies past support for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program and encourage you to make funding for this program a priority in FY2022. Stronger funding for the program will expand conservation work to a greater number of the species that are in decline. Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,

Christina Wampler, President

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE LAC DU FLAMBEAU BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA INDIANS

On behalf of the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, I am pleased to submit testimony concerning the Tribe's FY 2022 funding needs in the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Indian Health Service (IHS), and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) accounts.

The Tribe is grateful to the Subcommittee for passage of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 and to all members who supported the CARES Act in 2020, which sustained the Tribe through the worst of the pandemic, and for the recently enacted American Rescue Plan (ARP) and the resources those measures provided the Tribe to actively combat and mitigate the pandemic, help Tribal businesses and

families hit hardest by the pandemic, and ensure that essential governmental services could be provided to our members.

We write to express our strong support for the Biden Administration's FY 2022 discretionary funding request. We understand that the Administration seeks significant increases in FY 2022 discretionary spending to address the four-fold crises of: 1) the pandemic, 2) the economic crisis that has shuttered business and suppressed governmental revenues which threaten essential services, 3) racial inequities and historic shortfalls to underserved communities, and 4) the climate crisis. Our Tribe has seen all four calamities. We support the President's FY 2022 budget request. We ask that you to do the same.

As of April 8, 2021, there have been 362 positive coronavirus cases on the Lac du Flambeau reservation out of 1829 tested (a positivity rate of 19.7%), 360 recoveries, 2 active cases, 21 hospitalizations, 1 current hospitalization, and zero deaths. We have been very fortunate. But this was no accident. On March 14, 2020, early in the pandemic, we issued a State of Emergency Declaration. This was followed up a few days later with a Shelter at Home Declaration. We closed the Lac du Flambeau Public School and Zaasijiwan Head Start program on the advice of our medical professionals. We closed the Aging Program, suspended daily meal deliveries, began doing curbside delivery of frozen meals for elders, and urged seniors to shelter at home. On April 29, 2020, we closed access to public boat landings, campgrounds, parks, trails, and tribal roads. We also closed the LDF Country Market, LDF Gas Station, LDF Smoke Shop, and the Tribal Government Building to Visitors. We issued a face-mask order and kept our members updated through frequent statements on the Tribe's website.

With CARES Act funds, we were able to issue hazard pay to essential workers, did our best to provide services and resources to Tribal members impacted the most by the pandemic, and made emergency assistance available to those most in need. We hope to construct an Emergency Operation Center using COVID–19 relief funds to better meet the needs of our reservation community in times of crises. We have already leveled the ground in anticipation of construction. The past year has been a testament to the hard work of dedicated Tribal officials and employees working collaboratively to keep members and residents safe and to mitigate the spread of the infectious coronavirus. The pandemic, however, highlighted the unmet needs of Indian country.

I. INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE PROGRAMS

The Tribe appreciates the Subcommittee's commitment to increasing appropriations in FY 2021 for the Indian Health Service (IHS) to address the health needs of our members. We greatly appreciate and support the President's $8.5 billion funding request for FY 2022 for IHS, an increase of $2.2 billion. If enacted into law, this will help address "long-standing health inequities" experienced by Tribal members that have been driven home to all Americans by the pandemic. This funding also includes an advance appropriation for FY 2023. These funds will better ensure that we maintain and expand the Peter Christensen Health Center, Dental Program, the Family Resource Center, and our In-patient Treatment Center. These programs are vital to ensure the support and preservation of family life and wellbeing by providing outpatient mental health, inpatient & outpatient alcohol and other drug abuse, and psychological consults.

We are also pleased to see the Administration prioritize funding to fight the opioid crisis with an investment request of $10.7 billion, an increase of $3.9 billion over the FY 2021 enacted level. The request will help Tribes like ours provide medication—assisted treatment and expand our behavioral health provider workforce. The Tribe is still working hard to combat the problem of opioid addiction. We appreciated the Committee's continued focus on the urgency of this crisis. We urge the Subcommittee to increase funds for preventive health programs such as Drug Endangered Children (DEC) and Drug Endangered Elders (DEE). These programs can save lives. Congress must recognize the toll that the pandemic, quarantines, and economic uncertainty has caused Tribal communities that are predominantly low-income.

II. BIE AND BIA APPROPRIATIONS

A. Indian Education. The Tribe continues to promote higher education among our children, especially in STEM subjects with the hope that through scholarships and federal loan forgiveness programs, our young Tribal citizens will return to the Reservation to maintain it as a vibrant Tribal community. We have limited Tribal funds to help our members cover the rising costs of college and graduate school. For these reasons, we strongly support President Biden's request of $4 billion for the BIA and

BIE, a $600 million increase over the FY 2021 enacted level. We cannot stress enough our need to retain our human capital here at Lac du Flambeau. Recruitment and retention of qualified professionals remains the greatest challenge for remote reservations like ours. Investments in people return powerful dividends for our future.

B. Road Maintenance Program. The Tribe appreciates Congress appropriating $36 million for the BIA Road Maintenance Program for FY 2021, including $500,000 for school bus roads. The BIA, however, has not been transparent in how these additional appropriations are allocated among eligible Tribes. We again urge the Subcommittee to make a one-time investment in the Road Maintenance Program, as it did 30 years ago, and ensure that at least $20 million be added to the Road Maintenance Program account for FY 2022 for the replacement by Tribes and the BIA of aging heavy road maintenance equipment. With many equipment decades old, replacement parts are hard to come by. We need to replace plow trucks, front end loaders, graders, sanders, and wings. Every Tribal program depends on all-season road access, including elementary, middle, and high schools, health centers, law enforcement, ambulance services, residences, and on-reservation businesses. Idle equipment serves no one.

III. NATURAL RESOURCES (EPA AND BIA)

The Tribe enthusiastically supports President Biden's call for a budget of $11.2 billion for EPA, an increase of $2 billion (21%) above the FY 2021 enacted level. We support the restoration of nearly 1,000 staff from EPA over the last four years. Ensuring that this important agency can carry out its core mission to protect the air, land, and waters of the United States, is critical. EPA must also lead the Nation in tackling the threat of climate change. We urge the Subcommittee to increase FY 2022 funds for the BIA and EPA Natural Resources programs that are critical to protecting our culture, our health, and our economy; part of Wisconsin's $19 billion hunting, fishing, recreation, and tourism industry. We thank the Subcommittee for increasing the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) Program to $330 million in FY 2021 and urge the Subcommittee to prioritize funds in FY 2022 to address environmental conditions in underserved communities like Indian country. We strongly recommend additional funding for the GLRI in FY 2022.

The Tribe has one of the leading Tribal Natural Resources programs in the Country. Our program includes a Fish Hatchery for several species of fish, Fisheries Management, Waterfowl habitat protection, GLRI, Wild Rice Restoration, Conservation Law Enforcement, Wildlife protection, Historic Preservation, and numerous Environmental Programs, including Water Resources and GAP. Our Natural Resources Department employs fish/wildlife/wild rice technicians, fish hatchery operators, hydrologists, environmental specialists, and administrators, many of whom are paid in full or in part with EPA and BIA funds. These funds are critical to our work protecting the resources that were promised to us in Treaties. Vilas and Oneida county lakes continue to have high concentrations of mercury. We cannot eat contaminated fish that are otherwise a staple of our members' diet. Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is another threat to our treaty protected resources and has been detected in deer in our ceded territories and is moving closer to the reservation. We seek funds to research CWD and prevention.

We continue to see higher levels of PFAS; per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, which are entering waters in our ceded territories. EPA established cumulative-lifetime health advisories for PFOA and PFOS, which are two PFAS that have been most widely produced and studied, at 70 parts per trillion (ppt). The Wisconsin Department of Health Services, at the request of the State's Department of Natural Resources, after study, recommended groundwater enforcement standards of 20 ppt for PFOA and PFOS. Exposure to PFOA and PFOS can lead to adverse health effects, including cancer. Wisconsin recommends that Walleye consumption be limited to one per month when such fish test positive. We seek additional funds to test for PFOS levels and other contaminants such as pharmaceuticals.

A. EPA's Underground Storage Tank Fund (LUST). The annual appropriation for Tribes allocated by EPA to cleanup under the Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) program is inadequate for Indian Country. We have spent almost a decade working with State and EPA officials to clean up the Tower Standard/Haskell Lake site, a LUST site located within the Tribe's exterior boundaries. This site is contaminated with petroleum, benzene, lead, dibromoethane, and other contaminants. EPA estimated that $1.7 million was required for "interim" action measures to remediate contamination on the site. The Tribe has advocated for recognition of Tribal Cleanup Standards and Federally Approved Water Quality Standards. EPA has not recognized our standards. Tribal Groundwater Standards are equivalent to Federal Safe

Drinking Water Act Standards and State Groundwater Cleanup Standard. Tribal Water Quality Standards were approved by EPA in 2005. Last fall, EPA completed site work with an Air Sparge/Soil Vapor Extraction Pilot Test and groundwater monitoring of some of the site wells. The design of this system will result in an interim measure expected to last 3 years, subject to funding. EPA has also promised to complete the site characterization monitoring wells next year, also subject to funding. This has been an outstanding promise since 2015.

Please allocate at least $25 million as a Tribal set-aside within the LUST Program for FY 2022. This will better ensure that our Tribe and other Tribes have access to sufficient EPA funds to remediate known LUST sites causing harm to our communities. We further recommend that the Senate report repeat language used in the Senate's FY 2020 report that directs EPA to "fully engage in meaningful consultation with Tribes and honor Tribal cleanup standards when developing interim and final action plans to remediate LUST sites located on reservations."

B. EPA Tribal General Assistance Program. For FY 2021, Congress approved $66.25 million for the Tribal general assistance program (GAP). Tribal GAP program provides base funds to assist Tribes build their environmental capacity to assess environmental conditions, utilize available data, and build their environmental programs to meet local needs. The Tribal GAP funding is limited to capacity building. It is critical that Congress expand Tribal EPA funding to include program implementation. Please consider this change in eligible uses, along with more funding for the program, in the FY 2022 appropriations measure.

C. Trust-Natural Resources Management. Continue to build Tribal capacity through meaningful increases to the Trust-Natural Resources Management program, specifically Tribal Fish Hatchery Operations and the Tribal Management/Development Program. For FY 2022, our Hatchery operations alone requires a $500,000 increase to the BIA's Fish Hatchery Operations account, and we require a $250,000 increase to our TM/DP Program operations. Our Natural Resources Program is the pride of the Tribe. We want to perpetuate it and hire and train future biologists, hydrologists, and environmental specialists to maintain the health of our hatchery, waters, land, and air. Our Natural Resources Program is the pride of our Tribe. We want to perpetuate it and hire and train future biologists, hydrologists, and environmental specialists to maintain the health of our hatchery, waters, land, and air. This requires resources we do not have. This Subcommittee's actions are key to our Tribe's ability to build on our successes for the benefit of our members. Please also support passage of the Recovering America Wildlife Act this year, including its set-aside of nearly $100 million for Tribal natural resource programs.

D. GLIFWC. The Tribe strongly supports the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC) appropriations request for FY 2022. GLIFWC provides valuable support to the Great Lakes Tribes, like Lac du Flambeau, through services and activities which GLIFWC funds under the BIA's Rights Protection and Implementation and other programs.

[This statement was submitted by John Johnson, Sr., President.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE LEAGUE OF AMERICAN ORCHESTRAS

The League of American Orchestras urges the Senate Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee to substantially increase Fiscal Year 2022 funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). While the agency has received steady bipartisan support from the Subcommittee and Congress over the last several years, this past year of unprecedented closures due to the COVID–19 pandemic has called for special consideration of the devastating impact on the arts sector, including orchestras.

Since the onset of COVID–19, the League of American Orchestras has collected information tracking the pandemic's impact on orchestras, their workforce, and their capacity to deliver on their community—centered mission. Our third COVID–19 Impact Survey opened on February 22, 2021, with 198 orchestras across budget sizes participating by March 11, 2021. The survey collected information to help gain a better understanding of orchestras' capacity to deliver performances for the rest of the current season and the 2021–22 season. Among the highlights as of March: 23% of orchestras are currently offering performances with a live, in-person audience; over two-thirds (67%) are offering streaming performances; orchestras are expecting halls to be on average at 42% of capacity when audiences return in person. The full impact of this pandemic has yet to be felt. Even as government closure orders lift, orchestras will not quickly return to full capacity, which will have a severe and prolonged impact on their financial capacity and workforce.

The designation of being an NEA grantee has long provided a significant reputational boost that assists orchestras of all sizes in presenting concerts and unique experiences to the public. In 2020, the value of an NEA grant became even more significant given the crucial financial support in the form of CARES Act grants during what continues to be an extended period of vulnerability for the performing arts. The following testimony is both an expression of gratitude by the grantees and a request on behalf of the orchestral field for the agency to be empowered to continue providing necessary support. The NEA's leadership capacity, direct grants via Art Works and Challenge America as well as its indirect grantmaking through state and regional partnerships, research, and convening role make the agency an irreplaceable beacon to arts organizations and the communities that rely upon them as they cope with and recover from this troubled time.

A National Endowment for the Arts CARES Act grant made it possible for the Portland (Maine) Symphony Orchestra (PSO) to retain its office location, pay needed utility bills, and preserve its artistic and education staff, all of which were needed for the 2020–21 season to operate. Without NEA CARES funding, the orchestra would have had to make dire cuts to its programs, staff, and operations. The NEA CARES grant freed up operational funds that led to the PSO's ability to quickly plan scenarios for an ever—changing 2020–21 season. This work resulted in a virtual concert season and the creation of a new program entitled Musician Led Projects. Both were launched in fall 2020. The digital season is employing nearly the entire roster of PSO musicians through Classical, Pops, Youth, Holiday, and Summer concerts. These concerts have included works by Arturo Marquez, Florence Price, Max Richter, George Walker, Ahmet Adnan Suygun, and many others. Musician Led Projects have given every musician in the orchestra the opportunity to earn income through self—led initiatives that connect music to members of the Portland community; this has been critical as the orchestra can only perform with 25–30 musicians on stage due to health recommendations. These projects have included small performances in outdoor locations, virtual performances, zoom studio tours with patrons, and educational content to engage very young listeners. Virtual concerts and Musician Led Initiatives have reached supporters and patrons in 36 states and provided employment opportunities for stagehand and concert hall staff in addition to work for PSO staff members. The NEA CARES Act grant allowed the Portland Symphony Orchestra not only to survive but quickly pivot to provide safe employment opportunities for artists and meaningful programs for the community.

With funding from an NEA CARES grant, the Nashville Symphony is presenting a series of free Community Concerts in the spring and summer of 2021. Scheduled to take place both at Schermerhorn Symphony Center and at locations around the Middle Tennessee region, these concerts will be the Nashville Symphony's very first performances since being forced to shut down in March 2020 due to the COVID–19 pandemic. Over the past year, the Nashville Symphony has embarked on a reimagining process and has initiated dialogues with key stakeholders and organizations in its community in order to help shape and transform the orchestra's community engagement programming. As part of the Nashville Symphony's reemergence, these Community Concerts represent a vital first step in how the orchestra will respond to the community's input and play a meaningful role in helping the people of Middle Tennessee heal from the devastation of the pandemic.

The Billings Symphony utilized its NEA CARES grant to fill and sustain three key positions: Music Director, Education Director and Manager of Artistic Operations. These positions play a significant role in contributing to the organization's overall community engagement and are critical for sustaining the orchestra's mission to "enrich lives through music." Eliminating or curtailing even one position would have resulted in dramatically reduced services to its already—underserved populations. This award allowed the Billings Symphony to continue offering its services through uncertain times as well as sustain it into the future. Given the unknown end of this public health crisis, the Billings Symphony has started facing a new reality by tasking its community engagement division to begin a transformation to provide creative and effective alternative programming, i.e., live streaming events, online educational resources for students, creative connection platforms for patrons and more. It prioritized scheduling for those who have been most isolated during the shutdown such as the Women's Prison and assisted living facilities. Lastly, receiving CARES funding freed up the orchestra to retain a residency for its "you can't be it if you can't see it" equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives, which include the leads for its planned March 2021 Guys and Dolls Concert.

By supporting musician salaries at the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra (SLSO) during the summer of 2020, CARES Act funds benefitted both performers and the regional community, which enjoyed continued access to orchestral music. Creative offerings included: the #SLSOatHome video series in which musicians offered per-

formances from their homes; the SLSO Instrument Playground Online, a valuable free educational tool for students, teachers, and parents to be introduced to orchestral instruments by musicians; and several musicians organized outdoor concerts in their own neighborhoods. The SLSO Songs of America project, a series of videos celebrating the breadth of voices in American music, featured SLSO musicians, local guest artists, and St. Louis landmarks that showcase the unique spirit of the community. The project reached more than 250,000 people online in its first month and aired on the local PBS affiliate, reaching another 185,000 people. Federal support, including NEA CARES Act funds, enabled the SLSO to be nimble and creative, maintain employment for musicians and staff throughout the pandemic, and continue making meaningful musical experiences when the community needed them most.

During a season when far too many performing arts organizations have been unable to perform, the NEA CARES Act grant facilitated Toledo Alliance for the Performing Arts (TAPA's) return to the stage. The funding helped retain their Music Director and plan a season with both in-person and virtual audiences. TAPA adjusted its concert repertoire to accommodate a limited number of musicians safely on the stage while selecting programming that would resonate with the Toledo community during these extraordinary times. TAPA's celebratory 80th anniversary Nutcracker, the longest running annual production in the entire country, was modified and streamed by over 4,000 viewers with a recorded score performed by Toledo Symphony musicians, and in December PBS Newshour featured this Toledo production. So far this season, concerts have been viewed not only locally, but in 46 states and 29 countries through the new TAPA Streaming service. This spring, TAPA celebrates Toledo's Metroparks, with Forces of Nature, a concert highlighting the treasure of their nationally acclaimed Metroparks system. In gratitude to their audiences, supporters, students, and community, their final concert this June will feature Beethoven's Symphony No. 6, Pastoral (feelings of gratitude after a storm). Toledo Alliance for the Performing Arts is deeply grateful for the NEA's investment in its efforts to provide the healing power of the arts during these challenging times.

The South Bend Symphony Orchestra (SBSO) in Indiana was honored to be a recipient of CARES Act support administered by the NEA. While the 2019–20 performance season came to an abrupt end for SBSO—as it did for nearly every arts organization in the country—the work of the organization had to continue. The operating support allowed the SBSO to focus energy on shifting to new projects and platforms during the pandemic. During a year spent exploring and redefining new ways in which the performing arts could thrive, the SBSO discovered that adaptation was equal to innovation. During the height of the pandemic, the South Bend Symphony launched an innovative new project entitled Octet. Octet was a proof of concept that attempted to add new dimensions to the listening experience when musicians and audiences were unable to gather in person. To provide musicians work at a time when it had become nearly non-existent for performers, eight SBSO string players were hired to assemble and perform in a socially distanced hall to record chamber music. This recording was mixed to be channeled through eight individual speakers, which were later set up in a circle in an exhibition hall at the South Bend Museum of Art where patrons could safely visit and encounter the sounds of a live octet as part an immersive audio experience. The project united several community partners and brought "live" music into South Bend for months. Octet, a fully transportable system, transcends the pandemic and will travel indefinitely to area hospitals, libraries, schools, and other community venues in the future. It notably traveled to several area COVID vaccine clinics, where patients enjoyed a unique musical experience during the mandatory observation time following vaccination. Without the incredible support of federal agencies like the NEA during this time, projects like Octet could never have happened. The SBSO is proud to have continued serving its patrons and community during the COVID–19 pandemic and is poised to thrive in the seasons to come.

Thank you for this opportunity to share a sampling of ways in which the National Endowment for the Arts has been able to support orchestras through the COVID–19 pandemic, which directly translated to supporting musicians, staff, and their communities. These dedicated grants and the flexibility for FY20 and FY21 grantees to pay down operating costs have made a tremendous difference at a financially precarious time. NEA CARES Act grants have helped many organizations offer much—needed employment and provide ways for children and adults to enjoy music and inspiration amid great uncertainty. The NEA has shown consistent strong leadership in promoting public engagement with high—quality artistry and great empathy and understanding for the urgent needs of arts organizations and artists throughout this pandemic, and the agency continues to provide valuable leadership as the arts recover and begin to reopen. While this year's testimony has focused on the COVID–

19 support provided by the agency in acknowledgment of this anomalous time, it is our hope that Congress will support the annual appropriations for the National Endowment for the Arts with a substantial increase in FY22 so that communities throughout our nation can look forward to deeper engagement with and increased access to the arts.

ABOUT THE LEAGUE

The League of American Orchestras leads, supports, and champions America's orchestras and the vitality of the music they perform. Its diverse membership of more than 1,800 organizations and individuals across North America runs the gamut from world—renowned orchestras to community groups, from summer festivals to student and youth ensembles, from conservatories to libraries, from businesses serving orchestras to individuals who love symphonic music. A national organization dedicated solely to the orchestral experience, the League is a nexus of knowledge and innovation, advocacy, and leadership advancement. Its conferences and events, award—winning Symphony magazine, website, and other publications inform people around the world about orchestral activity and developments. americanorchestras.org

[This statement was submitted by Simon Woods, President and CEO.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE MANIILAQ ASSOCIATION

Recommendations:

1. Provide full funding and advance appropriations for the Indian Health Service (IHS)
2. Increase funding and accepted applications for the Joint Venture Program
3. Fund Critical Infrastructure investments for the Indian health system
4. Ensure mandatory funding for Contract Support Costs and 105(l) lease payments
5. Fully fund Village Built Clinic leases
6. Support increased funding for Sanitation Facilities Construction
7. Increase funding and authorize a self—governance funding mechanism option for the Special Diabetes Program for Indians
8. Increase funding for Preventive Health programs.
9. Reduce dependence on competitive grants for Indian Country

Introduction

Thank you Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to share our funding priorities for the FY 2022 federal budget. My name is Tim Gilbert and I serve as President/CEO of the Maniilaq Association. The Maniilaq Association is an Alaska Native regional nonprofit organization representing twelve tribes in Northwest Alaska. We provide health services through a self—governance agreement with the Indian Health Service (IHS).

We have been grateful that IHS has received significant supplementary appropriations to combat the COVID–19 pandemic. Those dollars have been critical in ensuring that we had the means to serve our patients and fight this deadly disease. The historic funding provided to IHS will translate into real lives saved. It is critical that we use this crisis as an opportunity to make real, sustained investments in the Indian health system. As we have seen with the remarkable distribution of the COVID–19 vaccine in Indian Country, when given adequate resources and when tribal sovereignty is honored, tribal communities can rise to the challenge. It is now time to take the lessons learned from the COVID–19 pandemic—both positive and negative—to renew the Indian health system. Annual appropriations are essential to this effort and in fulfilling the federal government's trust and treaty obligations by ensuring critical programs and services receive adequate funding to fulfill their intended purpose. To further these goals, I offer the following recommendations for your consideration for FY 2022 appropriations for the IHS.

Provide Full Funding for the Indian Health Service.—The IHS and its tribal partners under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act strive to provide tribal people with access to high quality and comprehensive medical services, no more so than during the ongoing pandemic. It has navigated unimaginable hardships related to supplies, staffing levels, infrastructure and facilities, and high rates of underlying conditions in serving our people at this time.

The IHS Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup has calculated this need at $48 billion for full funding. While this represents a dramatic increase in funding, it is

imperative that Congress address the true needs of the Indian health system. In FY 2022, the Workgroup requests $12.759 billion for IHS. We support their full request and reiterate the top 5 priorities for program expansion as follows:

1) Hospitals and Clinics: $4.2 billion
2) Purchased/Referred Care: $2 billion
3) Mental Health: $715 million
4) Alcohol and substance Abuse: $778.5 million
5) Dental Services: $649.7 million

Support Expansion of the IHS Joint Venture Program.—As you are aware, the IHS Joint Venture (JV) program provides tribes with a critical opportunity to build new facilities and to enhance health services for their patients. Under this project, tribes and tribal organizations build or acquire the facility with their own or other non-IHS funds, and IHS commits to fund the additional staffing and operations costs associated with the new or expanded facility. The program has been a major success, with close to 40 facilities built, acquired, or renovated since 1992. It has been a critical, cost-effective mechanism to address the health care facilities shortage, since funds continue to be limited for the IHS Facilities Construction Priority List. Yet, despite the remarkable success of this program, projects like ours remain unfunded by IHS. In the last round, we—along with 2 other Tribal health organizations in Alaska—received a high score, but were not funded, as IHS only funded the top 5 applicants. We were in the top 10. We request that the Committee direct IHS to fund all high-scoring applicants for JV construction projects.

Additionally, there remains a significant flaw in the program that leaves tribal facilities without necessary maintenance and replacement funds. The IHCIA requires that the tribe lease the facility to IHS for 20 years at no cost. The JV facility is eligible to receive a share of IHS's perennially insufficient Maintenance and Improvement (M&I) funding, but is not eligible for a lease under section 105(l) of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA).[1] This leads to the anomaly that non-JV facilities can be fully funded under 105(l), receiving either fair market rental or the cost elements set out in the regulations, while JV facilities are stuck with nothing but M&I. We request that Congress amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to correct this issue. We are happy to provide any technical assistance you may need.

Support for Advance Appropriations for IHS.—For many years, tribes have requested that IHS appropriations be funded on an advance appropriations cycle. It has unfortunately become the norm that IHS does not receive its full yearly appropriation until several months (sometimes longer) after the start of the fiscal year. In the recent past, IHS, Tribal and Urban health programs have even had to deal with government shutdowns, when no funding was provided for weeks on end. These funding delays make it impossible for IHS and Tribal health programs to plan and manage their annual budgets. As you know, health systems cannot practically operate on a day to day or week to week basis without knowing what funding will be provided in the future. Unrelated political disagreements in Washington, DC should not impede American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) from receiving the health care they deserve. Full advance appropriations for the IHS would promote greater stability in services, medical personnel recruitment and retention, and facilities management.

We thank the leadership of this subcommittee for supporting this important change in previous Congresses. We were also grateful to see President Biden support IHS advance appropriations in his FY 2022 budget request to Congress which was released on April 9, 2021. We urge the Committee to take the necessary steps in the FY 2022 appropriations bill to move IHS to an advance appropriation for FY 2023 and beyond.

Fully fund critical infrastructure investments.—As Congress considers making dramatic investments in the country's infrastructure, it is critical that the Indian health system not be left behind. Therefore, we request that the subcommittee allocate funding for full implementation of interoperable Electronic Health Records (EHR) and tele-health. This will ensure that IHS can provide services that are similar to other health providers. As you are aware, this investment is especially critical as the Veterans' Administration and Department of Defense move to modernize their systems. For tribes and Tribal health organizations who have committed their own resources to move away from RPMS and make their systems functional, IHS should take this into consideration with any new resources and ensure these programs are not only interoperable, but compensated accordingly.

[1] 25 U.S.C. § 5324(l); 25 C.F.R. Part 900, Subpart H.

It is also critical that Congress make significant investments in Tribal health facilities construction. IHS and tribal facilities are some of the oldest in the nation, with an average age of 10.6 years. This creates situations where facilities are out of date, or not appropriate for the size of the patient populations they serve. Therefore, consistent with the Budget formulation Workgroup's request, we recommend $15 billion for Health Facilities Construction Funding & Equipment.

Sanitation Facilities Construction.—During the pandemic, we were told to socially distance and wash our hands to keep COVID–19 from spreading. Yet for many homes in Alaska Native villages, without access to clean running water or sewer, this was impossible. Roughly 20 percent of rural Alaska Native homes still lack in-home piped water. This creates significant health risks for Alaska Natives living in these communities. Yet, with a backlog of almost $3 billion ($1.8 billion of that in Alaska), the IHS Sanitation Deficiency list cannot keep pace with need. We urge Congress to prioritize Sanitation Facilities Construction funding in FY 2022 and any infrastructure package moving through Congress. Furthermore, cost caps imposed by the IHS decrease project priority and limit the amount of funding going to those projects. IHS should eliminate cost caps that would provide piped water and sewer for these communities.

Mandatory Funding for Contract Support Costs and 105(l) lease payments.—We appreciate the subcommittee's commitment to ensuring that Contract Support Costs (CSC) and 105(l) lease costs are fully funded by including an indefinite discretionary appropriation in FY 2021 for both of these accounts. However, these line items continue to take up a larger and larger percentage of the IHS discretionary budget, thereby leaving little room to expand other services given tight discretionary appropriations caps. We strongly agree with the subcommittee's words in the explanatory statement for the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116–94) regarding 105(l) costs which said, in part: "Obligations of this nature are typically addressed through mandatory spending, but in this case since they fall under discretionary spending, they are impacting all other programs funded under the Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, including other equally important Tribal programs . . . "

Therefore, we ask you to continue to advocate with your colleagues on authorizing committees to enact mandatory appropriations for CSC and 105(l) lease costs. Doing so, will ensure that other areas of the IHS budget are held harmless by these costs and true increases in critical services line items can move forward. This will enhance care for AI/AN patients and reduce health disparities.

Fully Fund the Village Built Clinic Lease Program.—Village health clinics supported by the IHS Village Built Clinic (VBC) Lease Program have a long and unique history in Alaska, and provide the only local source of health care in many rural areas. VBC leases, which are vital to the provision of services by Community Health Aides/practitioners, who provide primary health care services and coordinate patient care through referral relationships with midlevel providers, physicians, and regional hospitals, remain severely underfunded. We ask that Congress fully fund all VBC leases in FY 2022 and thereafter.

Extend Self-Governance Funding Options to the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) and increase funding to $250 million/year.—While we understand that SDPI is not under the jurisdiction of the subcommittee, we appreciate that Congress included a three-year reauthorization of SDPI in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116–260). Communities like ours across Indian Country rely on SDPI resources to address the alarming rates of diabetes and diabetes—related health complications among our people. SDPI's success rests in the flexibility of its program structure that allows for the incorporation of culture and local needs into its services. Consistent with this model, Congress should authorize SDPI participants the option of receiving their federal funds through either a grant (as currently used) or self—governance funding mechanisms under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. This would be a natural and just extension of SDPI in respecting tribal sovereignty. Additionally, SDPI has not had an increase in funding since FY 2004. Short term reauthorizations also destabilize this health program and make staffing and program continuity difficult. For this reason, we recommend permanent reauthorization for SDPI at a minimum base of $250 million per year with annual adjustments for inflationary increases. Therefore, we urge you to work with your Congressional colleagues to ensure that SDPI receives a funding increase of at least $250 million per year.

Plan for the Future with Dedicated Funding for Preventative Health Services.—Among the many things we have learned from the COVID–19 pandemic is that basic public health functions are critical to preserving life and overall health of Americans, yet public health systems in most tribal communities lag far behind systems in other jurisdictions. Without robust public health systems in place, respond-

ing to public health threats means that tribal communities will continue to be a challenge. Like other governments, Tribes have the responsibility to provide public health services for their people. Yet the federal government provides few resources to tribal communities for this purpose. AI/ANs experience health disparities for a variety of health conditions such as such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancer and other largely preventable chronic conditions. Treating these chronic health conditions imposes unnecessary challenges on Tribal health systems and IHS. We support long-term, sustained, full investment in tribal public health infrastructure so that tribal communities have the resources available to respond quickly when the next crisis hits.

Reduce Dependence on Federal Grants.—In addition to the critical funding needs that are outlined above, we also support moving away from competitive grants for federal funding mechanisms. The federal trust responsibility does not require that we jump through a myriad of hoops and onerous applications to see that services are provided to our people. Grants also unfairly pit tribes against tribes, when all are deserving of critical resources. Therefore, we agree with other tribal leaders and continue to support broad based funding for our health systems across all federal agencies. Too often, tribes are under resourced to apply for federal grants, and to comply with the associated burdensome reporting requirements which vary from grant to grant. Applications and reporting requirements force our health system to divert staff time to apply and report thereby diluting the usefulness of the resources. Instead, we request wide-spread, formula-based funding across all programs. Tribes must also be granted the flexibility needed to respond to the specific needs of their own communities, not those prescribed by federal grants. This also means providing enough resources so funds are provided in meaningful amounts across all tribes.

[This statement was submitted by Tim Gilbert, President/CEO.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF METHANE ACTION AND REMINERALIZE THE EARTH

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, Methane Action and Remineralize the Earth (remineralize.org) are providing a summary of our more detailed recommendations, which you may find on the website of Methane Action (MethaneAction.org). These are based on the recommendations of scientists, lawyers, economists and businessmen and women in the U.S. and overseas with many decades of expertise in climate change mitigation. (See, e.g., scientists' letter of April 2021 at MethaneAction.org). The world must rapidly reduce anthropogenic emissions, and develop and deploy greenhouse gas (GHG) destruction and removal methods, and through domestic and global governance, ensure that both are done safely and effectively. This Subcommittee has the power to take the lead in all three. Some of what we set out here may require authorizing in an appropriations bill. We focus primarily on the emerging, safe, efficient, nature-based methods of removing methane and other GHGs. We include recommended bill language below.

A GREENHOUSE GAS DRAWDOWN PROGRAM

Purpose.—The purpose of this title is to expedite the deployment of new GHG removal methods and the restoration of the earth's climate to a healthy state of below 300 parts per million CO2 as soon as possible, to return ambient methane to safe levels of less than .8 parts per million by 2028 from the current 1.9 ppm and reduce other greenhouse gases and climate—forcing agents as rapidly as possible, and to thereby reverse the harms caused by climate change and protect the stratospheric ozone layer especially near the arctic as well. (See, latest IPCC draft report on impacts on humans and nature:https://phys.org/news/2021–06-climate-impacts-people.html; https://phys.org/news/2021–06-climate-impacts-nature.html; https://phys.org/news/2021–06-hunger-drought-disease-climate-reveals.html and https://phys.org/news/2021–06-greenhouse-gases-pose-threat-arctic.html)

Establishing a Greenhouse Gas Drawdown Program.—Within ninety days of enactment, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, in consultation with other relevant agencies, shall publish one or more regulations establishing a Greenhouse Gas Drawdown Program (the Program). The technologies he shall require as options for destroying or converting GHGs shall include, but not be limited to, those described below unless the Administrator of the E.P.A. and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget agree that any would not be cost effective at a given time. The goal of the Program is to expedite the restoration of the earth's climate to a healthy state as described in the Purpose section above. It shall include the following steps undertaken simultaneously:

a) Environmental and Biological Assessment.—The Administrator and the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture shall commence within sixty days a program to study the climate restoration potential of practices under their jurisdiction, and the methods listed below, initially in controlled environments prior to the completion of their assessment duties under the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act. They shall ensure by regulation that the full assessment, and interagency consultation concerning any action that may affect any listed species, regardless of the location of the decision, the action or its effects.

b) Research, Development and Deployment.—The Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior and the Administrator of EPA, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy and the Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management and the Advanced Research Projects Agency, shall within sixty days of enactment begin to study, develop and to require the use of practicable greenhouse gas drawdown methods in such activities as they conduct, permit, subsidize or purchase from, including but not limited to:

1. the conversion or sequestration in agricultural, silvicultural and other forest soils, and open or closed aquatic environments, biochar, soil remineralization with rock dust and sea minerals and enhancement (enhanced rock weathering (ERW)) and the use of other natural sequestrates;
2. the conservation, restoration, remineralization and de-acidification of mature terrestrial forests, kelp forests, coral reefs, deltas, estuaries, and other aquatic ecosystems and marine life, including alterations in trawling and the designation of and implementation of expedited recovery programs for "Climate Keystone Species" that play particularly important roles in sequestering GHGs, including but not limited to the great whales, all bears and for foreign aid purposes, forest elephants;
3. the atmospheric oxidation, catalysis and other methods for the conversion of methane and other greenhouse gases and climate forcing agents by means of exposing them to minerals, including but not limited to photocatalysis with iron salt aerosols, tower or chimney aided catalysis, zeolite sorbents followed by catalytic destruction, minerals or compounds in filters, waters and the atmosphere both near and removed from sources of methane;
4. natural and enhanced weathering of the alkaline silicate rock dusts in soils to increase photosynthesis of growing plants, increase the intake or uptake of CO2 and N2O (nitrous oxide), improve the fertility of soils, and buffer downstream oceans from the effects of ocean acidification while addressing climate change; and
5. changing or amending tillage and cover crop combinations, altering animal grazing, fodder or feed for example, with rotational grazing, the addition of red and other seaweed, and other methods of reducing the amount or nature of GHGs emitted and escaping from and around livestock.

For the GHG Drawdown Program and (a) and (b) we appropriate $9,000,000, and provide additional appropriations as follows:

(i) Field test methane oxidation effects of iron in ships' fuel to assess the feasibility of removing methane from the atmosphere in order to reduce its presence as a pollutant with climate forcing and other dangerous effects by increasing the oxidative power of the atmosphere using chlorine atoms generated by iron—containing sea salt aerosols. This technique is called Enhanced Atmospheric Methane Oxidation (EAMO), employing iron salt aerosol to catalyze the oxidation. EAMO mimics the natural methane oxidation processes, for which is appropriated for contracting for Field Tests from FY22–24, $2,156,866, and an Environmental Impact Statement in advance of expanded EAMO deployment, $348,000.

(ii) Enhanced Atmospheric Methane Oxidation (EAMO) via Retired Oil Drilling Platform or Remote Island Tower.—The Administrator is directed to contract for an initial test project to disperse Iron Salts Aerosols ("ISA" in the form of FeCl3) into the atmosphere allowing ISA to work as a photocatalyst that in the presence of sunshine accelerates methane oxidation to CO2 and water. The Administrator shall contract in FY22 with a qualified provider for a trial of EAMO via a retired oil—drilling platform or island tower for which is appropriated $1,207,000.

(iii) Methane Oxidation Monitoring System (MOMS).—The Administrator shall complete a two-year contract for a Methane Oxidation Monitoring System (MOMS) using data from multiple existing satellites and from newly installed surface detection equipment, to be deployed on at least twenty ships by July 1, 2023. Ship Deployment and operations budget to be appropriated for FY2023. For development of MOMS in FY2022: $2,010,000

(iv) Agricultural and silvicultural methane removal.—In cooperation with USDA and its agencies, such as the USDA Office of International Research, Engagement and Cooperation, by July 1, 2022, and the Administrators of EPA and USAID, the Secretary shall contract for an evaluation of GHG sequestration, uptake, oxidation

and other long term removal methods in agricultural and silvicultural practice, including but not limited to the methods described in paragraphs 4)(I) and (II) below.

I) With a goal of cutting methane emissions from rice cultivation, in cooperation with the Administrators of EPA and USAID, the Secretary of Agriculture shall contract in FY 2022 for a three year test of the impact of various potential additives to rice farming, including but not limited to iron sulfates, approved for organic farming to enhance yields, fight plant chlorosis, and improve the nutritional value of rice crops by enhancing their iron levels in order to fight anemia, in conjunction with other changes in rice farming practice such as targeting the flooding of fields more efficiently for which is appropriated $3,000,000.

II) The Secretary of Agriculture, in consultation with the Administrators of USAID and EPA, shall contract with one or more qualified and successful organizations, such as Hope for Haiti, in FY22 to complete over a period of 18 months an agricultural GHG sequestration program that includes restoring minerals to the soil and provides multiple development benefits for which is appropriated $300,000.

(v) Achieving methane and other GHG emissions reductions, and potential sequestration and other removal via wetlands management.—The Administrator shall contract in FY22 for one or more investigations of relative wetland emissions of greenhouse gases, to determine if alternative practices could reduce greenhouse gas emission, without significantly changing the ecosystem of important wetland and other land preserves, recommend such wetland management practices, and evaluate proposals for changing land status, e.g., rewetting drained wetlands. $500,000 per year for 3 years for which is appropriated $1,500,000

(vi) Restoring Climate Keystone Species.—The Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture in carrying out their duties under Section 7(a)(1) and (2) of the Endangered Species Act shall assist the Secretary of Commerce, and competent non-government organizations, in establishing a program to enhance the recovery of salmon, whales, elephants and other climate keystone species in the U.S. and other countries which shall include taking steps to reduce the carbon footprint of trawling and to protect whales and other climate keystone and water cleansing species such as kelp forests and oysters for which is appropriated $10,000,000 for Interior including a pass—through for Commerce and $5,000,000 for Agriculture.

(vii) Surface-Based Photocatalytic Enhanced Methane Oxidation (SPEMO).—The Administrator shall contract for three years of research and development of surface—based photocatalytic enhanced methane oxidation (SPEMO) to lower methane emissions from coal mines, oil wells and animal farms, to ensure that the CH4 concentration from ventilated air is less than 1.7 ppm by volume; and apply photocatalytic paint to buildings, rooftops, photovoltaic panels, or in a ventilated conduit to reduce methane in the general atmosphere as a complement to commercial photocatalytic paints and coatings already being used because of their ability to reduce urban pollution such as nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds for which is appropriated $3,000,000.

(viii) Accelerating the recovery of the stratospheric ozone layer.—The Administrator shall contract in FY22 for a three year study of technologies for eliminating Ozone Depleting Substances at the source or in the general atmosphere, to promote the use of those found feasible and to develop and publish a comprehensive mitigation plan for reducing emissions and eliminating ozone depleting substances from the atmosphere for which is appropriated $1,500,000.

c) Comprehensive assessment of atmospheric methane sources, sinks and solutions, and development of a plan for atmospheric methane reduction. The Administrator shall by June 1, 2022 and annually thereafter issue a report providing (1) a review of each major methane emission source and sink and options to affect their impact on atmospheric methane levels; (2) a review of all possible, and all currently practicable, technologies, programs, policy and regulatory changes that could help reduce atmospheric methane levels and for each proposed technology or policy change, their technological readiness, likelihood of success, barriers to implementation, cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analysis, and likely impact on atmospheric methane levels, and (3) national and global plans and related proposed agreements for atmospheric methane and other GHG reduction, including goals, recommendations, governance of the development and deployment of methods, options for investment in new technologies, regulatory and land management changes, and the potential use of emergency powers, for which is appropriated $6,000,000.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE METLAKATLA INDIAN COMMUNITY

Recommendations:

1. Provide full funding and advance appropriations for the Indian Health Service (IHS).
2. Ensure that mandatory funding for Contract Support Costs and 105(l) lease payments
3. Fund Critical Infrastructure investments for the Indian health system
4. Increase funding and authorize a self-governance funding mechanism option for the Special Diabetes Program for Indians
5. Support for Tribal Hatcheries at the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
6. Support for U.S. Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty
7. Support for Tribal Court Assistance for Tribes Subject to PL 83–280
8. Support Funding to Address the Impacts of Climate Change
9. Reduce dependence on competitive grants for Indian Country

INTRODUCTION

Thank you Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to share our funding priorities for the FY 2022 federal budget is Reginald Atkinson and I am the mayor of the Metlakatla Indian Community. The Metlakatla Indian Community (MIC) is located on the Annette Island Reserve in southeast Alaska, a land base of 87,000 acres which includes significant fish and forestry resources. Through our Annette Island Service Unit we provide primary health services at our outpatient facility through funding from the IHS as a co-signer to the Alaska Tribal Health Compact under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. The following testimony will provide recommendations on the IHS and BIA priorities.

IMPROVING THE INDIAN HEALTH SYSTEM

We have been grateful that IHS has received significant supplementary appropriations to combat the COVID–19 pandemic. Those dollars have been critical in ensuring that we had the means to serve our patients and fight this deadly disease. The historic funding provided to IHS will translate into real lives saved. It is critical that we use this crisis as an opportunity to make real, sustained investments in the Indian health system. As we have seen with the remarkable distribution of the COVID–19 vaccine in Indian Country, when given adequate resources and when tribal sovereignty is honored, tribal communities can rise to the challenge. It is now time to take the lessons learned from the COVID–19 pandemic—both positive and negative—to renew the Indian health system. Annual appropriations are essential to this effort and in fulfilling the federal government's trust and treaty obligations by ensuring critical programs and services receive adequate funding to fulfill their intended purpose. To further these goals, I offer the following recommendations for your consideration for FY 2022 appropriations for the IHS.

Provide Full Funding for the Indian Health Service.—The IHS and its tribal partners under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act strive to provide tribal people with access to high quality and comprehensive medical services, no more so than during the ongoing pandemic. It has navigated unimaginable hardships related to supplies, staffing levels, infrastructure and facilities, and high rates of underlying conditions in serving our people at this time.

The IHS Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup has calculated this need at $48 billion for full funding. While this represents a dramatic increase in funding, it is imperative that Congress address the true needs of the Indian health system. In FY 2022, the Workgroup requests $12.759 billion for IHS. We support their full request and reiterate the top 5 priorities for program expansion as follows:

1) Hospitals and Clinics: $4.2 billion
2) Purchased/Referred Care: $2 billion
3) Mental Health: $715 million
4) Alcohol and substance Abuse: $778.5 million
5) Dental Services: $649.7 million

Support for Advance Appropriations for IHS.—For many years, tribes have requested that IHS appropriations be funded on an advance appropriations cycle. It has unfortunately become the norm that IHS does not receive its full yearly appropriation until several months (sometimes longer) after the start of the fiscal year. In the recent past, IHS, Tribal and Urban health programs have even had to deal with government shutdowns, when no funding was provided for weeks on end. These funding delays make it impossible for IHS and Tribal health programs to

plan and manage their annual budgets. As you know, health systems cannot practically operate on a day to day or week to week basis without knowing what funding will be provided in the future. Unrelated political disagreements in Washington, DC should not impede American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) from receiving the health care they deserve. Full advance appropriations for the IHS would promote greater stability in services, medical personnel recruitment and retention, and facilities management.

We thank the leadership of this subcommittee for supporting this important change in previous Congresses. We were also grateful to see President Biden support IHS advance appropriations in his FY 2022 budget request to Congress which was released on April 9, 2021. We urge the Committee to take the necessary steps in the FY 2022 appropriations bill to move IHS to an advance appropriation for FY 2023 and beyond.

Fully fund critical infrastructure investments.—As Congress considers making dramatic investments in the country's infrastructure, it is critical that the Indian health system not get left behind. Therefore, we request that the subcommittee allocate funding for full implementation of interoperable Electronic Health Records (EHR) and tele-health. This will ensure that IHS can provide services that are similar to other health providers. As you are aware, this investment is especially critical as the Veterans' Administration and Department of Defense move to modernize their systems. For tribes and Tribal health organizations who have committed their own resources to move away from RPMS and making their systems functional, IHS should take this into consideration with any new resources and ensure these programs are not only interoperable, but compensated accordingly.

It is also critical that Congress make significant investments in Tribal health facilities construction. IHS and tribal facilities are some of the oldest in the nation, with an average age of 10.6 years. This creates situations where facilities are out of date, or not appropriate for the size of the patient populations they serve. Therefore, consistent with the Budget formulation Workgroup's request, we recommend $15 billion for Health Facilities Construction Funding & Equipment.

Mandatory Funding for Contract Support Costs and 105(l) lease payments.—We appreciate the subcommittee's commitment to ensuring that Contract Support Costs (CSC) and 105(l) lease costs are fully funded by including an indefinite discretionary appropriation in FY 2021 for both of these accounts. However, these line items continue to take up a larger and larger percentage of the IHS discretionary budget, thereby leaving little room to expand other services given tight discretionary appropriations caps. We strongly agree with the subcommittee's words in the explanatory statement for the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116–94) regarding 105(l) costs which said, in part: "Obligations of this nature are typically addressed through mandatory spending, but in this case since they fall under discretionary spending, they are impacting all other programs funded under the Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, including other equally important Tribal programs . . . "

Therefore, we ask you to continue to advocate with your colleagues on authorizing committees to enact mandatory appropriations for CSC and 105(l) lease costs. Doing so, will ensure that other areas of the IHS budget are held harmless by these costs and true increases in critical services line items can move forward. This will enhance care for AI/AN patients and reduce health disparities.

Extend Self-Governance Funding Options to the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) and increase funding to $250 million/year.—While we understand that SDPI is not under the jurisdiction of the subcommittee, we appreciate that Congress included a three-year reauthorization of SDPI in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116–260). Communities like ours across Indian Country rely on SDPI resources to address the alarming rates of diabetes and diabetes—related health complications among our people. SDPI's success rests in the flexibility of its program structure that allows for the incorporation of culture and local needs into its services. Consistent with this model, Congress should authorize SDPI participants the option of receiving their federal funds through either a grant (as currently used) or self-governance funding mechanisms under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. This would be a natural and just extension of SDPI in respecting tribal sovereignty.

Additionally, SDPI has not had an increase in funding since FY 2004. Short term reauthorizations also destabilize this health program and make staffing and program continuity difficult. We recommend permanent reauthorization for SDPI at a minimum of $250 million per year with annual adjustments for inflationary increases. Therefore, we urge you to work with your Congressional colleagues to ensure that SDPI receives a funding increase of at least $250 million per year.

Plan for the Future with Dedicated Funding for Preventative Health Services.—Among the many things we have learned from the COVID–19 pandemic is that public health functions are critical to preserving life and overall health of Americans, yet public health systems in most tribal communities lag far behind systems in other jurisdictions. Without robust public health systems in place, responding to public health threats means that tribal communities will continue to be a challenge. Like other governments, Tribes have the responsibility to provide public health services for their people. Yet the federal government provides few resources to tribal communities for this purpose.

AI/ANs experience health disparities for a variety of health conditions such as such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancer and other largely preventable chronic conditions. Treating these chronic health conditions imposes unnecessary challenges on Tribal health systems and IHS. We support long-term, sustained, full investment in tribal public health infrastructure so that tribal communities have the resources available to respond quickly when the next crisis hits.

SUPPORT FOR BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Tribal Hatcheries.—We deeply appreciate the increase for the Fish, Wildlife, and Parks sub-activity within the BIA Trust-Natural Resources Management budget in FY 2021 and are asking the Subcommittees to continue increased funding levels FY 2022.

U.S./Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty.—Pacific salmon migrate through a broad geographic range that includes rivers, streams and the coastal waters of both the United States and Canada. Recognizing this reality, the Pacific Salmon Treaty was negotiated between the U.S. and Canada in 1985 to prevent overfishing and provide optimum production and fair sharing of the salmon harvest. In the U.S., salmon fisheries governed by the Treaty provide nearly 27,000 full time jobs and add nearly $2 billion annually to the gross domestic product. Funding to carry out different elements of the Treaty is appropriated through the Departments of Interior, State and Commerce. In the Department of Interior's budget, this funding is appropriated through the BIA Trust-Natural Resources Rights Protection Implementation sub-activity and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Pacific Marine Fisheries Commission. We thank you for the Subcommittee's continued support for this program in FY 2021, and encourage further investments to in FY 2022.

Tribal Court Assistance for Tribes Subject to PL 83–280.—We deeply appreciate the much—needed support for tribes who are affected by Public Law 83–280 and who are striving to serve their communities with competent and appropriate judiciary systems. We are grateful for both the increased appropriations directed to the BIA Public Safety and Justice Law Enforcement-Tribal Justice Support program element and the helpful report language provided in FY 2021 Senate Appropriations Committee report (116–123) that outlined additional support for BIA to work with "Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations to consider options that promote, design, or pilot Tribal court systems for Tribal communities subject to full or partial State jurisdiction under Public Law 83–280." We ask that the Subcommittees continue to include PL 280-specific funding under this program element and continue to direct the BIA in FY 2022.

Increased Funding to Address the Impacts of Climate Change.—Like many tribal communities we continue to be impacted by the growing challenge of climate change on our environment. Threats such as flooding, erosion, ocean acidification, increased wildfires, extended drought, and changes in seasons all contribute to the serious challenges that tribal communities currently face. We are forced to reduce emissions, mitigate and adapt, but we need additional support. We appreciate language in the FY 2021 Appropriations Explanatory Statement that acknowledged the challenges Alaska Native communities face when it comes to climate change. We encourage the committee to provide increased funding for climate change activities targeted at tribal communities in FY 2022.

Reduce Dependence on Federal Grants.—In addition to the critical funding needs that are outlined above, we also support moving away from competitive grants for federal funding mechanisms across all departments. The federal trust responsibility does not require that we jump through a myriad of hoops and onerous applications to see that services are provided to our people. Grants also unfairly pit tribes against tribes, when all are deserving of critical resources. Therefore, we agree with other tribal leaders and continue to support broad based funding across all federal agencies. Too often, tribes are under resourced to apply for federal grants, and to comply with the associated burdensome reporting requirements which vary from grant to grant. Tribes must also be granted the flexibility needed to respond to the specific needs of their own communities, not those prescribed by federal grants. This

also means providing enough resources so funds are provided in meaningful amounts across all tribes.

[This statement was submitted by Reginald Atkinson, Mayor.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee:

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) encourages the Subcommittee's support for fiscal year 2022 federal funding of $2.0 million in financial assistance from the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Aquatic Habitat Management sub-activity for the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program (Salinity Control Program) to prevent further degradation of Colorado River water quality and increased economic damages.

The salt concentration in the Colorado River causes an estimated $354 million in quantifiable damages to water users each year. While this figure is significant, had it not been for the efforts of the Salinity Control Program, damages would be much higher. Salinity Control Program actions have reduced the salinity of Colorado River water at key locations over 90 milligrams per liter (mg/L) from what they would have been without the actions. Modeling by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) indicates that quantifiable economic damages will rise to approximately $671 million by the year 2040 without continuation of the program.

Metropolitan is the regional water supplier for most of urban Southern California, providing supplemental water to retail agencies that serve approximately 19 million people. Water imported via the Colorado River Aqueduct has the highest level of salinity of all of Metropolitan's sources of supply, averaging around 630 mg/L since 1976. This salinity level causes economic damages to all sectors. For example, high salinity has the following impacts:

—It reduces the useful life of water heaters, faucets, garbage disposals, clothes washers, and dishwashers, and increases use of water softeners in the household sector;
—It increases the cost of cooling operations, the need for and cost of water softening, and decreases equipment service life in the commercial sector;
—It increases water use, the cost of water treatment, and sewer fees in the industrial sector;
—It decreases the life of treatment facilities and pipelines in the utility sector;
—It increases the cost of desalination and brine disposal for recycled water in the municipal sector;
—It reduces the yield of salt sensitive crops and increases water use for leaching in the agricultural sector;
—It increases desalination and brine disposal costs due to accumulation of salts in groundwater basins, and reduces opportunities for water recycling due to groundwater quality deterioration;
—It reduces the ability to replenish groundwater in basins with relatively low salinity standards;
—It reduces the ability to reclaim and reuse water due to high salinities in the water delivered to water treatment and reclamation facilities; and
—It makes it more difficult to meet wastewater discharge requirements to comply with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit terms and conditions.

There has been concern over salinity levels in the Colorado River for many years. To address the concern, the International Boundary and Water Commission signed Minute No. 242, Permanent and Definitive Solution to the International Problem of the Salinity of the Colorado River in 1973, and the President signed the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act of 1974 (Act) into law. Title I of the Act deals with the U.S. commitment to the quality of waters being delivered to Mexico. Title II of the Act deals with improving the quality of the water delivered to users in the United States. This testimony deals specifically with Title II efforts. To further foster interstate cooperation and coordinate the Colorado River Basin states' efforts on salinity control, the seven Basin states formed the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum.

The Forum is charged with reviewing the Colorado River's water quality standards for salinity every three years. In so doing, it adopts a Plan of Implementation consistent with these standards. The level of appropriation requested in this testimony is in keeping with the adopted Plan of Implementation, which is to be imple-

mented by Reclamation, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the BLM.

EPA has concluded that more than 60 percent of the salt load of the Colorado River comes from natural sources. The majority of land within the Colorado River Basin is federally owned, and much of this federal land is administered by BLM. In implementing the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act in 1974, Congress recognized that most of the salts in the Colorado River originate from these federally owned lands.

In 1984, Congress amended the Salinity Control Act and directed that the Secretary of the Interior develop a comprehensive program for minimizing salt contributions to the Colorado River from lands administered by BLM. In 2000, Congress reiterated its directive to the Secretary and requested a report on the implementation of BLM's program (Public Law 106–459). In 2003, BLM employed a Salinity Coordinator to increase BLM efforts in the Colorado River Basin, to pursue salinity control studies, and to implement specific salinity control practices. BLM is now working on creating a comprehensive Colorado River Basin salinity control program as directed by Congress. In January 2018 BLM issued A Framework for Improving the Effectiveness of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program, 2018–2023. This document lays out BLM's plan to implement Colorado River Basin salinity control activities over a five-year period.

Meaningful resources have been expended by BLM in the past few years to better understand salt mobilization on rangelands. With a significant portion of the salt load of the Colorado River coming from BLM administered lands, the BLM portion of the overall program is essential to the success of the effort. Inadequate BLM salinity control efforts will result in additional economic damages to water users downstream.

Implementation of salinity control practices through BLM is a cost-effective method of controlling the salinity of the Colorado River and is an essential component to the overall Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program. Continuation of adequate funding levels for salinity control within the Aquatic Habitat Management sub-activity will help to prevent further degradation of Colorado River water quality and significant increases in economic damages to municipal, industrial, and irrigation users. A modest investment in source control pays huge dividends in improved drinking water quality to nearly 40 million Americans.

Metropolitan urges the Subcommittee to support funding for fiscal year 2022 of $2.0 million from BLM's Aquatic Habitat Management sub-activity for the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program.

[This statement was submitted by Jeffrey Kightlinger, General Manager.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL CHAVARRIA, GOVERNOR OF THE PUEBLO OF SANTA CLARA, NEW MEXICO

Recommendations:

1. IHS—Provide full funding and advance appropriations for the Indian Health Service.
2. IHS—Authorize a self-governance funding mechanism option for SDPI.
3. DOI—$200 million increase for BIA tribal law enforcement and detention services.
4. DOI—$620,000 for juvenile education in BIA detention facilities.
5. BIA—Increase funding for BIA disaster recovery and prevention programs.
6. BIA—$5 million to establish a BIA Emergency Response Fund.
7. USFS—$6 million in priority funding for Tribal Forest Protection Act implementation.
8. EPA—$100 million for the EPA Indian General Assistance Program.
9. BIA—$6.2 million for the BIA Endangered Species Program.
10. BIA—$60.9 million for the Tribal Climate Resilience Program.
11. BIA—$20 million for THPOs and maintain $1.5 million for NAGPRA enforcement.
12. DOI—Maintain the funding moratorium for energy leasing in the Greater Chaco Region with additional funding for completion of the Tribal Cultural Resources Study.
13. BIE—Maintain Tribal Education Department and Sovereignty in Education grant funding.
14. BIE—$109 million for Facilities Operations and $725 million for Facilities Maintenance.
15. BIE—$473 million for Indian School Equalization Program.

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for this opportunity to share our funding priorities for the FY 2022 federal budget. My name is J. Michael Chavarria and I am the Governor of the Pueblo of Santa Clara in New Mexico. On behalf of my Pueblo, we thank you and your staff for your hard work on behalf of Pueblo Country throughout the ongoing COVID–19 pandemic. The relief dollars provided by Congress are critical to our short- and long-term recovery from this dire crisis. Annual appropriations are also essential to this effort in fulfilling the federal government's trust and treaty obligations by ensuring critical programs and services receive adequate funding to fulfill their intended purpose. To further these goals, I offer the following recommendations for your consideration for FY 2022.

I. ADVANCING HEALTHCARE IN INDIAN COUNTRY

Provide Full Funding and Advance Appropriations for the Indian Health Service. The IHS strives to provide tribal citizens with access to high quality and comprehensive medical services, no more so than during the ongoing pandemic. It has navigated unimaginable hardships related to supplies, staffing levels, infrastructure and facilities, and high rates of underlying conditions in serving our people at this time. Yet, despite its irreplaceable importance to Indian health, it must still contend with annual uncertainties related to federal funding. This is unacceptable. The time to change is now. The IHS should be given parity with the Veterans Health Administration and receive full advance appropriations on at least a two-year cycle. Full advance appropriations for the IHS would promote greater stability in services, medical personnel recruitment and retention, and facilities management.

The IHS Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup has calculated this need at $48 billion for full funding. While this represents a dramatic increase in funding, it is imperative that Congress address the true needs of the Indian health system. We strongly urge Congress to fully fund advance IHS appropriations beginning in FY 2022 to provide consistency and parity in the administration of Indian healthcare.

Extend Self-Governance Funding Options to the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI). Thank you for including a three-year reauthorization of SDPI in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021. Communities like ours across Indian Country rely on SDPI resources to address the alarming rates of diabetes and diabetes-related health complications among our people. SDPI's success rests in the flexibility of its program structure that allows for the incorporation of culture and local needs into its services. Consistent with this model, Congress should authorize SDPI participants the option of receiving their federal funds through either a grant (as currently used) or self-governance funding mechanisms under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. This would be a natural and just extension of SDPI in respecting tribal sovereignty.

II. SUPPORT FOR JUSTICE SERVICES

$200 Million Increase for Tribal Law Enforcement; Increase BIA Detention Facility Funding; and $620,000 for Juvenile Detention Education. Tribal law enforcement and emergency services personnel strive to provide high-quality and responsive public safety services. They must often do this notwithstanding the effects of serious understaffing and insufficient resources. If given the proper levels of support, tribal law enforcement would be able to better protect their communities. At Santa Clara Pueblo, for example, we would like to upgrade our radio system so the police department, fire/EMS, forestry, and conservation officers can all utilize the same network. This would greatly enhance our ability to serve the community. We urge Congress to provide a minimum $200 million increase for BIA and tribal law enforcement, including tribal courts and special services, in FY 2022 for officer resources, personnel, and supplies and equipment.

Public safety facilities and housing construction programs have been critically needed for many years. It has been four years since the Turning Point Program in Yuma, Arizona, that provided Native offenders with a substance abuse behavioral modification program with traditional healing practices unexpectedly closed. Today, we still do not have access to a comparable program or rehabilitation facility within our vicinity. BIA detention facilities and the services they provide are in need of increased support, particularly in regards to ensuring vulnerable youth have access to quality educational services. We request Congress increase funding for BIA detention services and provide $620,000 for juvenile education in BIA detention facilities.

III. EFFECTIVE NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Increase Funding for BIA Disaster Recovery and Prevention Programs.—The stewardship of natural resources is key to both the economic and cultural well-being of Pueblo People, particularly in this era of increasing climate uncertainty. Santa Clara has been devastated by three catastrophic wildfires with the threat of new fires and floods always on the horizon. We have invested heavily in the development of fire preparedness and suppression resources to protect life and property. We understand the fundamental importance of beneficial partnerships with the BIA and other agencies in this effort. Because of this work, we are proud to say that Santa Clara is home to award—winning tribal forestry and land management departments. Expanding tribal access to BIA disaster programs and deepening the resources available therein is critical. We urge Congress to provide increased funding for BIA natural disaster recovery and prevention programs in FY 2022.

$5 Million to Establish a BIA Emergency Response Fund.—Many tribal governments are hindered by the upfront investment costs and cost—sharing requirements of certain federal emergency response programs. When coupled with bureaucratic delays in distributing funds, it often takes an unacceptable amount of time to receive disaster relief precisely when time is of the essence. We anticipate the need for these resources will only continue to grow and with quick access to funding becoming a top response need. We recommend an initial amount of $5 million be allocated to establish a BIA Emergency Response Fund within the Office of Trust Services.

$5 Million in Priority Funding for Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA) Implementation with Report Language on Expanding TPFA-Eligible Lands to the National Park Service.—The TFPA (Pub. L. 108–278) authorizes the Interior Secretary to give special consideration to tribally—proposed Stewardship Contracting or other projects on Forest Service or BLM land bordering or adjacent to tribal lands to protect trust and federal resources from fire, disease, and other threats. This is a smart policy. The TFPA was authorized, however, without a designated funding mechanism or with an accounting for Park Service land. As a result, efforts to the implement its beneficial provisions have been impeded. While we are encouraged to see the President's proposed general increase in Forestry Projects funding, dedicated TFPA dollars are needed. We request $5 million for TFPA implementation with report language encouraging agencies to prioritize this process to the greatest extent possible; and we request report language on the expanding TFPA—eligible lands to include the U.S. Park Service.

$100 Million for the EPA Indian General Assistance Program.—EPA resources enable our Pueblo to support an array of projects that improve the quality of life for our people and safeguard the natural resources that provide us with physical and spiritual sustenance. Without these funds, we would face tremendous hurdles in operating environmental programs such as water quality monitoring and hazardous waste management. We strongly support the Indian GAP's goals of advancing greater local control, cooperative federalism, and tribal self-determination. We are encouraged to see the President's proposal to increase funding for this vital program in FY 2022, and we urge Congress to go even further by providing $100 million for EPA Indian GAP funding to advance sustainable environmental protection measures in Indian Country.

$6.2 Million in Funding for the BIA Endangered Species Program.—We must account and appropriately care for the diversity of wildlife that are essential to maintaining our ecosystems' equilibrium and are culturally meaningful as part of our natural resources management and conservation. Further, each species possesses its own inherent value and should, thus, be protected by the federal government. The BIA Endangered Species Program is the only program that provides tribal nations with technical and financial assistance to protect wildlife on tribal lands through natural resources restoration, management, and economic development. We highly recommend Congress support the President's $6.2 million request for the BIA Endangered Species Program in FY 22.

$60.9 Million for the Tribal Climate Resilience Program and Maintain Cooperative Landscape Conservation Programs.—Across America, communities are facing mounting challenges related to our progressively unstable natural environment. Invasive species, disappearing tree lines, and accelerated rates of erosion are also taking an increasing toll on our agricultural and natural resources. These two Interior programs equip tribal nations with the tools to manage resource stressors, develop adaptive management plans, and engage in intergovernmental coordination. We request Congress fund the President's $60.9 million request for the BIA Tribal Climate Resilience Program and maintain the Interior Cooperative Landscape Conservation Program.

IV. PROTECTING TRIBAL CULTURAL PATRIMONY

$20 Million to Support the Vital Work of THPOs and Maintain $1.5 Million for NAGPRA Enforcement.—The preservation of tribal sacred and cultural sites is a priority for all Indian Country. Damage of these sites is often irreversible, forever altering the way in which we can express ourselves as indigenous people. More tribal nations are establishing THPOs under the National Historic Preservation Act to protect this heritage. Our expert officers identify sites and coordinate with appropriate officials and third parties on their protection. They also support the work of museum and research centers that house tribal material culture and repatriated items. We request $20 million in THPO support and maintain $1.5 million in BIA NAGPRA enforcement funding for FY 22.

Maintain the Funding Moratorium Related to Energy Leasing in the Greater Chaco Region and Provide Additional Funding for Completion of Tribal Cultural Resources Study.—As requested by the President is his FY 2022 Budget, we urge Congress to maintain the moratorium on oil and gas leasing on federal land in the withdrawal area of the Greater Chaco Region. We request this moratorium span the lifetime of the legislation rather than becoming ineffective upon completion of the ongoing tribally—led cultural resource studies. However, if a temporal requirement must be included, we ask that the moratorium stay in place until completion of the studies as well as the Resource Management Plan Amendment. Further, we ask that additional funding be provided to complete the Region's Tribally-Led Cultural Resources Study, as instructed in the in the explanatory statement accompanying the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (Public Law 116–94).

V. INVEST IN NATIVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT WITH INCREASED BIE FUNDING

Maintain Funding for BIE Tribal Education Department and Sovereignty in Education Grants.—These grants have and continue to be greatly beneficial to the Pueblo of Santa Clara. The funds support the development of TEDs to improve educational outcomes for students and efficiencies and effectiveness in the operation of BIE—funded schools. The goal of the grants is to promote tribal educational capacity building, which it has achieved in our community through the Department of Youth and Learning and our Pueblo-Operated Kha'p'o Community School. Maintaining this BIE line item will strengthen the exercise of sovereignty in tribal education.

$109 Million for BIE Facilities Operations and $725 Million for BIE Facilities Maintenance.—To flourish academically and personally, we must provide our children with safe and vibrant classrooms and engaging areas to play, as well as with after—hours wraparound services. Too many tribal school facilities are in various states of disrepair. These unsafe conditions pose unacceptable human and environmental health risks that harm our students physically and psychologically. The backlog of unmet needs for these accounts has grown exponentially with Interior leadership testifying in July 2019 to a total identified deferred need of $725 million. We urge Congress to fully fund this unmet need amount at $725 for BIE Facilities Maintenance and $109 for BIE Facilities Operations.

$473 Million for the Indian School Equalization Program (ISEP).—These funds provide the core budget account for BIE elementary and secondary schools by covering teacher salaries, aides, principals, and other personnel. ISEP funds are often reallocated to cover the program cuts in other areas of education. ISEP must have adequate funding to ensure all program needs are fulfilled and must not be reduced to provide funds for new initiatives that have not been vetted by tribal nations. We strongly support an influx of investment in the ISEP in FY 2022.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE MONTEREY BAY AQUARIUM, MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

The Monterey Bay Aquarium is pleased to submit this request for increased funding for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service within the FY 2022 Interior-Environment Appropriations Act. The following testimony outlines several specific requests that are critical to support priority wildlife rescue, research, and recovery programs for Endangered Species Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act species important to California, the West Coast and nationwide, particularly as the nation looks to recover from the devastating COVID–19 global pandemic.

In a typical year, the Monterey Bay Aquarium welcomes over two million visitors, provides more than 91,000 students and 5,000 teachers with award—winning education programs at no cost, and provides valuable data, tools and approaches for conservation and science at local to global scales.

The COVID–19 global pandemic dramatically impacted our institution. The Aquarium suffered the loss of approximately $70 million in revenue and 40 percent

of our staff over the 14 months during which we were fully closed to the public. We continued to spend over $1 million every month on animal care and life—supporting core operations—including for endangered, threatened, and protected species care and stranding response and rehabilitation. In addition, we provided enhanced and free digital and livestreamed educational content for schools and the wider public. The Aquarium has taken extraordinary measures to ensure the health and safety of our animals, staff and the public during this challenging time, and we are hopeful that emergency grant funds appropriated in the past two COVID–19 bills will provide some economic relief soon. We are grateful to Congress and to the Committee for its role in COVID–19 relief and recovery.

Monterey County has only recently achieved the public health metrics that would allow us to reopen, so the Aquarium reopened to the public May 15 at 25 percent capacity. As we gradually increase the number of admitted guests, we can also more fully return to our mission- to inspire conservation of the ocean.

WILDLIFE RECOVERY AND RESCUE REQUESTS

The Aquarium recognizes the critical role that the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) plays in scientific information and managing the nation's public lands, natural resources, and wildlife species. For decades, we have worked in partnership with USFWS to help recover the threatened southern sea otter, and we urge you to support these priority requests for FY 2022 so that we may accelerate that work.

As scientists continue to document the impacts of rapid climate change and the significant loss of biodiversity, the USFWS leads the recovery of keystone endangered and threatened species that play an important role in maintaining resilient ecosystems. Sea otters, listed as threatened, are a prime example of a keystone species and have earned the title of "ecosystem engineers" because they can deliver outsized benefits to degraded stretches of coastline. Thanks to federal protection and the work done by federal and state agencies as well as concerted recovery efforts led by the Aquarium, the population in California has slowly begun to recover in recent decades. Healthy populations of sea otters can preserve and enhance the growth of seagrass and kelp, and offer benefits like improving water quality, nurturing valuable fisheries, protecting coastal communities from rising tides and storms, reducing invasive species, and sequestering carbon.

The Aquarium helps to lead a science and conservation alliance in California that conducts important cross—disciplinary research in collaboration with the USFWS, U.S. Geological Survey, and the California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. The Aquarium pioneered the use of female exhibit otters as surrogate mothers who rear stranded sea otter pups for successful release to the wild ("surrogacy method") and holds the only federal permit for sea otter surrogacy. Population estimates and research together show that use of the surrogacy method for wild sea otter recovery has been effective in increasing sea otter population numbers along California's Central Coast, as well as improving the ecological health of a National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Greater investment for species protected by the Endangered Species Act and safeguarded by the Marine Mammal Protection Act can play a central role in the collaborative effort to protect and enhance sea otter population gains, as well as bring associated habitat benefits, on the Central Coast of California. Over the long term, public—private leveraged funding may make it possible to accelerate recovery efforts and provide measurable environmental and economic benefits.

Given the importance of public—private collaboration with the USFWS, the Aquarium requests additional funding and prioritization for the following competitive grant programs:

Recovery Challenge Grants.—The USFWS Recovery Challenge Grant program leverages cost-effective models that bring together the resources needed to recover some of our most vulnerable species. This program recognizes the critically important role of nonprofit partners to the USFWS's endangered species recovery efforts and provides merit-based matching grants to support them. Although recovery efforts are on an upward or stable trajectory for many species supported by USFWS recovery programs, continued support and increased funding is needed to sustain these gains and to mitigate threats to populations, food webs, and environmental sustainability. Access to funds is currently highly competitive.

We request $11 million over FY21 ($20 million total) for the Recovery Challenge Grant program to support and implement critical recovery efforts in collaboration with the USFWS. In addition, we strongly support funding for Endangered Species Act recovery actions generally and request an increase of $15 million over FY21 ($120 million total) for this important program.

John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program.—The USFWS Recovery Challenge Grant program leverages cost-effective models tThe Aquarium was recently awarded its first Prescott Grant awards ($100,000 for 2019, $100,000 for 2020) to help improve southern sea otter populations through stranding response projects. This opportunity for grants comes at a critical time for the Aquarium, which continues to lead California's emergency live stranding response of southern sea otters throughout their entire range alongside network partners. Increased funding for the Prescott grant program also supports additional stranding network organizations that join the Aquarium in this challenging work.

We request an increase of $1.2 million over FY21 levels (total of $2.4 million) for the Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests.

[This statement was submitted by Margaret Spring, Chief Conservation & Science Officer.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN COURT JUDGES ASSOCIATION

On behalf of the National American Indian Court Judges Association (NAICJA), this testimony addresses important programs in the Department of Interior (DOI). First, NAICJA joins the American Bar Association (see attached letter) in requesting substantially increased funding for tribal courts in response to the $1.2 billion annual shortfall for tribal courts as identified in the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) 2020 report to Congress, Report to the Congress on Spending, Staffing, and Estimated Funding Costs for Public Safety and Justice Programs in Indian Country, 2018.

Secondly, NAICJA joins the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) in requesting:

Program	NCAI FY 2021 Request
DOI: Base funding for tribal courts and the Indian Tribal Justice Act, including courts in Public Law 280 jurisdictions.	$123,000,000
DOI: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Law Enforcement and Detention.	$527,400,000
DOI: BIA Funding to Tribal Governments	Provide increases via tribal base funding instead of through grants.
DOI: BIA Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act.	$93,000,000
DOI: BIA Welfare Assistance	$100,000,000
DOI: Indian Child Welfare Act Program	$30,000,000
DOI: BIA Social Services Program	$70,000,000
DOI/Indian Health Service	$12.75 billion
DOI/Indian Health Service: ISDEAA Section 105(l) Lease Agreements.	Provide such sums as may be necessary through mandatory spending.

NAICJA is a non-profit organization devoted to the support of American Indian and Alaska Native justice systems through education, information sharing, and advocacy. Its membership is primarily judges, justices, and peacemakers serving in tribal justice systems. As a national representative organization, NAICJA's mission is to strengthen and enhance tribal justice systems, including juvenile justice systems.

The federal government's trust responsibility to Tribal nations is at the heart of NAICJA's recommendation to follow NCAI's FY 2022 Indian Country Budget Request. Like all other governments, Tribal nations are responsible for the protection and care of their citizens, residents, and visitors on their lands. Through treaties and other agreements, tribal lands were ceded in exchange for the promise of protected self-governance and adequate resources from the United States. Those promises are the foundation of the government-to-government relationship that exists today.

Core to Tribes exercising those responsibilities of protection and care is sufficient federal government funding resources provided in fulfillment of its trust responsibility. The primary DOI agencies through which the federal government can provide

funds critical to the health and safety of tribal citizens and residents of tribal lands are the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and Indian Health Service (IHS). The BIA and IHS provide essential services including hospitals, schools, law enforcement, and social services among others. Programs and services through these agencies affect the lives of around two million people across the country.

Unfortunately, both agencies have been drastically underfunded for decades. Chronic underfunding allows systemic harm to be perpetuated against tribal citizens and residents of tribal lands. The inability of the federal government to live up to its trust responsibility is long-documented, most notably by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (the Commission). The Commission has released three reports since the 1990s chronicling the continued underfunding of Indian country. Most recently, in 2018, the Commission in Broken Promises: Continuing Federal Funding Shortfall for Native Americans found that "Federal funding for Native American programs across the government remains grossly inadequate to meet the most basic needs the federal government is obligated to provide . . . Since 2003, funding for Native American programs has mostly remained flat, and in the few cases where there have been increases, they have barely kept up with inflation or have actually resulted in decreased spending power." [1]

Chronic underfunding also affects tribal justice systems. Tribal courts in particular need resources to protect women, children, and families, address substance abuse, and rehabilitate offenders. In 1991, the Commission found that "the failure of the United States Government to provide proper funding for the operation of tribal judicial systems . . . has continued for more than 20 years." [2] In 2018, the Commission in Broken Promises found that there continues to be "systemic underfunding of tribal law enforcement and criminal justice systems, as well as structural barriers in the funding and operation of criminal justice systems in Indian Country." [3] Finally in 2020, the BIA submitted a report to Congress, Report to the Congress on Spending, Staffing, and Estimated Funding Costs for Public Safety and Justice Programs in Indian Country, 2018. The total annual estimated need for tribal public safety and justice programs included $1.3 billion for tribal law enforcement, $1.2 billion for tribal courts, and $240.6 million for existing detention centers. According to the same report, BIA funding only meets 14.7 percent of estimated need. Leaving tribes to fight for short-term funds via competitive grant processes.

It is time for this history of underfunding to change, especially as the world continues to battle a global pandemic. NAICJA urges this committee to support the requests outlined in this testimony and included in the NCAI's FY 2022 Indian Country Budget Request.

Increase base funding for tribal courts and the Indian Tribal Justice Act, including courts in Public Law 280 jurisdictions.—Along with the IHS, the BIA is one of the primary agencies responsible for providing services throughout Indian Country, either directly or through compacts or contracts with tribal governments. One of the most fundamental aspects of the federal government's trust responsibility is the obligation to protect public safety on tribal lands. Congress and the United States Supreme Court have long acknowledged this obligation, which Congress reaffirmed in the Tribal Law and Order Act expressly "acknowledging the federal nexus and distinct federal responsibility to address and prevent crime in Indian Country."

According to the BIA, the minimum base level of funding needed for tribal courts is $1.2 billion.[4] For FY 2021, funding for tribal courts (generally) was $38.9 million and $15 million for tribal courts in PL 280 jurisdictions. This gap between identified need and recent appropriations calls for an increase in base funding for tribal courts, including courts in PL 280 jurisdictions.

Fund BIA Law Enforcement and Detention efforts.—The BIA has also reported on the minimum base level of service needs in the areas of law enforcement and maintaining existing detention centers. The report found that $1.3 billion is needed for tribal law enforcement, and $240.6 million is needed to adequately fund existing detention centers.[5] Again, the same report found that Congress is funding tribal law enforcement, detention/corrections, and tribal courts at a mere 14.7 percent of estimated need.

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[1] United States Commission on Civil Rights, Broken Promises: Continuing Federal Funding Shortfall for Native Americans, 4 (December 2018).

[2] United States Commission on Civil Rights, The Indian Civil Rights Act: A Report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights 71 (June 1991).

[3] Supra note 1, at 32.

[4] Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Justice Services. "Report to Congress on Spending, Staffing, and Estimated Funding Costs for Public Safety and Justice Programs in Indian Country, 2018," July 2020.

[5] Id.

Again, the gap between identified need and level of appropriation is wide. Further, recent experience demonstrates that addressing the lack of justice funding can make rapid and dramatic strides toward improving public safety.[6] Tribal justice systems simply need the resources to put their tools to work to protect tribal citizens, residents, and visitors on tribal lands.

Fund BIA Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act.—The ICPFVPA authorizes funding for two tribal programs: (1) the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Program, which funds prevention programming, investigations, and emergency shelter services for victims of family violence; and (2) the Treatment of Victims of Child Abuse and Neglect program, which funds treatment programs for victims of child abuse. The ICPFVPA also authorizes funding for the creation of Indian Child Resource and Family Service Centers in BIA regions. Child abuse prevention funding will assist Tribal nations in protecting one of their most vulnerable and most sacred populations. Tribes, like states, need adequate resources to effectively prevent and respond to child abuse and neglect in their communities. However, unlike states, Tribes do not have meaningful access to HHS Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Program (CAPTA) grant programs. The ICPFVPA was enacted to fill this gap, but without appropriations for ICPFVPA programs, Tribes are left without funding for child protection and child abuse prevention services.

Fund BIA Welfare Assistance and Social Services.—The Welfare Assistance line item provides five important forms of funding to AI/AN families: (1) general assistance, (2) child assistance, (3) non-medical institution or custodial care of adults, (4) burial assistance, and (5) emergency assistance. The Social Services Program provides a wide array of family support services filling many funding gaps for tribal programs and ensuring federal staff and support for these programs. Importantly, the Social Services Program provides the only BIA and tribal specific funding available for child protective services for both children and adults in Indian Country. NAICJA supports NCAI's recommended appropriations for both programs.

Fund the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Program.—ICWA funding is the foundation of most tribal child welfare programs. Current funding levels fall far short of estimates made in 1978 when ICWA was passed, which with inflation would be $193 to $459 million in today's dollars. Funding for off-reservation programs has completely stopped since 1996. NAICJA supports NCAI's recommendation to increase the ICWA Program appropriation to $30 million.

Fund the Indian Health Service.—In permanently authorizing the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA), Congress reaffirmed the duty of the federal government to provide all the necessary resources to ensure the highest possible health status for AI/ANs, declaring that "it is the policy of this Nation, in fulfillment of its special trust responsibilities and legal obligations to Indians."[7] Unfortunately, IHS has never received sufficient funding to fully honor its obligations. "Funding for the IHS and Native American health care is inequitable and unequal. IHS expenditures per capita remain well below other federal health care programs, and overall IHS funding covers only a fraction of Native American health care needs, including behavioral health needs to address the suicide epidemic in Indian Country."[8]

In accordance with National Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup recommendations, representing all twelve IHS Areas, NAICJA supports a total appropriation of $12.75 billion. Further, NAICJA supports American Bar Association policy calling for IHS to be exempt from government shutdowns and federal budget sequestrations.[9]

Fund Indian Self Determination Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) Section 105(l) Lease Agreements.—Ensuring tribal nations have the tools and resources for effective governance is critical to fulfilling the promise of the ISDEAA (P.L. 93–638) ISDEAA promotes self-determination and self-governance, and this nation's trust and treaty obligations, by enabling tribal nations to enter into contracts and compacts with the federal government to operate certain federal programs. Those tribal shares of federal programs make up the "base funding" for tribal governments and provide certainty and security to those governments. Congress must support tribal self-determination by increasing tribal base funding, providing funding directly to tribal nations as opposed to passing funds through states, providing formula based funding rather than difficult to navigate competitive grant programs, and promoting

[6] Michael S. Black, Acting Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior, Testimony, Briefing Transcript, p. 136; see also Dep't of the Interior, press release, March 4, 2014.

[7] Indian Health Care Improvement Act, 25 U.S.C. § 1602.

[8] Supra note 1, at 8.

[9] 2019A115A.

accurate data collection so that funding can better target the needs of Indian Country. Additionally, funding for Section 105(l) lease agreements must be provided through mandatory spending that does not affect discretionary spending caps on tribal programs.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony. For more information, please contact A. Nikki Borchardt Campbell at nikki@naicja.org.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CLEAN AIR AGENCIES (NACAA)

On behalf of the National Association of Clean Air Agencies (NACAA), thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on the FY 2022 budget for the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), particularly grants to state and local air pollution control agencies under Sections 103 and 105 of the Clean Air Act (CAA), which are part of the State and Tribal Assistance Grant (STAG) program. NACAA has three recommendations with respect to FY 2022 appropriations. The association urges Congress to 1) increase federal grants to state and local air quality agencies by $92 million above FY 2021 levels, for a total of $321.5 million (equal to the Administration's request); 2) provide flexibility to state and local air quality agencies to use any additional grants to address the highest priority programs in their areas; and 3) retain grants for monitoring fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) under the authority of Section 103 of the Clean Air Act, rather than shifting it to Section 105.

NACAA is the national, non-partisan, non-profit association of air pollution control agencies in 41 states, including 115 local air agencies, the District of Columbia and four territories. NACAA exists to advance the equitable protection of clean air and public health for all, and to improve the capability and effectiveness of state and local air agencies. These agencies have the "primary responsibility" under the CAA for implementing our nation's clean air programs. As such, they carry out an array of critical activities intended to improve and maintain air quality and protect public health.

NACAA is grateful to the Subcommittee for your continuing commitment to air quality and your recognition of its importance to public health. While NACAA appreciates this commitment, it is important to emphasize how essential it is that these critical clean air programs receive additional funding going forward.

AIR POLLUTION POSES SERIOUS PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEMS

Many areas of the United States have enjoyed enormous improvements to air quality while experiencing strong economic growth. Overall, federal, state and local programs to address air pollution under the Clean Air Act have been hugely successful over the years. However, there are still significant air quality problems, posing threats to public health and welfare, including disparities that persist in overburdened communities despite progress overall. Every year tens of thousands of people in this country die prematurely from air pollution. Millions are exposed to unhealthful levels of air contaminants, resulting in health problems such as cancer and damage to respiratory, cardiovascular, neurological and reproductive systems.[1] EPA's own data show that in 2019 about 82 million people in this country lived in counties that exceeded one or more of the federal health—based air pollution standards.[2] EPA's most recent data on hazardous air pollutants indicate that in 2014 "millions of people live in areas where air toxics pose health concerns."[3]

State and local agencies still lead the nation in responding to climate change. As emissions continue upward, wildfires worsen, ozone seasons lengthen, global temperatures trend steadily upward and global atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations now exceed 420 parts per million. State and local agencies in NACAA have implemented programs that made meaningful progress towards reducing greenhouse gases and many maintained efforts to respond to the Paris Climate Agreement, even as the U.S. withdrew.

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[1] https://www.epa.gov/clean-air-act-overview/air-pollution-current-and-future-challenges
[2] https://www.epa.gov/air-trends/air-quality-national-summary
[3] https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2018-09/documents/2014__nata__technical__support__document.pdf, p. 138

There are few problems that this Subcommittee addresses that pose a greater threat to public health than air pollution. We ask that you provide adequate resources to ameliorate this problem.

STATE AND LOCAL AIR AGENCIES HAVE BEEN UNDERFUNDED FOR YEARS

The responsibilities that state and local air quality agencies face continue to increase, while at the same time federal funding has not kept pace with the need for resources. Federal grants to state and local air quality agencies (under Sections 103 and 105 of the CAA) were $229 million in FY 2021, which is approximately the amount they received over 15 years ago, in FY 2004. If the FY 2004 figure is adjusted for inflation, level funding is approximately the amount the Administration has requested—$321.5 million in FY 2022 ($92 million more than the current grant amount). Although the need for increases is far greater, NACAA recommends that Section 103 and 105 grants receive merely level funding adjusted for inflation ($321.5 million) in FY 2022.

State and local air agencies have done more than their fair share to provide resources. The Clean Air Act (Section 105) envisioned that the federal government would support up to 60 percent of the cost of state and local air programs. However, the reality is that it provides only about 25 percent and in some cases much less, while state and local agencies provide the remaining 75 percent.

Air quality agencies were already doing their best with inadequate resources. Now, state and local governments will face only steeper challenges trying to backfill the deficit in federal funding as the worst of the economic damage of the COVID—caused recession is likely still to come. The resource shortfalls for state and local clean air programs could stretch for years. Additionally, many clean air agencies are located within state and local public health departments and have had extra demands placed on them in serving immediate public health crises caused by the pandemic, further straining their budgets and competing for available resources. Without federal funding increases, many state and local air agencies will have difficulty keeping pace with existing requirements and addressing new responsibilities. These problems exist even before one considers a more active partnership between state and local agencies and the federal government, should it seek to expand its efforts to address the climate crisis. Such a partnership would require state and local involvement and leadership and the resources to make that possible.

HOW WOULD ADDITIONAL FUNDING BE USED?

State and local air quality agencies regularly carry out many essential resource—intensive activities, such as monitoring, compiling emission inventories, planning, conducting sophisticated modeling, permitting, inspecting sources and adopting and enforcing regulations. Continuing these existing responsibilities requires tremendous effort. In addition to ongoing day-to-day operations, state and local air quality agencies also face emerging issues, including new regulations, technologies, monitoring, controls and other elements of the program that become ever more sophisticated. Additionally, the public increasingly calls for more (and timelier) information and assistance from state and local agencies, including during out-of-the-ordinary events, such as wildfires and natural disasters.

Advances in technology, including monitoring and sensor equipment, and their accessibility to the public require state and local agencies to respond to this data more and more quickly. Unfortunately, many agencies still have older technology and must expend scarce resources struggling to respond to the public's need for information. These agencies are increasingly called upon to manage and share the air quality data generated by government and the public, and to develop programs to address air quality issues as they become known. Additionally, in light of technological and other advances and the need to provide the public and regulated community the efficiency and services they deserve, it is essential that state and local agency staff be well trained and provided with the tools necessary to keep pace with changing requirements.

Despite broad improvements in most national and regional trends, air pollution and climate change continue to inflict disproportionate harm on black people, indigenous people and people of color. All clean air agencies have an obligation to focus regulatory attention on the communities that historically have borne the greatest burdens from air pollution and a changing climate, and who continue to do so today. The members of NACAA aspire to address the systems that produce inequitable outcomes and believe EPA should do so as well. Accordingly, among the programs for which additional resources are needed are state and local air agency efforts to address these disproportionate harms, including funding for staffing, tools and tech-

nical assistance. We also believe EPA should have adequate funding for its own efforts in this arena.

To address the many challenges we face, including those identified above and others, there are many activities requiring additional funding, and they vary from area to area, since different parts of the country have unique problems and priorities. However, there are important efforts for which many agencies need additional resources. These include, among others:

—expanding greenhouse gas—focused programs and taking on new responsibilities as federal climate mitigation programs expand;
—developing new strategies to meet our health—based air quality standards and to reduce hazardous air pollutants;
—improving programs to address environmental justice and disproportionate harm;
—enhancing our monitoring systems, equipment and procedures;
—modernizing modeling and other estimation tools;
—improving emission inventories of air pollutants;
—improving risk assessment capabilities;
—improving small business compliance assistance;
—helping the public better understand air pollution and how to protect their health; and
—training staff so they can keep pace with changing requirements.

These and other efforts are essential if we hope to further reduce air pollution, maintain the improvements we have made and continue to protect public health and welfare. Additionally, a well—funded and well—functioning national air program will support the economy through timely, well—reasoned permitting, planning and actions that support the private sector.

While the grants requested in this testimony would not fully meet the needs of state and local clean air programs, even such a modest increase will help.

FLEXIBILITY IN THE USE OF FUNDS IS NECESSARY

Each state or local area in the country faces a unique set of air quality circumstances. For example, while one area may face tremendous impacts from wildfires, another may find ozone—related problems or hazardous air pollutants to be a greater challenge. A one-size-fits-all strategy for grants that is applied to all areas of the country would not recognize the need to focus resources effectively. Therefore, NACAA recommends that Congress provide state and local air agencies with the flexibility to use increased grant funds on the highest priority programs in their areas.

NACAA RECOMMENDS THAT MONITORING GRANTS REMAIN UNDER SECTION 103 AUTHORITY

EPA's budget proposes shifting the PM2.5 monitoring grant program from Section 103 authority to Section 105 authority. However, we request that these funds remain under Section 103 authority. Grants under Section 103 do not require state or local matching funds, while Section 105 grants call for a match. There are some state and local agencies that are unable to provide additional matching funds. If the program is shifted to Section 105 authority, these agencies may be forced to refuse critical monitoring grants due to their inability to afford the required match. NACAA has made this recommendation in previous years and state and local air quality agencies are very appreciative that Congress has been agreeable to this request in the past.

CONCLUSION

State and local air quality agencies' efforts to protect and improve air quality are critically important for public health and a sound economy. NACAA recommends that for FY 2022 Congress 1) increase federal grants to state and local air agencies by $92 million above FY 2021 levels, for a total of $321.5 million (equal to the Administration's request); 2) provide flexibility to state and local air agencies to use any additional grants for the highest priority programs in their areas; and 3) retain grants for monitoring fine particulate matter under Section 103 authority.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to provide testimony. If you require additional information, please contact Miles Keogh (mkeogh@4cleanair.org) or Mary Sullivan Douglas (mdouglas@4cleanair.org) of NACAA.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CLEAN WATER AGENCIES (NACWA)

The National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) represents nearly 330 public wastewater and stormwater utilities nationwide, both large and small, that collectively provide essential clean water services to more than 150 million Americans daily. These essential public services protect public health and the environment and are vital for local economic growth.

NACWA firmly believes it is past time for the federal government to re-engage as a strong funding partner in water infrastructure investment. Our nation's water infrastructure is at a key juncture, with costs rising both for traditional investment needs like maintaining aging infrastructure and meeting compliance obligations, as well as for newer challenges such as addressing emerging contaminants and managing increasingly complex water quality issues and ensuring system resilience in the face of climate change and cyber risks. And these costs do not include the additional expenditures related to needed new capital investments.

The challenges of COVID–19 over the past year have only heightened the financial and infrastructure needs of the public clean water sector. In the face of these rising costs, utilities struggle to maintain rates that are affordable for all customers. In fact, the inability of poorer households to afford ever—increasing rates for clean water services has become the single greatest problem for many clean water utilities around the country. This affordability challenge has existed for many years due to shrinking federal government investment but has been particularly exacerbated by the COVID–19 pandemic.

According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), the current federal cost—share of water infrastructure has fallen to less than 5 percent of total drinking water and wastewater infrastructure investment, forcing the vast majority of the cost of providing clean and safe water, onto local ratepayers and states. Paying for water infrastructure investment must be a shared effort between local governments and the federal government. The ongoing COVID–19 pandemic has heightened the importance of safe and reliable clean water for all Americans, while also underscoring the growing gap between federal and local investment in water systems and the vital need for more robust federal funding.

Last month, the U.S. Senate took a major first step towards bridging this gap with overwhelming bipartisan passage of the Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act of 2021 (DWWIA), S. 914, which authorizes tens of billions in funding for clean water and drinking water infrastructure and programs beginning with FY22. While the timing and bicameral path forward on this legislation remains unclear, NACWA hopes the Subcommittee continues building on this strong bipartisan momentum during the FY22 appropriations process and provides funding at levels at least as high as those authorized in DWWIA.

NACWA also requests that the Appropriations Committee provide as much funding as possible for clean water in any comprehensive infrastructure and investment package, especially in the form of direct grants.

Below are NACWA's FY22 EPA Appropriations priorities. As always, NACWA appreciates the Subcommittee's strong engagement and collaboration with the Association and our members and appreciates your consideration of these clean water priorities.

CLEAN WATER STATE REVOLVING FUND (CWSRF)

The CWSRF is the primary federal clean water financing tool that communities and public clean water utilities, both large and small, utilize to help meet their Clean Water Act (CWA) obligations and infrastructure needs. The CWSRF has been instrumental to communities' success in complying with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, reducing the frequency and size of sewer overflows during wet weather events, and upgrading aging infrastructure and improving overall local water quality. NACWA strongly supports the higher authorization levels being advanced in Congress through DWWIA and requests as robust funding as possible in FY22 for the CWSRF.

SEWER OVERFLOW AND STORMWATER REUSE MUNICIPAL GRANTS

Reducing sewer overflows can be very costly, placing financial strain on many communities and their ratepayers, especially in communities under federal consent decrees, dealing with aging infrastructure, and adjusting to population and economic shifts. Meanwhile, stormwater management presents significant opportunity for continued improvement in water quality and water reuse, but this comes with rising costs around the country.

Originally authorized under the America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) (P.L.115–270) at $225 million per fiscal year and recently reauthorized at $280 million per fiscal year under DWWIA, this program provides grants to municipal entities for treatment works to intercept, transport, control, treat, or reuse municipal combined CSO, SSO, and/or stormwater.

In FY20, Congress took a major step forward by funding these sewer overflow grants—originally proposed in conjunction with the 1994 CSO Policy—for the first time ever. NACWA appreciates Congress' FY20 appropriation of $28 million and FY21 appropriation of $40 million for the program. However, as the main grant program available to communities for sewer controls and stormwater we urge continued growth in appropriations for this program at the level authorized in DWWIA.

INTEGRATED PLANNING AND EPA OFFICE OF MUNICIPAL OMBUDSMAN

At the end of 2018, Congress passed the bipartisan Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (Public Law No: 115–436) which codified EPA's Integrated Planning (IP) Framework to provide local communities with critical flexibilities in meeting their CWA obligations and ensure residents continue receiving safe, reliable, and affordable clean water services. The IP approach helps local communities sequence and prioritize how they meet their specific clean water obligations and long-term infrastructure needs and better manage costs over time. IP presents a significant opportunity to help communities stay on track with their clean water obligations and best manage costs, especially at a time of rapid innovation and changing environmental conditions.

EPA will soon be providing an update to Congress on IP via a report that was required as part of the 2018 legislation. However, it takes significant work by the community, state regulatory agency, and EPA to understand and pursue an integrated planning approach. We urge Congress to provide EPA with additional resources to help communities consider IP, including providing states with needed guidance on how to incorporate integrated planning concepts in CWA municipal permits. Specific funding for this effort in FY22 would be particularly helpful in advancing IP efforts at the local level, as well as signaling to EPA that Congress continues to view expanding IP as a priority.

EPA has recently begun to ramp up its IP efforts with its Technical Assistance Program for states and municipalities, which ends in August 2022, to receive free IP reviews from the Environmental Finance Centers at the University of Maryland and University of North Carolina. While this assistance is helpful, the Agency has yet to fully provide states and communities, both large and small, with more information and guidance on the initial steps, knowledge, and resources needed to begin the IP process and how to best utilize it to meet CWA obligations.

NACWA appreciates the subcommittee including IP report language in the final FY21 omnibus bill that supports IP activities at the Agency. Dedicated Congressional funding for IP is essential however to ensure EPA has the resources to fully and properly implement the law and help communities fully utilize this clean water tool. NACWA requests funding at a level of at least $2 million in FY22 to provide EPA and the Agency's regional offices with dedicated resources to fully and properly implement IP activities.

The Water Infrastructure Improvement Act also included a provision establishing a Municipal Ombudsman's office within EPA to provide municipalities with a dedicated point of contact within the Agency to ensure Agency policies are being implemented appropriately and consistently at the local level, as well as lead the EPA's efforts on IP. Last year, EPA hired the Agency's first Municipal Ombudsman, and the water sector looks forward to increased collaboration. NACWA requests FY22 report language similar to that in the FY21 Omnibus that directs funding for the Office of Municipal Ombudsman to be funded at no less than the previous fiscal year level, with a request that this funding level be increased.

WATER WORKFORCE INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS PROGRAM

Jobs in the water sector provide a good career with competitive wages. Over the next decade however, the water utility workforce is expected to incur a retirement rate of over one-third. This number is not only alarming given the important daily work of these professionals but is also problematic given the education and on-the-job training these jobs require.

Congress authorized the Water Workforce Infrastructure Grants Program through AWIA 2018 to facilitate innovative workforce training programs that help address the workforce need. NACWA requests funding at a level of at least $5 million in FY22 for the program to train and develop the utility workforce of the future and ensure the long-term stability in the sector. NACWA also requests that the Sub-

committee clarify that public clean water and drinking water utilities are eligible to receive these grants in partnership with training and educational institutions.

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCE AND INNOVATION ACT (WIFIA) PROGRAM

The WIFIA program is a compliment to the SRFs, providing an additional financing option for water infrastructure investment by leveraging limited federal resources. Since being authorized in 2014, NACWA has been pleased with the success of the WIFIA program in financing critical infrastructure projects. NACWA requests funding at a level of $68 million in FY22 for WIFIA.

NACWA also supports an additional $5 million be provided for SWIFIA which allows state financing authorities that administer the SRFs to apply for WIFIA loans directly through EPA, applying with a single application in which the state would bundle multiple projects on the state's approved intended use plan.

LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLD WATER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHWAP)

NACWA has long supported the creation of a federal low-income water assistance program at U.S. EPA to assist low-income households in maintaining access to affordable and reliable public clean and drinking water services. A robust and permanent federal water assistance program is key to helping communities and public utilities provide service to all customers while continuing to invest in and maintain safe, reliable water and wastewater systems. The ongoing COVID–19 pandemic has further highlighted this important need.

DWWIA takes an important step by directing EPA to assess low-income water needs around the country and authorizing a low-income household water assistance pilot program. NACWA continues to work with Congress on the establishment of a permanent low-income household water assistance program, and as a step in that direction we strongly support the low-income provisions in DWWIA.

NACWA looks forward to further discussions with the Subcommittee and both the Senate and House authorizing committees on this important issue and requests that as much funding as possible be appropriated in FY22 for low-income household water assistance.

In addition to the core clean water programs outlined above, NACWA also supports increased FY22 funding for EPA's Geographic Programs, such as the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), Chesapeake Bay Program, and Long Island Sound among others, which support critical watershed—based investments; Section 319 Nonpoint Source grants that are instrumental in pursuing holistic watershed solutions to impairments driven by nonpoint sources, which remain the largest outstanding driver of water quality impairments; and $20 million for EPA's National Priorities Water Research grant program that serves as an important source of federal funding to directly support water research projects.

Lastly, NACWA supports strong FY22 appropriations for EPA to complete an updated Clean Water Infrastructure Needs Survey to ensure there is accurate, updated, and complete understanding of clean water needs across the country. It is critical that EPA receive Congressional funding support to complete this vital survey, but also that EPA be directed to move expeditiously in issuing the next updated report which is already behind schedule.

[This statement was submitted by Jason Isakovic, Director of Legislative Affairs, Kristina Surfus, Managing Director of Government Affairs.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE ENERGY

Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and members of the Subcommittee, I am David Terry, Executive Director of the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO), which represents the 56 State and Territory Energy Directors and their Offices. NASEO is submitting this testimony in support of funding for the ENERGY STAR program (within the Climate Protection Partnership Division of the Office of Air and Radiation) at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). NASEO supports funding of at least $80 million in FY'22, including specific report language directing that the funds be utilized only for the ENERGY STAR program. The program received $54 million a decade ago and is now down to $39.4 million. The ENERGY STAR program is successful, voluntary, and cost-effective. The program has a proven track record—it makes sense, it saves energy and money, and Americans embrace it. ENERGY STAR helps consumers and businesses control expenditures over the long term. The program is strongly supported by product manufacturers, utilities, and homebuilders, and ENERGY STAR leverages the states' voluntary efficiency actions. Voluntary ENERGY STAR activities are occur-

ring in public buildings, such as schools, in conjunction with State Energy Offices, in virtually every state, including Oregon and Alaska. The states and the public utilize ENERGY STAR because it is seen as unbiased and delivers cost—saving benefits to businesses, consumers and state and local governments.

The ENERGY STAR program is focused on voluntary efforts that reduce energy waste, promotes energy efficiency and renewable energy, and works with states, local governments, communities and business to achieve these goals in a cooperative, public—private manner.

NASEO has worked closely with EPA and approximately 40 states are ENERGY STAR Partners. With very limited funding, EPA's ENERGY STAR program coordinates with the State Energy Offices to give consumers and businesses the opportunity and technical assistance tools to make better energy decisions and catalyzes product efficiency improvements by manufacturers without regulation or mandates. The program is voluntary.

ENERGY STAR focuses on energy—efficient products as well as buildings (e.g., residential, commercial, and industrial). Over 300 million ENERGY STAR qualified products were sold in 2019 alone, not including another 300 million ENERGY STAR certified light bulbs. The ENERGY STAR label is recognized across the United States. Approximately 90 percent of households recognize the ENERGY STAR label and a majority of surveyed U.S. households reported having purchased an ENERGY STAR product. The manufacturing, installation, design, wholesale distribution, and provision of professional services related to ENERGY STAR products employed almost 827,000 American workers in 2019. It makes the work of the State Energy Offices much easier, by engaging the public on easily—recognized products, services, and targets. In order to obtain the ENERGY STAR label, a product has to meet established guidelines. ENERGY STAR's voluntary partnership programs include ENERGY STAR Buildings, ENERGY STAR Homes, ENERGY STAR Small Business, and ENERGY STAR Labeled Products. A new ENERGY STAR "tenant spaces" program should be launched in 2021. The program operates by encouraging consumers and working closely with state and local governments to purchase these products and services.

Marketplace barriers are also eradicated through the ENERGY STAR program's collaborative approach to consumer education. State Energy Offices are working with EPA to promote ENERGY STAR products, ENERGY STAR for new construction, ENERGY STAR for public housing, etc. Another ENERGY STAR success is in the manufactured housing sector. Some states and utilities offer modest rebates for ENERGY STAR manufactured homes in order to deliver both energy cost savings to homeowners and lower overall electric grid operation costs for all customers.

In 2019, millions of consumers and thousands of voluntary partners, including manufacturers, builders, businesses, communities, and utilities, tapped the value of ENERGY STAR and achieved impressive financial and environmental results.

An estimated 70,000 energy efficiency home improvement projects were undertaken through the whole house retrofit program, Home Performance with ENERGY STAR, in 2020.

More than 840 utilities, state, and local governments and non-profits utilize ENERGY STAR in their energy efficiency programs, as do 1,800 manufacturers.

The State Energy Offices are very encouraged by progress made at EPA, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Energy, and in our states to promote programs to make schools more energy—efficient while improving indoor air quality and comfort. In fact, there are over 150 ENERGY STAR—rated schools in states from Arizona to Maine. In addition, many states' private sector partners voluntarily utilize ENERGY STAR to promote energy efficiency and lower operating costs.

EPA provides technical assistance to the State Energy Offices in such areas as ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager (how to rate the performance of buildings), setting an energy target, and financing options for building improvements and building upgrade strategies. ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager is used extensively by State Energy Offices to benchmark performance of state and municipal buildings, saving taxpayer dollars. Portfolio Manager is the industry—leading benchmarking tool which has been used voluntarily in approximately 50% of the commercial buildings in the United States. Portfolio Manager is used to measure, track, assess, and report energy and water consumption.

Additionally, the industrial sector embraces ENERGY STAR at job—creating companies such as GM, Eastman Chemical, Nissan, Raytheon, and Boeing. Recent ENERGY STAR certified manufacturers include such companies as J.R. Simplot, Flowers Foods, Ardagh Glass, and Marathon Petroleum Refining. At the close of 2019, more than 750 U.S. industrial sites had committed to the ENERGY STAR Challenge for Industry, while 311 sites met or exceeded their targets by achieving an average 10% reduction in industrial energy efficiency within five or fewer years.

The State Energy Offices are working cooperatively with our peers in the state environmental agencies and state public utilities commissions to ensure that programs, regulations, projects and policies are developed recognizing both energy and environmental concerns. We have worked closely with this program at EPA to address these issues. We encourage these continued efforts.

For example, in Oregon, the State is focused on decarbonization efforts, and ENERGY STAR is a useful tool to promote sustained investments in energy efficiency. In Alaska, the State has worked with partners to promote the Village Energy Efficiency Program, and ENERGY STAR has been critical.

Moreover, Oregon and Alaska have significant ENERGY STAR activities underway:

—Oregon is home to 180 businesses and organizations participating in U.S. EPA's ENERGY STAR program: 9 manufacturers of ENERGY STAR certified products; and 10 companies supporting independent certification of ENERGY STAR products and homes 49 companies building ENERGY STAR certified homes. ENERGY STAR Partner Activity in Oregon includes 1.9 million customers served by ENERGY STAR utility partners in 2020; 3,607 buildings (255 million square feet) benchmarked using EPA's ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager; 26,522 homes earned the ENERGY STAR to-date; 437 buildings earned the ENERGY STAR to-date, including 107 schools, 3 hotels, 6 hospitals, 142 office buildings and 5 industrial plants.

—Alaska is home to 20 businesses and organizations participating in U.S. EPA's ENERGY STAR program; has 153 thousand customers being served by ENERGY STAR utility partners; 437 buildings that have been benchmarked using EPA's ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager; 11,891 homes have earned the ENERGY STAR label; 31 schools, and 4 hospitals.

CONCLUSION

The ENERGY STAR program saves consumers billions of dollars every year. The payback and job creation benefits are enormous. NASEO supports robust program funding of at least $80 million in FY'22. Funding for the ENERGY STAR program is justified. It is a solid public—private relationship that leverages resources, time and talent to produce tangible results by saving energy and money and, in light of Administrator Michael Regan's commitment to environmental justice, can provide immense benefits to high—need and underserved communities. NASEO endorses these activities as well as the constructive partnerships that the State Energy Offices have with EPA to cooperatively implement a variety of critical national programs without mandates.

[This statement was submitted by David Terry, Executive Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE FORESTERS (NASF)

The National Association of State Foresters (NASF) appreciates the opportunity to submit written public testimony to the House Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies regarding our fiscal year (FY) 2022 appropriations recommendations. Our priorities focus primarily on appropriations for the USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) State and Private Forestry (S&PF) programs, as well as the Research and Development (R&D) Forest Inventory and Analysis Program.

State foresters deliver technical and financial assistance, along with forest health, water, and wildfire protection for more than two-thirds of the Nation's 751 million acres of forests. The Forest Service S&PF mission area provides vital support to deliver these services, which contribute to the socioeconomic and environmental health of rural and urban areas. The comprehensive process for delivering these services is articulated in each State's Forest Resource Assessment and Strategy (Forest Action Plan), authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill and continued in the 2018 Farm Bill. S&PF programs provide a significant return on the federal investment by leveraging the boots-on-the-ground and financial resources of state agencies to deliver assistance to forest landowners, tribes, and communities. As federal and state governments continue to face financial challenges, state foresters, in partnership with the S&PF mission area of the Forest Service, are best positioned to maximize effectiveness of available resources by focusing work on priority forest issues where resources are needed most.

FY21 marked the first year that Congress appropriated the Forest Service budget under a modernized structure. To transition to this new structure, the historical budget for each program account was broken out into three parts: operations (aka

cost pools), salaries & expenses, and program dollars. Congress determined its FY21 appropriations levels based in part on an historical analysis performed by the Forest Service that described how FY21 program budgets would have broken out under the previous budget structure. While the modernized budget structure has resulted in unprecedented levels of transparency—as the FY21 budget was implemented, it became clear that elements of Forest Service analysis were incorrectly estimated.

Your support of the following programs is critical to helping states address the many and varied challenges outlined in Forest Action Plans.

STATE FIRE ASSISTANCE (SFA) AND VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE (VFA)

More people living in fire—prone landscapes, high fuel loads, drought, and deteriorating forest health are among the factors that led most state foresters to identify wildland fire as a priority issue in their Forest Action Plans. We now grapple with increasingly expensive and complex wildland fires—fires that frequently threaten human life and property. In 2020, 58,950 wildland fires burned more than 10.1 million acres.[1] State and local agencies respond to the majority of wildfires across the country; in 2019 state and local agencies were responsible for responding to 39,804 (79%) of the 58,477 reported wildfires across all jurisdictions.[2]

SFA and VFA are the fundamental federal mechanism for assisting states and local fire departments in responding to wildland fires and in conducting management activities that mitigate fire risk on non-federal lands. SFA also helps train and equip local first responders who are often first to arrive at a wildland fire incident and who play a crucial role in keeping fires and their costs as minimal as possible. Attacking fires when they are small is the key to reducing fatalities, injuries, loss of homes, and cutting federal fire—fighting costs. The need for increased funding for fire suppression on federal lands has broad support. The need to increase fire suppression funding for state and private lands, where roughly 80 percent of wildfires occur, and where many federal fires begin, is just as urgent. NASF supports funding the State Fire Assistance program at $88.5 million including $79 million for program dollars, and Volunteer Fire Assistance at $20 million in FY 2022.

FOREST PESTS AND INVASIVE PLANTS

Also among the greatest threats identified in the Forest Action Plans are native and non-native pests and diseases which have the potential to displace native trees, shrubs, and other vegetation types in forests; the Forest Service estimates that hundreds of native and non-native insects and diseases damage the Nation's forests each year. The growing number of damaging pests and diseases are often introduced and spread by way of wooden shipping materials, movement of firewood, and through various types of recreation. There is an estimated 81 million acres at risk of attack by insects and disease.[3] These extensive areas of high insect or disease mortality can set the stage for large—scale, catastrophic wildfire.

The Cooperative Forest Health Management program supports activities related to prevention, monitoring, suppression, and eradication of insects, diseases, and plants through provision of technical and financial assistance to states and territories to maintain healthy, productive forest ecosystems on non-federal forest lands. The Cooperative Forest Health Management program plays a critical part in protecting communities already facing outbreaks and in preventing exposure of more forests and trees to the devastating and costly effects of damaging pests and pathogens. NASF supports funding the Forest Health-Cooperative Lands Program at $51 million including $39.43 million in program dollars in FY 2022.

ASSISTING LANDOWNERS AND MAINTAINING HEALTHY FORESTS—FOREST STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM AND FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM

Actively managed healthy forest landscapes are a vital part of rural America, providing an estimated 900,000 jobs, clean water, wood products, and other essential services to millions of Americans. Over 50% of U.S. forestland is privately owned and supports an average of eight jobs per 1,000 acres.[4] However, the Forest Service estimates that 57 million acres of private forests in the U.S. are at risk of conversion to urban development over the next two decades. Programs like the Forest

[1] National Interagency Fire Center, Historical Wildland Fire Summaries, Last accessed April 15, 2021 at https://www.nifc.gov/fire-information/statistics/wildfires

[2] Id.

[3] Tkacz, Bory, et al. 2014. NIDRM 2012 Report Files: Executive Summary. 2013–2027 National Insect and Disease Forest Risk Assessment. Last accessed on March, 5, 2019 at: http://www.fs.fed.us/foresthealth/technology/pdfs/2012__RiskMap__Exec__summary.pdf

[4] Forest2Market. The Economic Impact of Privately-Owned Forests. 2009.

Stewardship Program (FSP) and the Forest Legacy Program (FLP) are key tools identified in the Forest Action Plans for keeping working forests intact and for providing a full suite of benefits to society. With the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) signed into law, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) will receive permanent annual funding at the full authorized level, nearly doubling historical appropriations for the LWCF. FLP should receive significant increased funding levels commensurate with the increased funding provided to the LWCF by the GAOA.

FSP is the most extensive family forest—owner assistance program in the country and is delivered in partnership with state forestry agencies, cooperative extension services, certified foresters, conservation districts, and other partners. FSP equips private forest landowners with the unbiased, science—based information they need to sustainably manage their forests now and into the future, helping to keep forests as forests. In addition to delivering technical assistance directly to forestland owners, the Forest Stewardship Program often serves as a gateway to other landowner cost—share assistance programming, like the USDA Environmental Quality Incentives Program, state programs, and partner programs, that can help landowners keep their forests working and intact. Today there are nearly 24 million acres nationwide managed with Forest Stewardship plans. From 2019 to 2020, the total amount of acres covered by current Forest Stewardship plans increased by nearly half a million acres. Forestland owners that have management plans are almost three times more likely to meet their management objectives compared to those without management plans. The FSP leads landowners to reach their management objectives while tying those objectives to the state's Forest Action Plan. Increased federal funding for FSP will allow state forestry agencies to ramp up outreach efforts and provide additional technical assistance to landowners to ensure that private forestland acres are maintained. Forest Stewardship plans provide guidance for family forest landowners to keep their land healthy and productive and often serve as management roadmaps for several generations.

Following congressional direction, NASF has worked closely with the Forest Service to modernize the funding allocation formula to state agencies for FSP, focused on improving program delivery with greater emphasis on performance—based outcomes. Under the new allocation formula, priority areas and priority resource concerns have been designated in each state and greater emphasis has been placed on providing technical assistance and implementing land management plans in those priority areas. NASF supports funding for the Forest Stewardship Program at $30 million including $22 million for program dollars, and the Forest Legacy Program at $128 million in FY 2022.

URBAN AND COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

Urban forests are important to achieving energy savings, improved air quality, neighborhood stability, aesthetic value, reduced noise, and improved quality of life in municipalities and communities around the country. Urban trees and forests provide a wide array of social, economic, and environmental benefits to people living in urban areas; today, more than 83 percent of the Nation's population lives in urban areas. Yet, urban and community forests face serious threats, such as development and urbanization, invasive pests and diseases, and fire in the wildland urban interface (WUI).

The program is delivered in close partnership with state foresters and leverages existing local efforts that have helped thousands of communities and towns manage, maintain, and improve their tree cover and green spaces. In FY 2020, the U&CF program delivered technical, financial, educational, and research assistance to nearly 8,000 communities across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories and affiliated Pacific Island nations. NASF supports funding the Urban and Community Forestry program at $40 million including $31.91 million in program dollars in FY 2022.

IMPORTANCE OF FOREST INVENTORY DATA IN MONITORING FOREST ISSUES

The Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program, managed by Forest Service, Forest and Rangeland Research, is the only comprehensive inventory system in the United States for assessing the health and sustainability of the Nation's forests across all ownerships. FIA provides essential data related to forest species composition, forest growth rates, and forest health data, and it delivers baseline inventory estimates used in Forest Action Plans. Further, this data is used by academics, researchers, industry, and others to understand forest trends and support investments in forest products facilities that provide jobs and products to society. The program provides unbiased information used in monitoring of wildlife habitat, wildfire risk,

insect and disease threats, invasive species spread, and response to priorities identified in the Forest Action Plans.

As the key partner in FIA program delivery via state contribution of matching funds, state foresters look forward to continued work with the Forest Service to improve efficiency in delivery of the program to meet the needs of the diverse user groups for FIA data. This will ensure that, at a minimum, the historical level of base program delivery is accomplished, which should include funding the collection of data on a 7-year cycle in the east and 10-year cycle in the west. NASF supports funding the FIA program at no less than $93.5 million in total funding in FY22 including no less than $32.4 million for program dollars. However, we request that this increase not be realized at the expense of other critical Forest Service Research & Development or S&PF programs. We request you to work with the Forest Service to establish a budget line item for FIA for salaries and expenses.

LANDSCAPE SCALE RESTORATION (LSR)

The concept of the LSR Program was developed over a decade ago by state foresters. They agreed to reallocate 15% of the federal dollars their agencies received annually through four core programs (Forest Stewardship, Urban and Community Forestry, Forest Health-Cooperative Lands, and State Fire Assistance) to a new competitive grant program, now called LSR. Given the tremendous toll COVID–19 has had on state budgets, now more than ever, S&PF programs are critical to protecting our forested landscapes nationwide. To better support private forestland owners and the state forestry agencies that provide them with wildfire protection and forestry assistance, NASF is recommending Congress return LSR funding back to the S&PF core programs it originated from for the next two years. This return of support to our nation's core cooperative forestry programs is essential to bolstering the forestry supply chain in the U.S. and helping Americans weather prolonged economic instability. In the absence of COVID–19 stimulus funding for state forestry agencies, NASF requests LSR funding be returned to the four core S&PF programs it originated from—Forest Stewardship, Urban and Community Forestry, Forest Health-Cooperative Lands, and State Fire Assistance—for both FY22 and FY23. If supplemental funding is provided for state forestry agencies or S&PF funding, NASF supports funding LSR at $20 million in FY22.

NASF appreciates the opportunity to share our FY 2022 appropriations recommendations for the Forest Service with the Subcommittee.

[This statement was submitted by Joe Fox, President.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICERS

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee, I appreciate this opportunity to present the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (NATHPO)'s recommendations for Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations. My name is Valerie Grussing and I am the Executive Director. First, thank you for the FY 2021 Interior Appropriations bill—it was the most preservation friendly appropriations bill in history. Our FY22 goals in service of our members rely on this Subcommittee's continued support for the needs of tribal preservation activities. The recommended line item amounts are discussed below.

1. National Park Service, Historic Preservation Fund, Tribal line item ($24 million)
2. National Park Service, National NAGPRA Program:
   a. Exclusively for NAGPRA Grants ($2.331 million)
   b. Program administration ($1 million for Program Use)
3. Bureau of Indian Affairs—Create line items and support the following divisions:
   a. 12 Regional Offices support for Cultural Resource compliance ($3 million)
   b. Central Office cultural resource efforts throughout the bureau ($200,000)
   c. NAGPRA compliance work ($765,000)
   d. To fight ARPA crimes on Indian reservations ($200,000)
4. Smithsonian Institution: For repatriation activities, including Review Committee and repatriation office ($1.25 million)
5. Bureau of Land Management: Fill vacant Tribal Liaison Positions, HQ agency lead and 10 of the 12 State Offices ($1.5 million)

What are Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs)? THPOs are an exercise of tribal sovereignty, appointed by federally recognized tribal governments that have an agreement with the Department of the Interior to assume the federal compliance role of the State HPO, per the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Tribal

historic preservation plans are grounded in self-determination, traditional knowledge, and cultural values, and may involve projects to improve Indian schools, roads, health clinics, and housing. THPOs are the first responders when a sacred site is threatened or when Native ancestors are disturbed by development. THPOs are often responsible for their tribe's oral history programs, operating museums and cultural centers, leading revitalization of Native traditions and languages, and many more related functions.

What is the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers? NATHPO is a national non-profit membership association of tribal government officials committed to protecting culturally important places that perpetuate Native identity, resilience, and cultural endurance. NATHPO assists tribes in protecting their historic properties, whether they are naturally occurring in the landscape or are manmade structures.

1. HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND (HPF), ADMINISTERED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE—TRIBAL LINE ITEM ($24 MILLION)

As of December 31, 2020, there are 200 National Park Service (NPS)-recognized Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs). Each THPO represents an affirmative step by an Indian tribe to assume the responsibilities of the State Historic Preservation Officers for their respective tribal lands, as authorized by Congress in the 1992 amendments to the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Collectively, these Tribes exercise responsibilities over a land base exceeding 50 million acres in 30 states. The HPF is the sole source of federal funding for THPOs and the main source of funding to implement the nation's historic preservation programs. HPF revenue is generated from oil and gas development on the Outer Continental Shelf. We recommend $24 million to carry out the requirements of the NHPA. This would provide the 200 federally recognized THPOs an average of $120,000 each to run their programs. Funding THPOs and staff creates jobs, generates economic development, and spurs community revitalization. It also facilitates required environmental and historic review processes, including for energy and infrastructure permitting. Tribes don't want to stop this development—they need it more than anyone. But they also need to reap the benefits rather than just continue to incur the costs. If these review processes are ever to be "streamlined," THPOs must be able to do the required work.

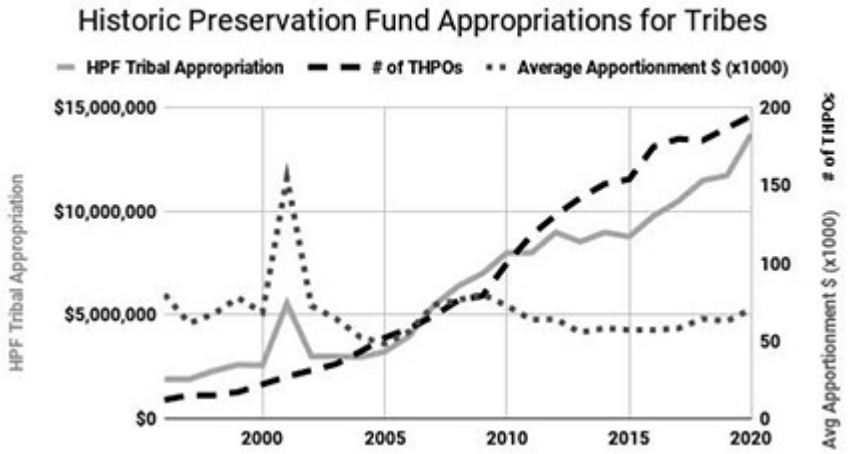
What is at stake? As the number of Indian tribes with THPO programs increases, the amount of HPF funding appropriated to THPOs must catch up. Native American cultural properties on millions of acres of tribal lands are at risk. For the past several years, each THPO program has been asked to conduct important federal compliance work with fewer financial resources. In the first year of congressional funding support for THPOs (FY1996), the original 12 THPOs each received an average of $80,000, while in FY2021, 200 THPOs received an average of $75,000. If the original $80,000 were adjusted for inflation, the current apportionment would be $131,000 per THPO; that is the gap we must begin to close. Additionally, the number of tribes with a THPO continues to grow; around 10 Tribes successfully establish a THPO program each year. The epidemics we see rampant in Indian country are the symptoms of historical trauma—of people systematically cut off from their families, languages, practices, and lands. Reconnecting Native peoples to their cultural heritage, traditions, and places has the power to help heal deep generational wounds. Treating the cause: that is the work THPOs do. To continue this work in Indian country, it is essential that THPO programs receive increased funding to meet the increasing need. The chart below demonstrates the program growth and funding need.

Additional HPF programs administered by the National Park Service.—NATHPO appreciates the strong HPF funding levels the Committee has provided in recent years. We support the request of the National Trust for Historic Preservation that Congress provide a total FY 2021 HPF appropriation of $150 million. Within that funding we recommend:

—$60 million for State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs);
—$24 million for Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs);
—$26 million for competitive grants to preserve the sites and stories Civil Rights;
—$10 million for grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities;
—$20 million for Save America's Treasures grants;
—$9 million for Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization grants;
—$1 million for grants related to communities underrepresented on the National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks.

We also recommend the Committee encourage the NPS to work with states and tribes to improve what has become a burdensome apportionment process so that

SHPOs and THPOs can more readily and efficiently access funding Congress has allocated for their work.



HPF Tribal appropriation has steadily increased, as has the number of THPOs. Therefore, the average apportionment per THPO has remained the same.

2. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, NATIONAL NAGPRA PROGRAM

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) provides for the disposition of Native American cultural items [1] removed from Federal or tribal lands, or in the possession or control of museums or federal agencies, to lineal descendants, Indian tribes, or Native Hawaiian organizations based on descent or cultural or geographic affiliation. NAGPRA prohibits trafficking of Native American cultural items and created a grants program exclusively for Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, and public museums.

NAGPRA Grants Program:

a. $2.331 million to be used exclusively for NAGPRA Grants to Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, and museums. We recommend that the Committee restore the amount that the NAGPRA grants program received each year for most of its history prior to when the NPS began to divert a greater amount of funds for administrative use within the cultural resource division. NAGPRA grants have been "level-funded" at $1.65 million. NATHPO requests that the Congress restore the grants to the $2.331 million funding level.

Administration of National NAGPRA Program:

b. $1 million, additionally, for NAGPRA program administration, including the publication of Federal Register notices, grant administration, civil penalty investigations, and Review Committee costs.

3. BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS—CREATE LINE ITEMS AND SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING DIVISIONS

The BIA has federally mandated responsibilities to work with Indian tribes and comply with the NHPA, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), NAGPRA, and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA). Currently the BIA does not have any budget line items devoted to complying with these federal laws. Funds are not only needed for the BIA to comply with their internal development efforts, such as roads and forestry, but also to conduct project reviews of outside development projects, such as oil and gas development. ARPA crime on Indian reservations continues to be a major problem, as looters and traffickers continue to steal valuable cultural resources from tribal and federal lands. The BIA does not have any special agents or law enforcement forces to combat this uniquely destructive crime in Indian country and we urge the creation of a dedicated line item within the BIA.

[1] Cultural items include human remains, funerary or sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony.

NATHPO recommends the BIA create line items and support the following divisions:

a. Cultural Resource compliance at the 12 Regional BIA Offices ($3 million);
b. Central Office cultural resource efforts throughout the bureau ($200,000);
c. NAGPRA compliance work ($765,000);
d. To fight ARPA crimes on Indian reservations ($200,000).

4. SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN AND THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY REPATRIATION PROGRAMS

NATHPO requests that the Smithsonian Institution receive $1.25 million for its repatriation activities, including operation costs of the Review Committee and repatriation office.

5. BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT: TRIBAL LIAISONS AND CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The BLM oversees the largest, most diverse and scientifically important collection of historic and cultural resources on our nation's public lands, as well as the museum collections and data associated with them. We appreciate the Committee's commitment to ongoing oversight of the Department's reorganization. NATHPO and many other organizations are profoundly concerned with the impact of the reorganization and loss of staff within the Cultural Resources Division. The cultural resources program also supports NHPA Section 106 review of land—use proposals, Section 110 inventory and protection of cultural resources, compliance with NAGPRA, and consultation with Tribes and Alaska Native Governments. We are very appreciative of last year's dedicated increase of $1.5 million for the agency to enhance its National Cultural Resources Information Management System (NCRIMS). We recommend once again providing specific funding of $1.5 million above enacted, specifically to fill vacant Tribal Liaison Positions, including the Headquarters agency lead and at 10 of the 12 State Offices.

Thank you for considering our testimony. I would be pleased to answer any questions you have.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICERS

Fiscal Year 2022 Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) Request

Funded through withdrawals from the Historic Preservation Fund (54 USC 3031), U. S. Department of the Interior's National Park Service.

—$60 million for State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs)
—$24 million for Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPOs)
—$19 million for the African American Civil Rights Movement grant program
—$7 million for the History of Equal Rights grant program
—$10 million for the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) grant program
—$20 million for the Save America's Treasures grant program
—$1 million for the Underrepresented Community grant program
—$9 million for the Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization grant program
—Funding for the Semiquincentennial grant program

UNIQUE AND SUCCESSFUL FEDERAL-STATE PARTNERSHIP

Recognizing the importance of our national heritage, in 1966 Congress passed the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA, 54 USC 300101), which established historic preservation as a priority of the federal government. Recognizing that State officials have local expertise, the Act's authors directed federal entities charged with its implementation—the Department of the Interior and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation—to partner with the States. Duties delegated to the SHPOs include: 1) locating and recording historic resources; 2) nominating significant historic resources to the National Register of Historic Places; 3) cultivating historic preservation programs at the local government level; 4) providing funds for preservation activities; 5) commenting on federal rehabilitation tax credit projects; 6) review of all federal projects for their impact on historic properties; and 7) providing technical assistance to federal agencies, state and local governments and the private sector.

To assist the states in accomplishing this federally—delegated work, in 1976, Congress established the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF). The HPF is funded from outer—continental shelf lease revenues rather than tax dollars, so that the depletion

of one non-renewal resource can be used to help preserve another non-renewable resource—our heritage. The states also contribute toward this effort, matching at least 40 percent of the HPF funding they receive.

FINDING AND SAVING AMERICA'S HERITAGE

The first step in preserving and protecting America's heritage is identifying it—which requires the survey, documentation, stewardship and sharing of historic site data. These sites represent the many peoples, places, and events that have shaped our national identity. Adequate funding is essential for SHPOs to meet these goals. Currently, due to lack of funding, many states must continue to rely upon outdated paper records—a situation that has been brought into sharp relief in terms of access and availability by the fact of the remote work required during the pandemic. Having accurate, up-to-date, digitally accessible information about our Nation's historic resources in all states would dramatically increase the efficiency and effectiveness of all local, state, and federal projects. From decisions on the design of local in-fill development, to state transportation planning projects, to federal large—scale infrastructure and energy projects and disaster recovery efforts—every single project and by extension the American people benefit from enhanced and accessible historic resource databases.

Once identified and documented, America's historic resources are primarily recognized at the local, state, and national levels by listing on National, State and Local Historic Registers. State Historic Preservation Officers, through the authority of the National Historic Preservation Act assist, support and encourage communities with their preservation efforts and are the gateway to the National Register of Historic Places. National Register recognition by the Secretary of the Interior confirms citizens' belief in the significance of their communities' historic places.

The National Historic Preservation program is primarily one of assistance, not acquisition. The federal government does not own, manage, or maintain responsibility for the vast majority of the historic assets aided by the National Historic Preservation program. Instead, the program, through the SHPOs, provides individuals, communities, and local, state, and federal governments with the tools they need to identify, preserve, and utilize the historic assets of importance to them.

In addition to $60 million in funding for SHPOs, the NCSHPO supports $24 million in funding for the Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPO). THPOs assume many of the responsibilities of the SHPO on their respective Tribal lands and are important leaders in the national preservation community. The number of THPOs continues to increase annually. With over 200 THPOs in place, funding increases are necessary to prevent a decrease in the average THPO grant.

NCSHPO also supports $19 million for competitive grants to identify, recognize and preserve the sites and stories related to the Civil Rights movement; $7 million for the History of Equal Rights grant program; $10 million for the program to support the preservation and rehabilitation of buildings on the campuses of Historically Black Colleges and Universities; $20 million for the Save America's Treasure's grant program; $9 million for the Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization grant program to support historic preservation in rural communities; and, $1 million for the Underrepresented Communities grant program.

JOBS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

Historic preservation has stimulated economic growth, promoted community education and pride, and rescued and rehabilitated significant historic resources throughout the country. By addressing the effects of blight and vacancy with an answer other than demolition of the irreplaceable, historic preservation is frequently a catalyst for positive community change, resulting in dynamic destinations for visitors and residents alike.

The Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit (HTC) program, administered by the State Historic Preservation Offices in cooperation with the National Park Service, is an important driver for economic development. Since inception, the HTC has enabled the rehabilitation of more than 45,000 buildings, created more than 3 million jobs and leveraged $173 billion in private investment nationwide. On average, the HTC leverages $5 dollars in private investment for every $1 dollar in federal funding, creating highly effective public—private partnerships and community re-investment. In many states, including my own state of North Carolina, the HTC has been expanded through adoption of state tax credit programs that complement the HTC.

Historic preservation also stimulates economic development through heritage tourism. SHPOs are essential, ground level partners in working with grass roots constituents to identify and interpret the historic places that attract these visitors. A modest increase in SHPO funding would allow SHPOs to expand their public out-

reach and assistance efforts, enabling communities to take greater advantage of heritage tourism opportunities which lead to job creation, new business development and enhanced community pride.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICES' ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The HPF has facilitated nearly 2 million listings in the National Register and the survey of millions of acres for cultural resources. The HPF has also provided SHPOs with the administrative capacity for constituent access to the Historic Tax Credit program, which has generated more than $38.1 billion in federal tax revenue from historic rehabilitation projects. In FY 2020, HPF funding also enabled SHPOs to review more than 110,000 federal projects and balance the desire for progress with the need to have America's past remain part of its future.

Many SHPOs have also made extensive use of HPF grant programs that are intended to make sure that sites associated with the Civil Rights Movement and underrepresented communities are recognized and preserved. In North Carolina, over the last several years, we have applied for and received grants under several of these grant programs. A 2015 Underrepresented Communities grant yielded National Register nominations and listings for eight Rosenwald School nominations, two historic African American cemeteries, and the College Heights Historic District, which is associated with the HBCU North Carolina Central University. A 2020 Civil Rights grant is currently underway with a study to gather and document oral histories, background research, and places associated with the Civil Right Movement in northeastern North Carolina. The North Carolina Division of State Historic Sites has also recently received a Civil Rights grant to rehabilitate the home of Civil Rights leader Golden Frinks in Edenton and to update the existing National Register listing to capture its Civil Rights significance.

CONCLUSION

On behalf of all 59 SHPOs, I'd like to thank you, Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Historic preservation recognizes that what was common and ordinary in the past is often rare and precious today, and what is common and ordinary today may be extraordinary, whether it is fifty, one hundred or five hundred years from now. State Historic Preservation Offices help to ensure that the places associated with the history of all Americans are recognized and preserved. To that end, I would like to thank the committee sincerely for its commitment to historic preservation. The federal government plays an invaluable role in preserving our nation's history and our collective sense of place. Through our partnership, SHPOs remain committed to working together to identify, protect, and maintain our Nation's heritage.

[This statement was submitted by Ramona Bartos, President and Deputy SHPO of the North Carolina Office of Archive.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

On behalf of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony. Founded in 1944, NCAI is the oldest and largest national organization comprised of American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Tribal Nations. NCAI's testimony will discuss certain funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Indian Health Service (IHS), and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), totaling approximately $13.5 billion.

Federal funding, as part of the federal government's treaty and trust obligations, is critical to ensuring that Tribal Nations are able to provide essential government services to tribal citizens. This is particularly important during a pandemic, and where federal law and policy deny Tribal Nations the same opportunities to develop strong tax bases as are available to states and local governments. More information on the funding requests that are outlined throughout this letter can be found in the FY 2022 Indian Country Budget Request: Restoring Promises.[1]

[1] National Congress of American Indians (2021). Fiscal Year 2022 Indian Country Budget Request: Restoring Promises. Washington, DC. https://www.ncai.org/resources/ncai-publications/NCAI_IndianCountry_FY2022_BudgetRequest.pdf.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, INDIAN AFFAIRS

Ensuring Tribal Nations have the tools for effective governance is critical to fulfilling the intent of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA). Congress must support tribal self-determination by increasing tribal base (or Tribal Priority Allocation, "TPA") funding and promoting more accurate data collection, so that funding can better identify and target the needs of Tribal Nations.

NCAI conducted a detailed analysis of federal government spending on Indian Affairs (IA) programs for FYs 2001 through 2021.[2] This analysis illustrated that the increase in funding for IA programs over the past 20 years has marginally kept up with inflation, while many programs are comparatively operating with less financial support now than in FY 2001.[3] In addition, detailed spending data revealed that significant increases in the budgets for Administrative priorities in any given year often comprise most of the total annual increase for that year.

Basic Tribal Governance Programs.—IA distributes funding for the "Aid to Tribal Government (TPA)" (ATG) program provides baseline funding for tribal government programs and services.[4] This includes program costs and staffing to execute tribal government activities, such as monitoring government compliance and maintaining citizenship information.[5] Additionally, IA provides funding for the "Small Tribes Supplement" program to provide a minimum base level by which eligible Tribal Nations can run viable governments.[6] IA also provides funding for the "New Tribes" program that establishes a base level of funding to support new federally recognized Tribal Nations.[7] Unfortunately, the funded amount of these tribal governance programs in FY 2021 constitutes an effective reduction of $33.4 million in purchasing power compared to the amount provided in FY 2001, adjusted annually for inflation.[8] And when controlling for the funded activity "Tribal Government," which includes programs that allow for moving multiple tribal shares into a single program line, the net effect is a $42 million loss in purchasing power when comparing the FY 2021 enacted amount to the adjusted FY 2001 amount.[9]

This past year, IA has demonstrated the value of ATG in promoting self-determination and the unique needs of Tribal Nations. The majority CARES Act Operation of Indian Programs funding was distributed through ATG[10] with the option to reallocate funds received under Division B, Title VII of the CARES Act to other TPA accounts.[11] As part of the American Rescue Plan, a majority of the funds were, again, proposed for distribution using ATG, expressly allowing Tribal Nations to reprogram funds.[12]

Increasing funding to Tribal Nations through the ATG program is a solution to grow Tribal Nations' base funding. The flexibility to reprogram or permanently transfer funds also helps to offset a portion of the revenue lost to federal tax law and policy that inhibits Tribal Nations' exercise of their tax authority.

Increases intended for ATG should also provide increases to the Consolidated Tribal Government Program (CTGP) and Self-Governance Compacts program for any shares of ATG that have been moved to these consolidated program lines. Only IA has this consolidated information and should be able to inform such ratios for Congress. Any amount provided to the ATG, CTGP, and Self-Governance Compacts programs should have a corresponding increase for the New Tribes program because New Tribes program shares eventually move into ATG.

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[2] Id. Pg. 28

[3] Id.

[4] U.S. Department of the Interior, Budget Justification and Performance Information Fiscal year 2021, IA–ST–6, https://www.bia.gov/sites/bia.gov/files/assets/as-ia/obpm/BIA__FY2021__Greenbook-508.pdf.

[5] Id. at IA–TG–3.

[6] Budget Justification and Performance Information Fiscal year 2021, supra note 37, at IA–TG–4.

[7] Id.

[8] NCAI, FY 2022 Indian Country Budget Request, Pg. 35.

[9] Id.

[10] U.S. Department of the Interior, CARES Act Final Distributions for ATG and Welfare Assistance, https://www.bia.gov/sites/bia.gov/files/assets/as-ia/opa/pdf/CARES%20Act%20Final%20Distributions-ATG—%26__WA__508.pdf.

[11] U.S. Department of the Interior, FAQ—Division B, Title VII of the CARES Act, July 2020, Pg. 5, https://www.bia.gov/sites/bia.gov/files/assets/as-ia/opa/pdf/FINAL%20-%20FAQs%20for%20Indian%20Affairs%20Div.%20B%20Title%20VII%20of%20the%20CARES%20Act%20Funds%20-%2007.02.20__508.pdf.

[12] U.S. Department of the Interior, American Rescue Plan Consultation Presentation, Pg. 9, https://www.bia.gov/sites/bia.gov/files/assets/as-ia/doc/Consultation__ARP__Final__3-25-2021__508__Compliant.pdf.

Public Safety and Justice Programs: TPA funds are not eligible to be reprogrammed to most Public Safety and Justice programs.[13] This means that Congress and this Subcommittee must consider public safety and justice in tribal communities separate from TPA funds. In 2018, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights found that there continues to be "systematic underfunding of tribal law enforcement and criminal justice systems, as well as structural barriers in the funding and operation of criminal justice systems in Indian Country" that undermine public safety.[14]

In 2020, the BIA submitted a report to Congress estimating that to provide a minimum base level of service to all federally recognized Tribal Nations, $1.3 billion is needed for tribal law enforcement, $1.2 billion is needed for tribal courts, and $240.6 million is needed for existing detention centers.[15] Based on its latest report, Congress is funding tribal law enforcement, detentions/corrections, and tribal courts at just 14.7 percent of their estimated need.[16] Meaningful investment in tribal law enforcement and tribal justice systems is necessary to ensure the safety and security of residents and visitors on tribal lands. NCAI recommends that Congress provide $123 million for tribal courts, including courts in P.L. 83–280 jurisdictions, and $527.4 million for Criminal Investigations and Police Services and Detention/Corrections.

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

In permanently authorizing the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA), Congress reaffirmed the duty of the federal government to provide all necessary resources to ensure the highest possible health status for AI/ANs, declaring it as "the policy of this Nation," intended to fulfill "its special trust responsibilities and legal obligations to Indians."[17] Unfortunately, the historic underfunding of the Indian healthcare system has resulted in a health crisis across Indian Country. Additionally, treatment of chronic diseases like diabetes, auto-immune deficiencies, cancer, and heart disease quickly expend limited tribal resources, leaving few dollars for preventative care. Further, failing infrastructure creates unsafe and unsanitary conditions and severely compromises the quality of healthcare. Aging facilities and the lack of resources to modernize equipment and health information technology have created a dire need for large investments in basic infrastructure.

For the Indian Health Service (IHS) budget to grow sufficiently to meet the documented needs of Tribal Nations over a 12-year period, and based on the FY 2018 estimate of 3.04 million AI/ANs eligible for Indian health programs, the federal government would need to invest $48 million.[18] New healthcare insurance opportunities and expanded Medicaid in some states may increase healthcare resources available to AI/ANs. However, other such opportunities cannot substitute for fulfillment of the federal government's trust and treaty obligations to Tribal Nations. Accordingly, NCAI recommends the amount requested by the National Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup for FY 2022—a total of $12.75 billion in FY 2022.[19]

Section 105(l) Lease Agreements: Ambiguities in the intent of Congress with respect to Section 105(l) lease agreements under the ISDEAA impact health delivery and substantially hinder the development of healthcare infrastructure throughout Indian Country.[20] Congress should confirm that space used to provide services within the scope of an ISDEAA agreement—to any patient—is compensable under Section 105(l) of the ISDEAA.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Tribal communities face direct and often disproportionate impacts of environmental degradation. Federal funding to support environmental protection for tribal

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[13] Id.

[14] U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Broken Promises: Continued Federal Funding Shortfall for Native Americans, 32, 2018, https://www.usccr.gov/pubs/2018/12-20-Broken-Promises.pdf.

[15] U.S. Department of the Interior, Report to Congress on Spending, Staffing, and Estimated Funding Costs for Public Safety and Justice Programs in Indian Country, 2018, Pg. 1, (2020), https://www.ncai.org/initiatives/tibc/Public__Safety__and__Justice__Subcommittee__-__2018__TLOA__Report.pdf.

[16] Id. at comparing 2018 BIA spending to 2018 Total Estimated Costs.

[17] Indian Health Care Improvement Act, 25 U.S.C. § 1602.

[18] NCAI FY 2022 Indian Country Budget Request at Pg. 70.

[19] IHS Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup, Reclaiming Tribal Health: A National Budget Plan to Rise Above Failed Policies and Fulfill Trust Obligations to Tribal Nations, Pg. 1, https://www.nihb.org/docs/05042020/FINAL__FY22%20IHS%20Budget%20Book.pdf.

[20] NCAI Resolution #ECWS–2021–002, Support for Legislative Fix to Amend Lease Compensation Provisions of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. https://www.ncai.org/attachments/Resolution__eontvOcwAgAYphrWlBPWpscJEzItoIqJInPaYgjHtOhHqZpSyCL__N CAI%20Resolution%20ECWS-21-002.pdf

lands was not forthcoming until more than 20 years after the passage of the Clean Water and Clean Air Acts. The federal government must ensure Tribal Nations have fair and equal opportunities to preserve and enhance the environmental quality of Indian Country for present and future generations. NCAI recommends that Congress provide the Environmental Protection Agency $100 million for the Indian Environmental General Assistance Program; a five percent set—aside in the National Clean Water Act State Revolving Fund; a 20 percent set—aside in Water Pollution Control Grants; $13 million for Nonpoint Source Pollutant Control, Clean Water Act Section 319; a 10 percent set—aside for the Exchange Network; and a $17 million set—aside as part of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

ESTIMATE OF TOTAL OBLIGATIONS FOR TRIBAL PROGRAMS

Congress should require all federal departments or agencies with tribal programs to include an annual estimate of the cost to fully fund the responsibilities of each tribal program within the department or agency. Each program estimate should include a detailed explanation of the methodology and underlying data relied on to provide such estimates. Each methodology should be developed in consultation and collaboration with Tribal Nations. The estimates should also identify data deficiencies that limit accuracy and provide a plan for remedying those deficiencies.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony and for your consideration of the recommendations of NCAI. We look forward to working with this subcommittee on a nonpartisan basis to ensure the federal government honors its treaty and trust obligations to Tribal Nations through the federal budget process.

[This statement was submitted by Fawn Sharp, President.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski and members of the Committee, thank you for providing the opportunity to submit this testimony regarding federal appropriations for the National Endowment for the Arts in Fiscal Year 2022. My name is Pamela (Pam) Breaux, and I serve as President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA), the organization that represents and serves the nation's 56 state and jurisdictional arts agencies. Today, I thank the members for their tremendous support of the National Endowment for the Arts and urge the Committee to consider increasing funding in FY 2022.

Over the last year, as the nation has grappled with the COVID–19 pandemic and resulting economic hardships, this Subcommittee repeatedly supported artists and arts organizations, understanding the important role they play in our communities. The arts and creative sector workforce was especially devastated as a result of the pandemic; for this reason, state arts agencies doubled down on providing services and resources to the field. This Subcommittee provided funding to assist states in this important work, for which NASAA and the states are extremely grateful; we especially appreciate that committee members worked together in a bipartisan manner to provide funding to the Arts Endowment.

As you look to the next budget, NASAA hopes you will consider increasing funding for the National Endowment for the Arts to $201 million, which continues to make a substantial impact in communities throughout the United States. Through its highly effective federal—state partnership, the Arts Endowment distributes 40% of its programmatic funds to state, jurisdictional and regional arts agencies each year. The resulting funds helped to empower states and regions to priorities and served far more constituents than federal funds alone could reach. Unique among federal agencies, the Endowment funds state plans; these plans are developed by state arts agencies in response to citizens, communities, arts organizations, legislatures and governors. This makes the federal—state arts investment incredibly responsive and relevant to citizens in every state and jurisdiction. The report accompanying last year's Consolidated Appropriations Act affirmed Congress's support for this important partnership and its corresponding 40% allocation. We sincerely thank the Committee for this acknowledgement.

Federal funding for arts and creativity is a high return investment in cities, towns and rural communities nationwide. It improves the lives of all Americans, equips an innovative workforce and keeps us competitive globally. It is a great example of government done right, as it fuels public—private partnerships, leverages $9 in additional funds for every federal dollar invested and puts tax dollars and decision—making authority into the hands of citizens.

State arts agencies use their share of NEA funds, combined with funds from state legislatures, to support almost 23,000 grants to arts organizations, civic organizations and schools in more than 4,600 communities across the United States. Twenty-two percent of state arts agency grant awards go to non-metropolitan areas, supporting programs that strengthen the civic and economic sustainability of rural America. Twenty-six percent of state arts agency grant dollars go to arts education, fostering student success in and out of school and building the critical thinking, creativity and communications skills needed to meet the demands of an increasingly competitive work force.

Congress's continued support of the 40% formula is essential to state arts agencies, boosting their ability to ensure that the arts benefit all communities, regardless of wealth or geography. The Maine Arts Commission, for example, quickly transformed services to provide meaningful benefits to its arts community struggling to deal with impacts of the pandemic. The Arts Commission mounted a professional development series designed to help arts organizations retool development and fundraising practices for difficult times, manage crises to help organizations transform their operations during turbulent times, and reinvent audience development strategies to help organizations engage audiences during and after the COVID–19 pandemic. These are but a few examples of how the Maine Arts Commission and many other state arts agencies are providing needed services to the arts and creative community.

New research tells us that the recovery of the arts and creative sector is also inextricably linked to the recovery of the nation's broader economy. Arts and Economic Recovery Research shows how the arts strengthen the economy following periods of acute economic distress. Rigorous quantitative data and case studies show that the arts can improve—not merely reflect—broader economic conditions at the state and local levels. The findings reveal that the arts are an agile and resilient sector with the capacity to ignite job growth, reduce economic risk through diversification, stimulate commerce and attract tourism. As we work toward arts sector recovery and stability, that work not only benefits the arts industry, but it also positions the arts to benefit the broader economy. Strengthening the arts provides opportunities to help strengthen the nation.

NASAA and states also applaud the Arts Endowment's many services to the country, including its leadership in developing noteworthy programs for communities, military personnel, veterans, students, and many others. NASAA and state arts agencies proudly partner with the Endowment and work collaboratively and in solidarity to benefit all communities across the country. Together we accomplish what neither side can achieve alone.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony. NASAA sincerely appreciates Congress's strong bipartisan support for the National Endowment for the Arts and federal funding for the arts. We look forward to continuing to work productively with this Committee, and we stand ready to serve as a resource to you.

Sincerely,

Pamela (Pam) Breaux
President and Chief Executive Officer National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION (NFPA)

Dear Chairman Leahy and Vice Chairman Shelby:

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is a self-funded, global non-profit organization founded in 1896 dedicated to ending losses from fire, electrical, and related life safety hazards. With the unabating wildfire crisis in the U.S., NFPA recently launched Outthink Wildfire(tm), an initiative to advocate for policy change in five key areas that will stop the destruction of communities by this hazard. We write to ask for your support for key federal programs.

The five tenets are: 1) all homes and business in areas of wildfire risk must be retrofitted to resist ignition; 2) current codes, standards, and sound land use planning practices must be used and enforced; 3) local fire departments must have adequate resources to protect their communities; 4) fuel management on federal and non-federal lands must be a priority; and 5) the public must be well—informed and motivated to embrace their role in reducing wildfire risk. While action on these fronts is urgently needed at all levels of government, Federal programs need to play a key role in ending the devastating wildfire losses communities are now experiencing as discussed in this letter.

MITIGATING WILDFIRE SEVERITY

NFPA supports the Administration's FY2022 proposal to provide $1.7 billion in funding for high—priority hazardous fuels and forest—resilience projects to the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), in addition to the proposed $340 million to the Department of the Interior (DOI) for hazardous fuel treatments on its lands. As identified in the National Cohesive Wildfire Management Strategy, denser, more continuous fuel on landscapes now outside of their natural ecological fire regimes is a major contributor to the severe wildfires that threaten communities and drain Federal fire suppression resources. The U.S. must increase the rate of fuel treatments, including prescribed burning, to address the millions of acres now at high or very high risk of wildfire.

In addition to increased resources for hazardous fuel treatment projects, NFPA supports programs that enable collaboration between the USFS and its partners, assist state and private land managers in restoring forest health, and encourage landscape—scale restoration projects. For example, the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration program has been successful in reducing fire risk and achieving other management objectives through a stakeholder—driven process aimed at minimizing conflict.[1] Given the National Cohesive Strategy's call for increased landscape—scale fuel treatment and forest health projects, funding this program at its authorized level of $80 million can help continue and expand on its success. Similarly, the Landscape Scale Restoration Program should receive $20 million.

Finally, NFPA supports a robust budget for forestry research, including programs to better understand wildfire behavior and landscape treatment strategies, as well as programs to develop new wood products and markets to create more financial incentives for hazardous fuel treatment. As part of that funding, the Joint Fire Sciences Research program should receive $8 million each for the USFS and DOI. NFPA also believes research funding for the built environment aspect of wildfire resilience should be increased and thus supports the Administration's proposal to increase funding for the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), particularly for efforts to improve resiliency through building codes.

ASSISTING STATE & LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS

State and local fire response resources play a major role in preparing for and responding to wildfires on both public and private lands, making the USFS funds provided by the State Fire Assistance (SFA) and Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) programs critical to public safety. According to the National Association of State Foresters, members of state and local fire departments are the first to respond to 80 percent of wildfires. Findings from NFPA's 2016 Fourth Needs Assessment of the U.S. Fire Service[2] that the majority of fire departments with wildfire response responsibilities lack sufficient training and personal protective equipment reveal a significant gap in safety, for both the responders and the lives and properties of the communities they protect.

SFA and VFA are critical safety programs for supporting wildland urban interface (WUI) communities, funding hazardous fuels treatment in the WUI, supporting fire planning projects, and helping to train and equip state and local responders. SFA also supports public education and community capacity development programs like Firewise USA(r) and the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network. These programs teach WUI residents how to lower wildfire risk to their homes and support community mitigation activities. Therefore, NFPA supports funding the State Fire Assistance program at $88.5 million and the Volunteer Fire Assistance program at $20 million.

MITIGATION FOR COMMUNITIES

The National Cohesive Strategy also identifies the need for fire adapted communities—communities where homes and businesses are retrofitted to resist ignition and wildfire safety codes, standards, and land use planning practices are applied.

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[1] See e.g., Schultz, Courtney, et al. (2017) Strategies for Success Under Forest Service Restoration Initiatives, Ecosystem Workforce Working Paper, Number 81 (https://tinyurl.com/38b3cpz4)

[2] National Fire Protection Association (2016) Fourth National Needs Assessment, https://www.nfpa.org/News-and-Research/Data-research-and-tools/Emergency-Responders/Needs-assessment, (Eighty-eight percent of U.S. fire departments-some 23,000 departments—provide wildland and/or WUI firefighting services, but 63 percent of those have not formally trained all of their personnel involved in wildland firefighting on these skills. Only 32 percent have all of their responders equipped with appropriate personal protection equipment (PPE), and 26 percent do not have any of the necessary PPE at all. Only 27 percent of departments have a health and fitness program).

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, the Nation has over 70,000 thousand communities in areas at risk from wildfires, home to 46 million housing units. Preparing for wildfire through creating defensible space and home retrofits can greatly reduce the risk of loss. NFPA supports the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program and the Administration's proposal to add $540 million in new resources to programs tasked with helping communities undertake pre-disaster planning and make investments in resiliency. The USFS' Wildfire Hazard Severity Mapping for Communities program also supports community risk assessment and hazard mitigation planning and should continue. In addition, NFPA is also highly supportive of proposed efforts to improve resiliency and safety in HUD—assisted housing with an additional $800 million in new investments.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on Federal support for reducing wildfire risk to communities. NFPA strongly urges the Committee to support a robust budget for wildfire mitigation and we stand ready to provide any addition information that would be useful.

Sincerely,

L. Seth Statler
Director of Government Affairs
National Fire Protection Association

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL HUMANITIES ALLIANCE

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

On behalf of the National Humanities Alliance, with our more than 200 member organizations, I write to express strong support for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

OVERVIEW

For FY 2022, we respectfully urge the Subcommittee to fund the National Endowment for the Humanities at $201 million.

While we recognize the difficult choices that are before this Subcommittee, we believe that expanding the capacity of the NEH is essential at this moment in the nation's history when the humanities are so needed to 1) renew our civic and democratic culture; 2) advance racial equity by helping Americans understand diverse histories and cultures; and 3) rebuild the economy and revitalize communities.

The NEH has a clear track record of supporting programs that work towards these ends, and additional capacity is needed to ensure that these crucial goals are met around the country. With its current level of funding, the NEH is unable to fund many of the highly rated proposals it receives—in FY 2020, 1,605 applications with high ratings were not funded, amounting to a total of $184,789,512.

RENEWING OUR CIVIC AND DEMOCRATIC CULTURE

The NEH funds programs that can help rebuild our civic infrastructure by supporting history and civics education and providing opportunities for communities to come together to address difficult issues and build bridges across differences.

The NEH has taken the lead in revitalizing the teaching of civics, partnering with the Department of Education to fund The Roadmap to Educating for American Democracy. Released in March 2021 by iCivics, The Roadmap is the product of a collaboration of over 300 scholars, teachers, and parents with different political leanings. Rather than promising a national curriculum, the Roadmap proposes robust history and civics education structured around seven themes that can be integrated into K–12 education.

In addition, the NEH has long funded professional development programs for K–12 teachers that ensure that the U.S.'s diverse history is taught in primary and secondary classrooms. Programs such as The Most Southern Place on Earth and Stony the Road We Trod take deep dives into Civil Rights history and bring teachers into contact with activists, while programs like Teaching Native American History and The Battle of Little Bighorn and the Great Sioux War introduce teachers to Indigenous perspectives and tribal representatives. Muslim American History and Life and Religious Worlds of New York help teachers understand our nation's religious diversity. And The First Amendment and Twenty-First Century America emphasizes the ongoing life of our foundational documents. The National Humanities Alliance conducted a year—out follow-up survey of participants in 12 NEH funded pro-

fessional development programs that took place in 2019. Respondents were asked to reflect on their classroom practices during the 2020 school year. Eighty-three percent of respondents said they frequently or very frequently "challenge [their] students to think about our nation's history from alternative perspectives," and 73 percent said they "teach about historical events from the perspective of everyday people involved."

The NEH also supports National History Day, providing opportunities for high school students to engage in nuanced explorations of American history that build critical thinking skills and a robust understanding of how the past impacts the present. The NEH also supports conversation—based programs that help Americans build community and come together across differences. Dialogues on the Experience of War programs help veterans throughout the country process trauma, contextualize their experiences, and build supportive communities. One-hundred percent of respondents across 5 Dialogues programs surveyed by the National Humanities Alliance agreed the groups they took part in were "safe and supportive places for discussion" and reported a desire to "keep in touch with some of the people [they] met through the program."

ADVANCING RACIAL EQUITY BY HELPING AMERICANS UNDERSTAND DIVERSE HISTORIES AND CULTURES

NEH funding supports educators and community—based organizations in broadening understanding of our diverse histories, grappling with legacies of slavery and racism, and building connections and dialogue across difference.

The NEH has funded a wide range of community digitization projects that help build more inclusive archives. A Clemson University program invited descendants of the enslaved and convicted laborers who helped build the school to preserve their heritage, acknowledging these stories as foundational to the university's existence. In Seattle, a program run by the Korean American Historical Society led to the development of much—needed curricular materials on Korean American history and culture.

Research undertaken by the National Humanities Alliance indicates that these projects had immediate impacts on those who participated in them. In a survey of the Museum of Chinese in America's program (MOCA), 100 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt "a greater sense of belonging as a result of having a project focused on preserving my cultural heritage in my community." Participants from Georgia College and MOCA felt the workshop "[showed their community that they] have more in common."

NEH funding supports public programs that help communities grapple with and celebrate their complicated and diverse histories. The Mastheads, a humanities organization in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, offered a series of community conversations on the region's rich and diverse past, including a lecture from local historian Dr. Frances Jones-Sneed titled "Black Artists Who Found Their Voices in the Berkshires." In survey responses, 95 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed "the program enhanced [their] appreciation of Pittsfield's history." The International Storytelling Center in Jonesborough, Tennessee, hosted Freedom Stories: Unearthing the Black Heritage of Appalachia, a year-long virtual celebration of Appalachia's understudied Black history. In a preliminary report on the program, 90 percent of survey respondents agreed the program "helped [them] better understand the diversity of the Appalachian region," and 83 percent were motivated to "learn more about racial justice in Appalachia."

The NEH also offers essential support for minority—serving higher education institutions, providing humanities faculty powerful and much—needed opportunities to undertake research and develop new curricula, ultimately serving both students and the local community. The NEH's HBCU Cultural Heritage Stewardship program provides HBCUs with resources to protect, preserve, and leverage their historic campuses, buildings, and landscapes, ensuring these symbols of African American excellence and American achievement are preserved to inspire and educate future generations.

Additionally, an NEH grant to Tuskegee University is helping faculty integrate local literary history—including writing by Zora Neale Hurston, Ralph Ellison, and Albert Murray—into their classrooms. After taking courses that integrated faculty workshop content, 86 percent of student respondents to a National Humanities Alliance survey reported learning more about Tuskegee's local culture and/or literary history. One student wrote: "I gained a greater appreciation for the school I attend and the city it's in.[. . .] Great minds grew from this soil." NEH funding helped Vanguard University, a Hispanic Serving Institution, develop a summer bridge program themed around American history and culture. A survey of the program con-

ducted by the National Humanities Alliance demonstrated that it prepares students for success in their college career. At the end of the fall 2020 semester, 100 percent of respondents again agreed or strongly agreed they "know where to go to find resources on campus that will help [them] succeed (e.g., writing center)." Ninety percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed they are "confident reaching out to [their] professors for assistance/questions/advice when needed" and "feel comfortable going to [their] professors' office hours."

Finally, funding for documenting traditional cultures and endangered languages supports Indigenous people throughout the United States. Through the Dynamic Language Infrastructure-Documenting Endangered Languages program, a partnership with the National Science Foundation, NEH funding has preserved and made accessible languages spoken by Indigenous tribes, having a profound impact on their way of life. On the Olympic Peninsula, the creation of the Klallam Dictionary has made it possible for children to study the language in their schools. Most local Native American students take Klallam courses, and their collective GPA has risen since the dictionary was published in 2012. Preservation funding has helped Calista Education and Culture, a Native Alaskan organization, collect and publish historical narratives and traditional tales, at the same time preserving the voices of fluent Yup'ik speakers. Similarly, funding to Sealaska Heritage Institute helped the organization collect and publish Tlingit oral literature. Originally published in the 1990s, these collections are still being used in Tlingit language classrooms.

REBUILDING THE ECONOMY AND REVITALIZING COMMUNITIES

NEH funding catalyzes growth in local economies and connections within communities—exactly the work that is needed as we look to rebuild from the pandemic. Communities throughout the U.S. benefit today from past NEH investments that have built strong community institutions and stimulated local economies. NEH funding to the Dubuque County Historical Society in Iowa helped transform the institution into the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium, which contributed about $10.5 million per year to the local economy prior to the pandemic. In Rabun Gap, Georgia, the NEH helped establish the Foxfire Museum & Heritage Center, an Appalachian cultural institution renowned for its New York Times bestselling anthologies that today serves as a local cultural hub and tourist site while providing educational opportunities for students in the rural area. A more recent NEH grant to the Community Library Association in Ketchum, Idaho, is helping build community around Ernest Hemingway's legacy, encouraging locals to reflect on their heritage and providing internships for students, in addition to preserving Hemingway's home. And in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, NEH funding is similarly building community around local cultural heritage by supporting The Mastheads' summer programs. In a 2019 survey of these programs conducted by the National Humanities Alliance, 97 percent of respondents felt that participating in them enhanced their sense of connection to Pittsfield.

CONCLUSION

We recognize that Congress faces difficult choices in allocating funds in this and coming years. Humanities educators and organizations have so much to offer communities across the country at this pivotal moment in our history, and robust investment in the NEH is essential to ensure that they have the capacity to do so. Thank you for your consideration of our request and for your past and continued support for the humanities.

Founded in 1981, the National Humanities Alliance advances national humanities policy in the areas of research, preservation, public programming, and teaching. More than 200 organizations are members of NHA, including scholarly associations, humanities research centers, colleges, universities, and organizations of museums, libraries, historical societies, humanities councils, and higher education institutions.

[This statement was submitted by Stephen Kidd, Executive Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA). Founded in 1919, NPCA is the leading national, independent voice for protecting and enhancing America's National Park System for present and future generations. We appreciate the opportunity to provide

our views regarding the FY22 National Park Service (NPS) budget. Our requests this fiscal year are:

1. $2,974,029,000 for the Operation of the National Park System ($295,042,000 above FY21 and equal to the president's budget request);
2. $32,200,000 for Cultural Resource Project funds and support ($5,000,000 above FY21 and above the president's budget request; and
3. $32,889,000 for the Heritage Partnership Program ($9,000,000 above FY21 and $10,641,000 above the president's request)

NPCA's highest priority remains funding for the Operation of the National Park System (ONPS). We commend the appropriated increases in this account in recent years, including the $111 million increase the subcommittees provided in FY21. These funds are critical to help parks recover from years of underfunding. Unfortunately, NPS is still struggling with insufficient staff and other operating needs due to the impact of uncontrollable fixed costs compounded by record visitation increases. Between 2011 and 2019, the park service lost 16% of its staff while at the same time struggling to accommodate a 17% increase in visitation. The FY21 increase helped restore staffing, but as the president's budget notes, much work remains to be done to bring these levels up further. Staffing for our national parks is creating major challenges for park superintendents who are struggling with reduced spending power and who are unable to fill lapsed positions.

Park superintendents regularly report challenges resulting from understaffing and that these constraints are compounded by often double-—digit percentage increases in visitation. Staff commonly cover multiple corollary duties. It is not uncommon to have, for example, interpretive staff addressing increased restroom use or law enforcement assisting with parking cars. As a result, other needs go unaddressed. Natural and cultural resource protection, research and monitoring, programming, and other services central to parks meeting their mission go unaddressed or are delayed indefinitely.

Unfortunately, the surge in visitation we are already witnessing this summer may be a bellwether of times to come as superintendents scramble to cover basic needs while ensuring the safety and basic needs of long lines of visitors. A robust FY22 increase in operations funding is needed to help with these and other pressing needs.

We commend the administration's recognition of parks' operating needs in its budget, as well as the focus on racial justice and climate change. Additional operations funding are needed to help with these issues.

Restoring thousands of lapsed positions is an opportunity to diversify NPS staffing. The vast majority of NPS staff, 83%, are white, a percentage significantly higher than other federal agencies, while more than three in five are men. The lack of ethnic and racial diversity among park staff is cited as one reason that people of color comprise a disproportionately low percentage of park visitors. For example, only 2% of national park visitors are African American. Bringing rangers back to our parks, and ensuring a diverse and inclusive workforce while doing so, can help make all Americans feel welcome in their parks.

Funding can also help increase HR capacity to address diversity issues, from connecting with academia and other sources to cultivate a pipeline of talented career recruits, to ensuring the ubiquity of diversity training and related resources that are needed to enhance retention. An infusion of operations funding can also expand community outreach and improve the relevance of park programming. Investments can support outreach to underrepresented communities; field trips and ranger programs, including virtually; and IT needs such as distance learning. These can be complimented by multilingual signage and programming and other culturally relevant efforts that make parks accessible and relevant to all. We encourage report language encouraging NPS to use a robust operations increase to diversify its personnel.

Investing in park operations can also assist NPS with needs related to climate change adaptation, resiliency and mitigation. Our national parks are on the front lines of climate change, between storm surges, wildfire risks, and threatened wildlife habitat and irreplaceable cultural sites. Helping our parks adapt to a changing climate requires funding. These investments can be made across diverse subaccounts within park operations, including Cultural and Natural Resource Stewardship. Accordingly, we are enthusiastic supporters of and urge support for the proposed $211.3 million increase for Resource Stewardship. We recognize the urgent need for these natural resource stewardship investments as outlined below. However, we also respectfully encourage the subcommittee to consider providing increases for cultural resource stewardship and to examine those needs more carefully in FY23.

Among other climate—related needs, funding is vital to relocate facilities threatened by erosion and storm surges, combat invasive species, address catastrophic wildfires, provide critical air and water quality monitoring and otherwise inventory and monitor cultural and natural resources to identify threats and develop adaptive management strategies. NPCA is particularly invested in the need for improved air monitoring and staffing. An investment of $3.3 million is needed for NPS monitoring repair, replacement, or upgrades, and $2.6 million is needed annually for operation/maintenance and personnel. We note that the Climate Conservation Corps concept offers an opportunity to address many needed repair, resiliency, and mitigation projects on park lands and importantly, adjacent landscapes that share wildlife habitat and watersheds. We commend and support the administration's proposal for $45 million for this program in FY22. NPCA is an enthusiast of this concept, which, in addition to supporting these climate—related needs, offers to train a diverse workforce that can steward our parks and public lands in the future.

Increased park operations can also support infrastructure investments that take into consideration adaptation, resiliency and mitigation. Park maintenance increases should not just be limited to those through the Great American Outdoors Act. Supporting cyclic maintenance, repair and rehabilitation can help keep the deferred maintenance backlog from growing.

Secondly, Cultural Resource Projects and support funds need support with a $5 million increase, a modest sum with the potential for large rewards in protecting our heritage. Within the Cultural Resources Stewardship program, Cultural Resource Project funds are used to complete the National Park System's highest priority cultural resource management projects. These projects are beyond the funding capabilities of the parks themselves, and are designed to preserve, protect and provide information about the diverse array of NPS's cultural resources. Funds from this program is used by the National Park Service to fulfill its Section 110 (National Historic Preservation Act) obligations. Those obligations include 1) ensuring historic preservation responsibilities are fully integrated into all federal agencies; 2) supporting programs and initiatives that advance the goals of the NHPA; 3) Engaging more diverse communities in historic preservation; and 4) ensuring that historic properties are protected and that new projects do not unnecessarily damage historic properties.

Cultural Resource Project Funds have been used in seven NPS regions (including Alaska) to document, preserve, and interpret African American history. An increase of $5 million within the Cultural Resources Stewardship program directed towards Cultural Resources Project Funding would allow for that critical work to continue and to be expanded to other traditionally underrepresented groups including Asian Pacific Americans, Latinos, and American Indians. The project funds and support have been flat funded at $27.5 million since 2016 and warrant a modest $5 million increase to $32,200,000.

A third NPCA priority is our request $32.9 million for the Heritage Partnership Program, which supports National Heritage Areas (NHAs) in dozens of communities throughout the country. The 55 National Heritage Areas are strong examples of truly effective public—private partnerships established in support of conservation and preservation values. Heritage areas allow local experts to better protect and interpret stories and resources that are both regionally distinct and nationally significant. The federal funding NHAs receive must be matched dollar for dollar with money from a non-federal source. On average most heritage areas are generating a five to one return on their federal investment making them one of the most cost-effective programs ever managed by NPS. That money is used to provide grants to local partners who manage a variety of local and regional programming.

The funding level for the Heritage Partnership Program in FY21 was $23 million. We are disappointed with the president's budget request for a cut to this important program. Members of the Alliance of National Heritage Areas, a coalition of NHA managers and executive directors, have concluded their program should be funded at a level where each heritage area receives $500,000 in federal funding per year. With 55 NHAs currently designated a budget of $32 million would allow for each to receive $500,000 (after meeting NPS guidelines and performance benchmarks) while providing additional funds to support new heritage areas as well as NPS management and staffing needs.

NPCA worked for years with partners and park champions in Congress to secure introduction of the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) and its predecessor bills, and final passage. It was an historic victory for our national parks. Therefore, we were alarmed that the previous administration sought to undermine the program in numerous ways, in particular undermining the Land and Water Conservation Fund and related programs. We were relieved that this subcommittee and its House counterpart rejected those efforts and provided extensive implementation instruc-

tions to NPS to ensure transparency and accountability, and to provide a broader sense of federal land acquisition opportunities. We were also pleased that both the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and the Legacy Restoration Fund (LRF) were eligible for Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) and encourage these accounts to be eligible in FY23 and future years.

We encourage the committee to continue engaging with the new administration to ensure transparency and accountability in GAOA implementation. We hope that you can work with them to ensure next year's budget provides supplemental lists for both the LWCF and LRF, which would offer numerous benefits including allowing members of Congress, public interest groups, and the broader public to see the many park units that can benefit from these investments in future years as well as enable rank and file members to pursue CDS for both LWCF and LRF projects.

As members of the committee know, investing in our national parks is a wise investment. National parks deliver robust economic returns, with $10 in economic benefits for every dollar invested in the NPS. In 2019, 328 million park visitors spent an estimated $21.0 billion in local gateway communities when visiting NPS sites. This spending supported a total of 341 thousand jobs, $14.1 billion in labor income, $24.3 billion in value added, and $41.7 billion in economic output in the national economy.

We should briefly note our commitment to other programs and agencies. Endangered Species Act funding is also needed, and we appreciate recent investments to provide for these needs. We urge the committee to continue to make significant investments in the protection and recovery of our most vulnerable species, including fish, wildlife and plants in our national parks. The health and long-term protection of our national parks is also contingent on continuing strong investments in critical watershed protection and restoration programs. NPCA strongly supports Environmental Protection Agency and USFWS programs that restore watersheds essential to the wetlands, rivers, streams, and bays that flow in and around our parks. We applaud the committee for its past commitment and urge its continued support for the efforts of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, the Chesapeake Bay Program, Delaware River Restoration Program and the South Florida Program.

In conclusion, we hope that the committee's new leadership and membership and the administration's commitment to our national parks, communities and the broader environment, coupled with the expiration of the Budget Control Act of 2011, can be an opportunity for increased investments. We look forward to communicating with you as the FY22 process moves forward. We appreciate your attention to our views and thank you again for the opportunity to submit testimony.

[This statement was submitted by John Garder, Senior Director of Budget and Appropriations.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL TRIBAL CONTRACT SUPPORT COST COALITION

My name is Lloyd Miller and I serve as legal counsel to the National Tribal Contract Support Cost Coalition. The Coalition is a voluntary organization of 20 Tribes and inter—tribal organizations across 11 States. Collectively, these tribal organizations operate over $500 million in IHS and BIA contracted programs on behalf of over 250 Native American Tribes. I am pleased to submit this written testimony for the Coalition to address fiscal year 2022 contract support cost issues in the Indian Health Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs budgets.[1]

The Coalition was launched in 1996 to press Congress and the agencies to honor the Government's legal obligation to add contract support cost funding to every contract and compact awarded under the Indian Self-Determination Act. During the same period, tribal members of the Coalition carried on massive litigation—pressing multiple cases that eventually resulted in two Supreme Court decisions cementing the federal government's duty to pay these costs in full.[2]

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[1] The Coalition members are the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (AK), Arctic Slope Native Association (AK), Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes (AK), Cherokee Nation (OK), Chickasaw Nation (OK), Choctaw Nation (OK), Citizen Potawatomi Nation (OK), Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (MT), Copper River Native Association (AK), Forest County Potawatomi Community (WI), Kodiak Area Native Association (AK), Little River Band of Ottawa Indians (MI), Muscogee (Creek) Nation (OK), Pueblo of Zuni (NM), Riverside-San Bernardino County Indian Health (CA), Shoshone Bannock Tribes (ID), Shoshone-Paiute Tribes (ID, NV), Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (AK), Spirit Lake Tribe (ND), Tanana Chiefs Conference (AK), Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (AK), and Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (43 Tribes in ID, WA, OR).

[2] See Cherokee Nation v. Leavitt (2005) and Salazar v. Ramah Navajo Chapter (2012).

Ultimately, Treasury ended up paying some $2 billion in damages to the Tribes for broken contract promises, some stretching back 20 years.

Adjusting to the legal regime in the wake of the Cherokee and Ramah cases wasn't easy. Initially the agencies tried to roll back the Tribes' courtroom victories by pushing for destructive appropriations riders. In FY 2014, their failure to work with this Committee led IHS to undertake a massive reprogramming of agency funds to meet current year contract obligations. But after that unfortunate experience, the House and Senate appropriations committees worked closely and creatively with the Tribes and OMB to develop and later refine a new and uncapped appropriation to address contract support cost requirements. Today, the risk of insufficient appropriations to pay the Tribes is gone, and for that we thank this Committee.

MANDATORY APPROPRIATIONS.

The Committee's solution in FY 2015 was creative: it included an indefinite and mandatory appropriation within a fixed discretionary appropriation to cover a legal obligation of unknown amount. The more natural solution would have been to move contact support cost payments to the mandatory side of the budget. But, doing so was deemed a potentially insurmountable undertaking as compared to the solution we have today. That said, the presence within the IHS and BIA appropriations of an indefinite appropriation to pay a mandatory obligation of unknown amount has produced its own challenges for the Administration and for this Committee.

Given these realities (and as we first proposed to this Committee in 2013), today we renew our request that mandatory IHS and BIA contract support cost payments be moved to the mandatory side of the budget. Among other means of accomplishing this goal, the Coalition continues to support the enactment of legislation establishing a permanent and indefinite appropriation for contract support cost payments.

And since 105(l) leasing obligations are similarly mandatory obligations, we further recommend that IHS and BIA section 105(l) leasing obligations likewise be moved to the mandatory side of the budget.

PAYMENT DELAYS AND UNDERPAYMENTS.

The BIA and the Office of Self-Governance seem structurally incapable of making timely payments to the Tribes. Although delays in regular contract payments are rampant, delays are especially severe when it comes to contract support costs. Government contractors are routinely paid on a timely basis. Yet, tribal governments are left to wait months, even years, before they receive their payments. Today, almost seven months into the new fiscal year, the BIA and OSG have still not paid many Tribes—and possibly not paid most Tribes—any contract support cost amounts to operate their FY 2021 contracts and compacts.

This is unacceptable.

Worse yet, the BIA and OSG have still not paid many Tribes in full for FY 2020, and in some cases for FY 2019-even though indefinite appropriations are legally available to pay these obligations. At issue are substantial portions of the Tribes' CSC obligations, and not mere post-year reconciliations.

The Coalition respectfully asks this Committee to charter a task force to develop regulatory and legislative solutions to these persistent BIA and OSG payment problems. Interior should also be required to promptly report in writing to this Committee (and to the Tribes) on the status of the BIA's and OSG's FY 2020 and FY 2021 payment obligations to the Tribes.

AGENCY FAILURES TO REPORT TO CONGRESS

It has been years since the BIA honored Congress's directive for an annual written report on contract support cost obligations. This is so, even though the annual reporting mandate is unmistakable in Section 105(c) of the Act: "Not later than May 15 of each year, the Secretary shall prepare and submit to Congress an annual report . . . . " See 25 U.S.C. § 5325(c).

For IHS, the problem is delay. Although annual reporting is mandatory, not until May 2019 did IHS submit its reports to Congress for fiscal years 2016 and 2017 (posting them that month on its website). The IHS report for fiscal year 2018 was more timely, but still posted 19 months after the May 2018 statutory deadline (in November 2019). IHS has still to release its FY 2019 shortfall report.

Annual contract support cost reports are vital not just for Congress but for the Tribes too. After all, CSC dollars are obligations to the Tribes—they are not appropriated for agency programs. Only by seeing these reports can the Tribes learn how each agency is managing this important account. In the past, reports have often dis-

closed errors in tribal payments (sometimes also leading to corrective action). These reports have also revealed systemic agency shortcomings, such as inconsistent practices across Areas or Regions, as well as inconsistent practices between contracting and compacting Tribes. Transparency and regular reporting are essential for self-governance to succeed and to honor the agencies' government-to-government obligations to the Tribes. If Congress and the Tribes are to have effective oversight over one billion dollars in contract support cost appropriations, timely reports are essential.

The Coalition respectfully requests that the Committee direct the BIA to promptly provide FY 2017 and FY 2018 reports to Congress and the Tribes; that the Committee direct that IHS and the BIA expedite the preparation of their FY 2019 reports (due last May) and provide a written explanation of any systemic obstacles that prevent timely reporting to Congress and the Tribes; and that the agencies timely honor their statutory reporting duties for FY 2020 and future years.

The Coalition also respectfully requests that the agencies be required on a semi-annual basis to update their reports for specific fiscal years, because both agencies continue making payment adjustments for up to 5 years.

Indian Health Service CSC Payments on Substance Abuse and Suicide Prevention (SASP), Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative (DVPI) and Related Appropriations Accounts.

Prior to FY 2012, IHS transferred these accounts to Tribes through their compacts and contracts. CSC requirements were calculated and reported to Congress (though for the most part IHS failed to pay them). But ironically, just months after the Supreme Court Ramah decision in 2012 confirmed that payment was mandatory, IHS reversed course and demanded new grant instruments for these funds.

Today, Tribes must cut into very limited program accounts to cover program administration costs (such as accounting, hiring, facility and auditing costs). Tribes continue to struggle with the Nation's highest rates of substance abuse, domestic violence, opioid addiction, methamphetamine addiction and suicide than the general population, so it is essential that they receive necessary CSC funding so that scarce program funds are not diminished to cover unavoidable administrative costs.

Further, employing unnecessary grant instruments and grant reporting conditions and the like simply perpetuates a whole agency grant administration bureaucracy. This can be avoided (or at least diminished) by placing these accounts into tribal contracts and compacts.

Three years ago, the Committees pressed IHS to return to the prior practice of transferring these and similar funds through compacts and contracts.[3] IHS eventually launched—but then stalled—a tribal consultation process to explore the issue. In December 2019, the Committees directed IHS to complete the process by the end of March 2020.[4] Yet despite all the consultation, nothing ever happened. Nothing ever changed.

Since IHS has failed to act and to reform the process for awarding these accounts, the Coalition respectfully requests that the Committee add bill language for 2022 mandating the transfer of these accounts to Tribes though their contracts and compacts.

TRIBAL CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Both agencies are required to meet annually with the Tribes under the auspices of each agency's Contract Support Cost Work Group. The BIA recently convened a very brief meeting, while the IHS has failed to reconvene its workgroup for a full agenda since March 2018.

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[3] See 164 Cong. Rec. at H2629 (daily ed.) (Mar. 22, 2018) (Joint Explanatory Statement to the FY 2018 Appropriations Act) ("ISDEAA Contracts.-The Committees encourage the transfer of amounts provided to tribal organizations for the Substance Abuse and Suicide Prevention Program, for the Domestic Violence Prevention Program, for the Zero Suicide Initiative, for aftercare pilots at Youth Regional Treatment Centers, and to improve collections from public and private insurance at tribally—operated facilities to such organizations through Indian Self-Determination Act compacts and contracts, and not through separate grant instruments. This will ensure that associated administrative costs will be covered through the contract support cost process.")

[4] 165 Cong. Rec. H10316, H11295 (daily ed. Dec 17, 2019) (Managers' Explanatory Report on H.R. 1865, the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020) ("IHS is finishing Tribal consultation for the substance abuse, suicide prevention, and domestic violence funding and the Service is urged to complete this phase of the process within 90 days of the date of enactment of this Act so that funds can be distributed expeditiously.")

As with reporting, active engagement and consultation is essential for an effective and open government-to-government relationship. It is also essential for identifying problems and developing collaborative tribal—federal solutions.

The Coalition therefore respectfully requests that the Committee direct IHS and the BIA to convene their respective CSC Work Groups on an annual basis, as mandated by each agency's Manual.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony on behalf of the National Tribal Contract Support Cost Coalition.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee, I appreciate this opportunity to present the National Trust for Historic Preservation's recommendations for Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations. My name is Shaw Sprague, and I am the Vice President of Government Relations. The National Trust is a privately funded nonprofit organization chartered by Congress in 1949. We work to save America's historic places to enrich our future.

Thank you for the FY 2021 Interior Appropriations bill—it surpassed the FY 2021 bill to become the most preservation friendly appropriations bill to date. We look forward to continuing our work with this Subcommittee as you address the ongoing need for investment to sustain our nation's rich heritage of cultural and historic resources that generates lasting economic and civic vitality for communities throughout the nation. In addition to this testimony, we encourage you to review our report, "The Preservation Budget: Select Preservation Priorities for FY 2022 Appropriations," which includes more detailed information about the programs identified below, including funding levels over time and examples of program successes.

National Park Service.—Historic Preservation Fund. The Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) is the principal source of funding to implement the nation's preservation programs. The National Trust is enormously appreciative of the four successive, increased funding levels the Committee has provided to the HPF. We are encouraged also by President Biden's request of $151.8 million, the largest request ever by any Administration. HPF funding supports fundamental preservation activities such as survey, nomination of properties to the National Register of Historic Places, public education, and project reviews required for federal Historic Tax Credit (HTC) projects. The competitive grant programs within the HPF have seen remarkable growth and success over the last several appropriations cycles. We also appreciate the increases provided to state and tribal historic offices and note they continue to face significant unmet financial needs.

We respectfully request that Congress approve a total FY 2022 HPF appropriation equal to the President's request. We are challenged by supporting the President's budget, which was released after our preservation coalition agreed to funding requests totaling the authorized amount of $150 million. Accordingly, within the HPF we recommend:

—The President's request of $55.675 for State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) exceeds by $2 million the enacted level but is less than the $60 million we recommend;

—The President's historic request of $23 million for Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPO) less than the $24 million we aspire to;

—The President's request of $21.75 million is a historic request for African American Civil Rights grants, a program the Committee has consistently supported and enhanced with strong encouragement by the National Trust. Earlier our coalition had settled on a request of $19 million, which also exceeded enacted levels;

—We are gratified by the President's request of $3.375 million for the newly established "Equal Rights Grants," which confirms the Administration's support of the Committee's funding of grants for Civil Rights for All Americans in the past two appropriations bills. While we had hoped to see a $7 million appropriation for this well—received and impactful program, we appreciate the Committee's sustained commitment to ensuring the stories of all Americans are told and preserved;

—$10 million for grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities to preserve and rehabilitate historic buildings;

—We were pleased to see the President's request of $25 million for Save America's Treasures grants, equal to enacted. The National Trust has a long supported this program, and we are gratified by the President's strong request. Working

within the constraints of the authorized level of funding, our coalition has requested $20 million;

—The National Trust is also a strong supporter of the Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization grants and appreciates Senator Leahy's leadership in creating this impactful program, which has demonstrated a national reach for main street revitalization. Again, we are gratified by the President's request of $10 million which exceeds our coalition request of $9 million; and

—$1 million for grants for the survey and nomination of properties associated with communities currently underrepresented on the National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks; an important start to diversifying our historic record.

National Park Service: Operation of the National Park System.—The National Park Service (NPS) is responsible for 423 units of the National Park System ranging from the battlefields where our ancestors fought and died to recent additions like the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument, the Reconstruction Era National Monument and the Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument. We encourage the Committee to provide funding above the $2.688 billion from FY 2021 to maintain NPS operations, ensure stewardship of historic and cultural resources, and prevent reductions in visitor services. Within this funding, we strongly support the Administration's request of $5.375 million for the African American Civil Rights Network and $1.243 million for the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom. We recommend $1 million for the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network and that some of these funds be made available for grants to Network sites.

National Park Service: Deferred Maintenance.—The NPS is responsible for maintaining a system comprised of more than 85 million acres that tells the stories of remarkable people and events in our country's history. Unfortunately, after over 100 years of operation and inconsistent public funding, the National Park System faces a deferred maintenance backlog estimated at nearly $12 billion, of which 47% is attributed to historic assets. Deferred maintenance in our national parks puts historic and cultural sites at risk of permanent damage or loss, and in the absence of funding, the condition of these assets will continue to deteriorate and become more expensive to repair and preserve in the future. The National Trust was deeply engaged in advocacy for the Great American Outdoors Act, and we look forward to the historic levels of dedicated funding Congress has committed to address these issues. We also recommend sustained increases for specific line items to ensure the maintenance backlog continues to decrease.

—Construction. We support the President's request of $146.7 million for Line Item Construction, an increase over FY 21 enacted levels.

—Repair and Rehabilitation; Cyclic Maintenance. We are enormously appreciative of the Committee's sustained commitment to enhancing these accounts with significant investments since FY 2016. We recommend an increase to $150 million for Repair and Rehabilitation, an increase of $14 million above FY 2021 enacted and $205 million for Cyclic Maintenance, an increase of $11.8 million above 2021 enacted. The Administration has requested level funding for these programs.

—Leasing Historic Structures in National Parks. We appreciate the Committee's long—standing and strong support of expanded use of historic leasing authorities by the NPS. Leasing is a well—established tool that can bring non-federal resources to the rehabilitation and more active use of under—utilized or abandoned buildings within the parks. The NPS continues to be slow to advance a successful national leasing program. We are hopeful that will change and would like to work with the Committee to avoid missing future opportunities to bring unused or underperforming buildings into greater public use.

National Park Service: Cultural Programs.—Within its cultural programs, the NPS manages the National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks, certifies federal HTC projects, coordinates federal archaeology programs, and provides funding through the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act Grants, Japanese American Confinement Sites Grants, and American Battlefield Protection Program Assistance Grants. The National Trust recommends $35 million in FY 2022, an increase of $3.06 million from FY 2021 and roughly $1.6 million more than the request. Additional increases in this account will enhance modernization of the National Register and support sustained demands to review and approve federal HTC projects. We also want to express our enormous appreciation of this Committee's strong objections to the Trump Administration's proposal to drastically change NPS regulations guiding the National Register process.

National Park Service: International Park Affairs, Office of International Affairs.—The National Trust recommends $2.1 million for the Office of International Affairs to ensure engagement in the World Heritage Program and support for the dozens of communities and sites across the country seeking nomination to the World Heritage List. Our request exceeds enacted by $176K, and the Administration's request by $175K. This office is responsible for selecting sites for the World Heritage Tentative List and shepherding them through the detailed nomination process. Examples of pending sites include Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks (Ohio) and Civil Rights Movement Sites (Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi).

National Park Service: National Heritage Areas.—We recommend $32 million for the Heritage Partnership Program and National Heritage Areas (NHAs). This funding would provide $500,000 for each of the 55 individual NHAs in 34 states, as well as NPS administrative support for coordination, guidance, assistance, and training. It represents an increase of $8.1 million over enacted and roughly $9.75 million more than the Administration's request.

Bureau of Land Management: Cultural Resources Management.—The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) oversees the largest, most diverse and scientifically important collection of historic and cultural resources on our nation's public lands. We deeply appreciate the Committee's commitment to oversight of the Trump Administration's reorganization of the agency. The National Trust and many other organizations are very concerned with the impact of the reorganization and loss of staff within the Cultural Resources Division.

We are very appreciative of the Committee's support in FY 2020 of a dedicated increase of $1.5 million, and $1 million in FY 2021, for the agency to enhance its National Cultural Resources Information Management System (NCRIMS). This collaboration with state historic preservation offices is one of the nation's most innovative programs to support predictive modeling and data analysis to enhance planning for large—scale, cross—jurisdictional land—use projects. We enthusiastically support the Administration's request of $21.693 million. This is a significant and too 0ften overlooked preservation success story.

Bureau of Land Management: National Landscape Conservation System.—The BLM's National Landscape Conservation System (National Conservation Lands) includes approximately 37 million acres of congressionally and presidentially designated lands. In 2019, new congressional designations added approximately 1.25 million acres to the system. We encourage the Committee to support the Administration's proposal of $67.674 million to sharply increase the system's base program. This would provide a slight increase of funding for this program over its FY 2006 level. An increase in funding will allow for greater inventory and monitoring of cultural resources in this growing system, prevent damage to the resources found in these areas, ensure proper management, and provide for a quality visitor experience.

Department-Wide: Land and Water Conservation Fund.—The National Trust has long supported robust funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and we look forward to the Committee's role in implementing full dedicated funding for the LWCF. Many of the nation's most significant historic and cultural places have been permanently protected through LWCF investments, including Martin Luther King Jr. National Historical Park, Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, and Dayton Aviation National Historical Park. Recent LWCF funding will benefit historic parks including Ocmuglee Mounds National Historical Park, River Raisin National Battlefield Park, Lewis and Clark National Historical Park and William Howard Taft National Historic Site. In total, more than $550 million has been invested to acquire historic sites and 137,000 acres in 162 NPS units.

Independent Agencies: National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities.—We urge the Committee to approve the President's request of $201 million for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and request consideration of $225 million for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). NEA and NEH funding is critical to communities around the country. It has also supported efforts by the National Trust's Historic Sites and others to tell a fuller American story and engage visitors with history in compelling ways. For example, support from the NEA has created programs like Art and Shadows at the Shadows-on-the-Teche in Louisiana, which put regionally—based artists in residence at the site, resulting in programming that attracted new audiences and brought people from around the country to the town's downtown commercial district. NEH support has brought teachers from around the country to learn about history in the places that it was made and to carry those experiences back to their classrooms, including exploring the Constitution at James Madison's Montpelier and discovering the rich, but largely unknown, African American history in the President's neighborhood at Decatur House.

Independent Agencies: Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.—We recommend $8 million million for the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), an increase of $825,000 over enacted. The increase would enhance the ACHP's performance of its essential roles in ensuring that the nation's historic and cultural resources are protected while also advancing timely delivery of major infrastructure projects and improving consultation with Indian Tribes. The increase would also support the ACHPs efforts to promote enhanced mapping and digitization of cultural resources.

Thank you for considering our testimony. We stand ready to assist the Committee in support of our recommendations.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE ASSOCIATION

Chairwoman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to submit testimony on behalf of the National Wildlife Refuge Association. The Refuge Association and its coalition of representatives from Refuge Friends organizations and concerned citizens thank you for your support for the National Wildlife Refuge System, and we request an increase in funding for Refuge System Operations and Maintenance to $600 million in FY2022.

The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge Association is to protect, promote, and enhance the National Wildlife Refuge System. We work closely with System staff in Headquarters, regional offices, and on refuges themselves. We talk to them about their projects, and what they need to do their jobs. And the overwhelming response is: we need more staff, and we need more funding.

Wildlife refuges are economic engines for their communities, yet the biggest challenge facing the Refuge System is a lack of funding. Each refuge requires tailored management to protect its rich and diverse wildlife habitat but faces a stark lack of staff. Since FY2010, when the budget was the same ($503m) as it is today in FY2021, 3,500 staffers worked to maintain and protect the Refuge System. Today, that number is under 2,500, an enormous 30% loss in capacity.

Due to years of low budget allocations, the funding gap has degraded critical wildlife habitat and imperiled important species. The number of wage grade staff have declined by 50% in the last 20 years to a level of just 500. These folks move the water, maintain the roads, and support all the infrastructure involved in refuge management. Without them, roads are not repaired, wetlands do not receive the necessary water to grow food for migratory birds, weed management is neglected, buildings fall into disrepair. The nuts and bolts for refuge management are lacking.

For years, the Refuge Association has advocated for increases to various pots of money within the Refuge System budget: law enforcement, invasive species, urban funding, etc. This year, however, as we speak with regional staff, we hear an escalating urgency to their cries for help.

It's not just that law enforcement staff levels are low—entire species are declining because there are not enough LE staffers present on refuges to prevent human disturbances.

—250 law enforcement officers cover 850 million acres of land and water. Even excluding the water acres, each federal wildlife officer covers, on average, 400,000 acres. In many cases, one officer alone is responsible for an entire state, with their refuge units hours away from each other.

It's not just that wage—grade staffing levels are low—it is impossible to keep up with the work. At the Mid-Columbia Refuge Complex in central Oregon, invasive species have hammered the sagebrush habitat that sagebrush lizards depend on. The refuge complex was able to get help to clear invasive species from a small section of the refuge, resulting in a return of the lizards. But without additional staff, they cannot replicate this work anywhere else. For example, one of the refuges in the complex, Columbia NWR, previously had 13 staff, and they now have one.

—500 wage grade staffers across the System are responsible for 200,000 acres on average. But this doesn't tell the entire story. Desert NWR in southern Nevada, for example, is 1.6 million acres, and has zero wage grade staff. Invasive species projects are huge undertakings, and require multiple staff working together.

And it's not just that invasives funding is inadequate—current funding of $11 million is just a drop in the bucket. Kudzu is taking over the southeast, phragmites are everywhere on refuges, mice are decimating seabirds at Midway Atoll, feral hogs are destroying habitat on a number of refuges, and cheatgrass dominates 100 million acres in the Great Basin (not all of these acres are refuge lands).

—2.4 million Refuge System acres are infested with invasive plants, and current funding and capacity only allows treatment of 10% of those acres. Similarly, the

Refuge System has 1,749 invasive animal populations and currently controls 5.3% of those.

The National Wildlife Refuge System is the largest system of public lands set aside for wildlife conservation in the entire world. Nothing like the System exists anywhere else. The United States has a professional workforce of biologists, wetlands managers, foresters, wildlife officers, and many others who are trained to manage these lands. We are squandering this opportunity to manage this System of biologically critical habitat for the future while allowing a lack of management to overwhelm the staff, who care deeply about their jobs and this land.

So what have we lost? 1,000 professional staff members in 10 years. $100 million in capacity in 11 years. Shorebird populations are down 40% in 40 years. There are 715 listed animal species under the Endangered Species Act, and 942 listed plant species. Pronghorn habitat has been bisected in the southwest from border wall construction. Law enforcement capacity is so low that officers can be 1.5–2 hours away when an issue arises on a refuge, leaving refuges wide open to the tragedy of the commons.

We are past the point of needing incremental funding increases for the Refuge System. A dramatic increase to $600 million is essential in FY2022. We realize that funding caps are lower than ideal, but the System is desperately in need and the Fish and Wildlife Service has been decimated through years of under funding.

And in the words of one refuge supervisor: "We are going down with the ship."

There are, of course, huge success stories as well. The urban program is incredibly promising and a huge priority for the Refuge Association and the Refuge System. With six designated priority urban refuges (San Diego, Tualatin, John Heinz, Valle de Oro, Minnesota Valley, and Detroit River), staff at these refuges have the resources to build community partnerships, bring local kids and families out to see wildlife habitat and watch the critters who live there, and teach the community about nature not far from their own homes.

Although the mouse eradication project at Midway Atoll has been sidelined due to COVID–19, that project promises to eliminate the mice infestation that is decimating the seabird populations on the atoll. Partnerships are ready to go when it is safe, and we anticipate the success of this project, due to the isolation of the atoll and the limited geographic scope. Invasives projects in the Lower 48 are not so lucky, with invasive plants (salt cedar, phragmites, reed canary, cheatgrass, etc.) so entrenched that they are almost impossible to fully eradicate. Ongoing funding and staff to keep pace with invasives is desperately needed.

FY2022 FUNDING VERSUS FULL FUNDING

The Refuge Association is asking for funding of $600 million in FY2022, but the real need long term is closer to $1 billion. Current funding is roughly half that. Refuges have traditionally been havens for wildlife, and closed off to most visitors. But times have changed, and people are flocking to the Refuge System-59 million in FY2019, and we know there was a huge boom in visitors during COVID–19 lockdowns. Friends Group membership is up, and they are more engaged than ever and advocating on behalf of their local refuge. Urban partnerships are exploding, and the demand for visitor services is intense. All refuges should be staffed with a refuge manager, biologists, wage grade staff, and visitor services staff, plus any specialists needed, such as foresters at Umbagog NWR in Maine.

We know that a mere $503 million in O&M funding leads to a Refuge System that is quickly eroding in habitat maintenance, but also losing the ability to even keep refuges open. No refuge is fully staffed. More than half of refuges have zero staff on site. Many refuges are closed to the public and are completely unmanaged. Lewis and Clark NWR in Oregon, for example, is closed and unmanaged, despite thousands of scaup migrating through and an overall decline in the scaup population.

Looking to the future, it is critical that we invest in the Refuge System today. If this funding shortage continues for much longer, we will start to see a brain drain in professional capacity and refuges requiring millions of dollars in restoration work to restore lands that eroded during these times of lack of management.

The National Wildlife Refuge Association requests funding for Refuge System O&M at $600 million in FY2022. Room must be made in the budget for this expense, because without it, wildlife populations will continue to decline and habitat will erode.

EVERGLADES HEADWATERS NWR & KLAMATH NWRS-LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

EHWNR goals include the protection of 100,000 acres with conservation easements, which protect the land from development and conserve its wildlife and water

values while keeping the land in private ownership, privately managed (which reduces public costs), and on the tax rolls. An additional 50,000 acres will become (if protected) public conservation lands open to public recreational access, supported by the sportsmen's community.

EHWNR has 38 federally listed endangered species and is one of those rare refuges that can hit all of these refuge priorities: conserves or protects against threats to resources, protects ESA habitat, ecosystems, water, biodiversity, and cultural and historic resources, strengthens resilience to climate change impacts, has recreational access, benefits underserved or at-risk communities, and demonstrates strong local partner engagement and support.

The National Wildlife Refuge Association requests $20 million in LWCF funding for the Everglades Headwaters NWR in FY2022.

We also recommend an appropriation of $5 million in LWCF funding to move water to the six Klamath refuges in northern California and southern Oregon, to alleviate long-term water shortages on these refuges.

REFUGE FUND

The Refuge System uses net income derived from permits and timber harvests to make payments to local communities to offset property tax revenue lost when the federally—acquired lands are removed from local tax rolls. The System relies on Congressional appropriations to the Refuge Fund to compensate for the shortfall between revenues and tax replacement obligations. However, declining revenues and lack of appropriations have resulted in the Service paying less than 50% of its tax—offset obligations since 2001.

Reduced funding threatens the partnerships that are so important for successful conservation, and the negative impact on local communities is felt even more starkly in difficult economic times. We also ask that this Committee consider converting or rolling the Refuge Fund into the PILT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) program. Some refuge lands are included in PILT and others are included in the Refuge Fund. One funding mechanism for all refuge lands makes sense and would streamline the process of returning funds to local communities.

The Refuge Association requests $50 million for the Refuge Fund in FY2022.

PARTNERSHIPS—PARTNERS FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE PROGRAM

With 75% of all fish and wildlife species dependent upon private lands for their survival, the Partners Program is one of the most powerful tools for protecting wildlife where it lives. By building effective partnerships between public agencies and private landowners to conserve America's expansive working landscapes, the Partners Program has implemented nearly 29,000 restoration projects in the past twenty-five years, restoring over one million acres of wetlands, three million acres of uplands, and 11,000 miles of streams. The Partners Program leverages federal dollars, generating nearly $16 in economic return for every $1 appropriated for projects.

The Refuge Association and the landowner—led Partnerscapes request $75 million for FY2022. Such a funding level would be leveraged to result in an additional $400 million worth of conservation across the nation.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. We look forward to working with you to fund these important programs, and to bring the Refuge System back to a place where it can protect and grow our natural heritage for the 21st century.

[This statement was submitted by Caroline G. Brouwer, Vice President.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIVE VILLAGE OF EYAK

Recommendations:

1. Provide full funding and advance appropriations for the Indian Health Service
2. Increase funding and accepted applications for the Joint Venture Program
3. Ensure mandatory funding for Contract Support Costs and 105(l) lease payments
4. Fund Critical Infrastructure investments for the Indian health system
5. Increase funding and authorize a self-governance funding mechanism option for the Special Diabetes Program for Indians
6. Increase funding for Preventive Health programs.
7. Reduce dependence on competitive grants for Indian Country

Introduction

Thank you Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to share our funding priorities for the FY 2022

federal budget. My name is Mark Hoover and I serve as the Chairman of the Native Village of Eyak. The Native Village of Eyak is a federally recognized tribal government located in Cordova, Alaska, on the southeast shores of Prince William Sound in the North Gulf Coast. The Tribe is a co-signer to the Alaska Tribal Health Compact with the Indian Health Service (IHS) and operates a wide range of health care programs, including primary care services and behavioral health. The Tribe also has a self-governance compact under the ISDEAA with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Native Village of Eyak focuses on self-determination and self-governance as a means of improving the lives and health of our tribal citizens. We are not only responsible for providing quality, available health care services, but also for promoting opportunities and partnerships for our citizens, protecting our traditional land and natural resources, and for strengthening our culture.

We are grateful that IHS received over $9 billion supplementary appropriations to address the COVID–19 pandemic. Those resources have been critical to ensuring that we had the means to serve our patients and fight this terrible disease. The pandemic also gives us an opportunity to make real, sustained investments in the Indian health system. As we have seen with the remarkable distribution of the COVID–19 vaccine in Alaska and throughout Indian Country, when given adequate resources and when tribal sovereignty is honored, tribal communities demonstrate remarkable success. We believe now time to take the lessons learned from the COVID–19 pandemic—both positive and negative—to renew the Indian health system. Annual appropriations are essential to fulfilling the federal government's trust and treaty obligations by ensuring critical programs and services receive adequate funding to fulfill their intended purpose. Therefore, I offer the following recommendations for your consideration for FY 2022 appropriations for the IHS:

Provide Full Funding for the Indian Health Service.—We with support from the IHS, we strive to provide Alaska Natives and American Indians (AI/AN) with access to high quality and comprehensive medical services, no more so than during the ongoing pandemic. The Indian health system has navigated unimaginable hardships related to supplies, staffing levels, infrastructure and facilities, and high rates of underlying conditions in serving our people at this time.

The IHS Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup has calculated the need at $48 billion for full funding. To build toward enacting this change, in FY 2022, the Workgroup requests $12.759 billion for IHS. We support their full request and reiterate the top 5 priorities for program expansion as follows:

1) Hospitals and Clinics: $4.2 billion
2) Purchased/Referred Care: $2 billion
3) Mental Health: $715 million
4) Alcohol and substance Abuse: $778.5 million
5) Dental Services: $649.7 million

Support for Advance Appropriations for IHS.—For many years, tribes have requested that IHS appropriations be funded on an advance appropriations cycle. It has unfortunately become the norm that IHS does not receive its full yearly appropriation until several months (sometimes longer) after the start of the fiscal year. In the recent past, IHS, Tribal and Urban health programs have even had to deal with government shutdowns, when no funding was provided for weeks on end putting the lives of our patients in jeopardy. These funding delays make it impossible for IHS and Tribal health programs to plan and manage their annual budgets. Congress recognized these challenges will it provided the Veterans Administration with advance appropriations over a decade ago. Yet, IHS still waits for parity. As you know, health systems cannot practically operate on a day-to-day or week-to-week basis without a full understanding of their budgets. Unrelated political disagreements in Washington, DC should not impede AI/ANs from receiving the health care they deserve. Full advance appropriations for the IHS would lead to better stability for our health system, improve provider recruitment and retention, and improve practices over all.

We thank the leadership of this subcommittee for supporting legislation that would enact advance appropriations in previous Congresses. We also appreciate President Biden's support for IHS advance appropriations in his FY 2022 budget request to Congress. We urge the Committee to take the necessary steps in the FY 2022 appropriations bill to move IHS to an advance appropriation for FY 2023 and beyond. The time is now to end the delay of health care for AI/ANs.

Support Expansion of the IHS Joint Venture Program.—The IHS Joint Venture (JV) program provides tribes with a critical opportunity to build new facilities and to enhance health services for their patients. Under this project, tribes and tribal organizations build or acquire the facility with their own or other non-IHS funds, and IHS commits to fund the additional staffing and operations costs associated

with the new or expanded facility. The program has been a major success, with close to 40 facilities built, acquired, or renovated since 1992. It has been a critical, cost-effective mechanism to address the health care facilities shortage, since funds continue to be limited for the IHS Facilities Construction Priority List. Yet, despite the remarkable success of this program, projects like ours remain unfunded by IHS. In the last round, Native Village of Eyak—along with two other Tribal health organizations in Alaska—received a high score and were on the top 10 list of projects, but were not funded, as IHS only funded the top 5. We request that the Committee direct IHS to fund all high-scoring applicants for JV construction projects.

Additionally, the JV program currently leaves tribal facilities without necessary maintenance and replacement funds. The IHCIA requires that the tribe lease the facility to IHS for 20 years at no cost. The JV facility is eligible to receive a share of IHS's perennially insufficient Maintenance and Improvement (M&I) funding, but is not eligible for a lease under section 105(l) of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA).[1] This leads to the anomaly that non-JV facilities can be fully funded under 105(l), receiving either fair market rental or the cost elements set out in the regulations, while JV facilities are stuck with nothing but M&I. We request that Congress amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to correct this issue. We are happy to provide any technical assistance you may need.

Mandatory Funding for Contract Support Costs and 105(l) lease payments.—We appreciate the subcommittee's commitment to ensuring that Contract Support Costs (CSC) and 105(l) lease costs are fully funded by including an indefinite discretionary appropriation in FY 2021 for both of these accounts. However, these line items continue to take up a larger and larger percentage of the IHS discretionary budget, thereby leaving little room to expand other services given tight discretionary appropriations caps. We strongly agree with the subcommittee's words in the explanatory statement for the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116–94) regarding 105(l) costs which said, in part: "Obligations of this nature are typically addressed through mandatory spending, but in this case since they fall under discretionary spending, they are impacting all other programs funded under the Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, including other equally important Tribal programs . . . "

Therefore, we ask you to continue to advocate with your colleagues on authorizing committees to enact mandatory appropriations for CSC and 105(l) lease costs. Doing so, will ensure that other areas of the IHS budget are held harmless by these costs and true increases in critical services line items can move forward. This will enhance care for AI/AN patients and reduce health disparities.

Fully fund critical infrastructure investments.—As Congress considers making dramatic investments in the country's infrastructure, it is critical that the Indian health system not be left behind. Therefore, we request that the subcommittee allocate funding for full implementation of interoperable Electronic Health Records (EHR) and tele-health. This will ensure that IHS can provide services that are similar to other health providers. IHS recently testified before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs that the current EHR "created significant barriers to the rapid response needed for COVID–19." For tribes and Tribal health organizations who have committed their own resources to move away from RPMS and make their systems functional, IHS should take this into consideration with any new resources and ensure these programs are not only interoperable, but compensated accordingly.

It is also critical that Congress make significant investments in Tribal health facilities construction. IHS and tribal facilities are some of the oldest in the nation, with an average age of 10.6 years. This creates situations where facilities are out of date, or not appropriate for the size of the patient populations they serve. Therefore, consistent with the Budget Formulation Workgroup's request, we recommend $15 billion for Health Facilities Construction Funding & Equipment.

Staff Housing Quarters.—We continue to experience challenges finding adequate housing for staffing for health and other professionals to serve our community. As you know, health staffing shortages across the Indian health system are dire, and providing adequate living spaces for professionals are directly linked with our ability to recruit and retain staff. We appreciate the Committee's commitment to provide $10 million for staff quarters in the FY 2021 appropriation. Please continue to provide funding and increase this line item in FY 2022.

Extend Self-Governance Funding Options to the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) and increase funding to $250 million/year.—While we understand that SDPI is not under the jurisdiction of the subcommittee, we appreciate that Congress included a three-year reauthorization of SDPI in the Consolidated Appro-

[1] 25 U.S.C. § 5324(l); 25 C.F.R. Part 900, Subpart H.

priations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116–260). Communities like ours across Indian Country rely on SDPI resources to address the alarming rates of diabetes and diabetes—related health complications among our people. SDPI's success rests in the flexibility of its program structure that allows for the incorporation of culture and local needs into its services. Consistent with this model, Congress should authorize SDPI participants the option of receiving their federal funds through either a grant (as currently used) or self-governance funding mechanisms under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. This would be a natural and just extension of SDPI in respecting tribal sovereignty.

Additionally, SDPI has not had an increase in funding since FY 2004. Short term reauthorizations also destabilize this health program and make staffing and program continuity difficult. For this reason, we recommend permanent reauthorization for SDPI at a minimum base of $250 million per year with annual adjustments for inflationary increases. Therefore, we urge you to work with your Congressional colleagues to ensure that SDPI receives a funding increase of at least $250 million per year.

Plan for the Future with Dedicated Funding for Preventative Health Services.—Among the many things we have learned from the COVID–19 pandemic is that basic public health functions are critical to preserving life and overall health of Americans, yet public health systems in most tribal communities lag far behind systems in other jurisdictions. Without robust public health systems in place, responding to public health threats means that tribal communities will continue to be a challenge. Like other governments, Tribes have the responsibility to provide public health services for their people. Yet the federal government provides few resources to tribal communities for this purpose.

AI/ANs experience health disparities for a variety of health conditions such as such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancer and other largely preventable chronic conditions. Treating these chronic health conditions imposes unnecessary challenges on Tribal health systems and IHS. We support long-term, sustained, full investment in tribal public health infrastructure so that tribal communities have the resources available to respond quickly when the next crisis hits.

Reduce Dependence on Federal Grants.—In addition to the critical funding needs that are outlined above, we also support moving away from competitive grants for federal funding mechanisms. The federal trust responsibility does not require that we jump through a myriad of hoops and onerous applications to see that services are provided to our people. Grants also unfairly pit tribes against tribes, when all are deserving of critical resources. Therefore, we agree with other tribal leaders and continue to support broad based funding for our health systems across all federal agencies. Too often, tribes are under resourced to apply for federal grants, and to comply with the associated burdensome reporting requirements which vary from grant to grant. Applications and reporting requirements force our health system to divert staff time to apply and report thereby diluting the usefulness of the resources. Instead, we request wide—spread, formula—based funding across all programs. Tribes must also be granted the flexibility needed to respond to the specific needs of their own communities, not those prescribed by federal grants. This also means providing enough resources so funds are provided in meaningful amounts across all tribes.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATURAL SCIENCE COLLECTIONS ALLIANCE

The Natural Science Collections Alliance appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of fiscal year (FY) 2022 appropriations for the Smithsonian Institution and the Department of the Interior. We encourage Congress to make new investments that address agency backlogs and secure future efforts for the preservation, curation, growth and study of scientific and cultural collections within the Department of the Interior and the Smithsonian Institution. We request that Congress provide the National Museum of Natural History with at least $60 million in FY 2022, with new funding to correct for a lack of adequate increases in recent years. Please provide the United States Geological Survey (USGS) with at least $1.75 billion in FY 2022, with increased support for collections related activities.

The Natural Science Collections Alliance is a non-profit association that supports natural science collections, their human resources, the institutions that house them, and their research activities for the benefit of science and society. Our membership consists of institutions that are part of an international network of museums, botanical gardens, herbaria, universities, and other institutions that contain natural science collections and use them in research, exhibitions, academic and informal science education, and outreach activities.

Scientific collections, and the collections professionals and scientists who make, care for, and study these resources, are a vital component of our nation's research infrastructure. These collections and their associated experts contribute to the expansion of our bioeconomy. Whether held at a museum, government managed laboratory or archive, or in a university science department, these scientific resources form a coordinated network of specimens, samples, and data (for example, genetic, tissue, organism, and environmental) that are a unique and irreplaceable foundation from which scientists are studying and explaining past and present life on earth.

Preservation of specimens and the strategic growth of these collections are in the best interest of science and the best interest of taxpayers. Existing scientific collections that are properly cared for and accessible are a critical component of the US science infrastructure and are readily integrated into new research on significant questions. Specimens that were collected decades or centuries ago are now routinely used in research in diverse fields related to genomics, human health, biodiversity sciences, informatics, environmental quality, and agriculture.

According to the U.S. Interagency Working Group on Scientific Collections (IWGSC), "scientific collections are essential to supporting agency missions and are thus vital to supporting the global research enterprise." A 2020 report by the IWGSC presents a framework for estimating and documenting the long-term benefits, both monetary and non-monetary, generated by federal institutional collections. Additional recent reports have highlighted the value of mobilizing biodiversity specimens and data in spurring new scientific discoveries that grow our economy, improve our public health and wellbeing, and increase our national security.

In 2019, the Biodiversity Collections Network (BCoN) issued a community informed call for the development of an Extended Specimen Network, or ESN. The report, Extending U.S. Biodiversity Collections to Promote Research and Education, outlined a national agenda that leverages digital data in biodiversity collections for new uses and called for building an Extended Specimen Network: "Science and industry rely on physical specimens housed in U.S. biodiversity collections. Rapid advances in data generation and analysis have transformed understanding of biodiversity collections from singular physical specimens, to dynamic suites of interconnected resources enriched through study over time. The concept of the 'extended specimen' conveys the current perspective of the biodiversity specimen as extending beyond the singular physical object, to potentially limitless additional physical preparations and digital resources." This endeavor requires robust investments in our nation's scientific collections, whether they are owned by a federal or state agency or are part of an educational institution or free—standing natural history museum or other research centers.

A 2020 report by the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM), Biological Collections: Ensuring Critical Research and Education for the 21st Century, provided guidance to the NSF regarding the sustainability of living stock and natural history collections. The report argued that collections are a critical part of our nation's science and innovation infrastructure and a fundamental resource for understanding the natural world.

The NASEM, BCoN, and IWGSC reports, articulate a common vision of the future of biological collections and define a need to broaden and deepen the collections and associated data to realize the potential for biodiversity collections to inform 21st century science. Collections are a critical resource for advancing the knowledge needed to address current global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and pandemics. The COVID–19 crisis has illustrated how inextricably linked humans are to the natural world. Biological collections, their extended data, and the experts that build and study them are globally important for understanding where viruses such as SARS-CoV–2 exist in nature or when they cross from their current hosts to humans.

The Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) is the central federal partner in the curation and research on scientific specimens. Scientists at the NMNH care for 146 million specimens and ensure that the institution remains a global leader in scientific research and public engagement. To increase the availability of these scientific resources to researchers, educators, other federal agencies, and the public, NMNH is working on a multi-year effort to digitize its collections. Funding is required to ensure this work is completed.

The National Museum of Natural History is also working to strengthen curatorial and research staffing and to backfill positions left open by retirements and budget constraints. The current staffing level is insufficient to provide optimal care for the collections. Future curatorial and collections management staffing levels may be further jeopardized given funding cuts at science agencies, such as the United States Geological Survey that, until recently, supported staff positions at the National Museum of Natural History. We believe these changes significantly jeopardize our bio-

economy at a time when there are critical issues facing the country, where the network of collections and experts working with these collections are needed.

Interior is an important caretaker of museum collections as well; the Department has an estimated 206 million items, comparable in size only to the Smithsonian Institution. Although many of the department's collections are located in bureau facilities, numerous artifacts and specimens are cared for in non-governmental facilities, such as museums and universities.

In addition, the USGS furthers the preservation, inventory, and digitization of geological scientific collections, such as rock and ice cores, fossils, and samples of oil, gas, and water. The National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation program helps states with collections management, improves accessibility of collections data, and expands digitization of specimens to ensure their broader use. One example of the returns from this program is the potash mineral deposit discovered in Michigan that is valued at an estimated $65 billion. Rock samples from Michigan were entered into a national database, where private companies discovered the deposit's existence and are now assessing the potential for mining.

USGS supports the documentation and conservation of native pollinators through its Native Bee Inventory and Monitoring Lab (BIML). Pollinators, such as bees, are critical components of ecosystems and play an integral role in wildlife and habitat management and restoration. Three-fourths of the world's flowering plants and about 35 percent of the world's food crops rely on pollinators to reproduce. Given that pollinator populations are in decline globally, BIML's work in developing a nationwide method to inventory and monitor bee population trends on public lands is crucial.

USGS has more than a million specimens of birds, mammals, amphibians, and reptiles that are housed at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History. The Biological Survey Unit (BSU) consisted of USGS scientists stationed at the NMNH, where they conducted research on USGS—specimens of fish, reptiles, birds, and mammals that are curated at the NMNH. This arrangement went back to 1889. These specimens, data, and the research they enable are required to inform Department of the Interior land and natural resource management decisions, and often also support decision—making by State and Tribal governments. It is our understanding that the BSU has now been eliminated, with the Smithsonian taking over care of these collections. The work the BSU supported and conducted at the NMNH was important and in the national interest. There is a lack of clarity and understanding about how this work is currently being sustained, given the Smithsonian's own shrinking staff.

The Bureau of Land Management has a large backlog of cultural resources to inventory on public lands. Currently, only about 11 percent of public lands have been assessed for heritage resources. Such assessments need to be conducted before unique resources are lost to looting, vandalism, fire, or environmental change.

The National Park Service must continue its investments in scientific collections into the future, which means cataloging millions of museum objects and connecting the resulting databases to national and global data portals. The National Park Service curates a wide range of specimens and artifacts, from historical and cultural items to preserved tissues from protected species and living microorganisms collected in our National Parks. Several parks have made progress on addressing planning, environmental, storage, security, and fire protection deficiencies in museum collections, but much work remains, and present and future collections will be fundamental for effective management efforts.

CONCLUSION

Scientific collections are critical infrastructure for our nation's research enterprise. They are a national treasure that help support the nation's bioeconomy. Research specimens connect us to the past and are used to document and solve current problems. They allow us to predict threats to human health, find successful methods for ensuring food security, and address the impact of future environmental changes. Sustained investments in scientific collections are in our national interest. We also see these investments as critical for our efforts to grow diversity and inclusion in the scientific workforce.

The budget for NMNH has not seen adequate increases in recent years. We urge Congress to provide NMNH with at least $60 million in FY 2022 to allow the museum to undertake critical collections care, make needed technology upgrades, and conduct cutting edge research. Please support adequate funding for programs within Interior bureaus that support the preservation and use of scientific collections—a truly irreplaceable resource. We encourage Congress to provide the USGS with at

least $1.75 billion in FY 2022, with increased support for collections related activities.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request.

[This statement was submitted by John Bates, President.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit recommendations for fiscal year 2022 (FY22) appropriations. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is an international nonprofit conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for people and nature. Our mission is to conserve the lands and waters upon which all life depends.

As the nation continues to struggle with the challenges of COVID–19, TNC appreciates the Subcommittee's work to address the pandemic's impacts on our citizens and the economy. Investments focused on restoring ecosystems and building a low—carbon economy will yield immediate relief for communities—particularly overburdened, Indigenous and low—income communities—throughout the country. TNC wishes to thank this Subcommittee for the final FY21 funding levels for conservation programs. TNC's budget recommendations for FY22 reflect a balanced approach, with funding levels consistent with those in FY21.

The effects of climate change require comprehensive policy action, including investments in natural climate solutions, clean energy development, natural infrastructure and resilience. TNC supports funding practical, innovative climate solutions to create an energy future that is cleaner, more secure and gives consumers greater energy choices. Likewise, investing in nature brings strong returns for our security, economy, communities and families. TNC is focused on supporting programs and investments that ensure economic and environmental benefits are enhanced today and made sustainable for tomorrow.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).—The passage of the Great American Outdoors Act means that after more than 55 years, LWCF will be guaranteed full funding in FY22 and beyond. The legislation carefully preserved Congress's discretion in deciding how best to allocate those dollars between the many conservation and recreation needs addressed by LWCF. TNC supports a healthy balance of LWCF projects and grants across the country. TNC urges the Subcommittee to provide vigorous oversight of LWCF to ensure smooth implementation and a strong future for this incredibly successful program. In addition, TNC asks the Subcommittee to avoid rescissions of past—year funds that could be used for LWCF project needs.

Endangered Species.—TNC supports continuing funding of at least $60 million for the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund. This funding provides critical matching grants to states and territories for conservation and species recovery efforts on non-federal lands. TNC requests the Subcommittee's continued support for Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) funding and HCP Land Acquisition Grants.

State and Tribal Wildlife Grants.—TNC supports the president's request of $82.4 million for state and tribal wildlife grants. Strong federal investments are essential to support strategic actions by state, tribal and federal agencies, as well as the conservation community, to protect wildlife and their habitats and prevent species from being listed as threatened or endangered. TNC urges Congress to enact the bipartisan Recovering America's Wildlife Act, which would be the most significant investment in wildlife conservation in decades.

Wildlife Conservation Programs.—The wildlife conservation programs at the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) continue a long and successful tradition of supporting collaborative conservation in the United States and internationally. TNC urges the Subcommittee to continue funding for the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, Migratory Bird Joint Ventures, FWS Migratory Bird Management Program and FWS Coastal Program at no less than FY21 funding levels. Likewise, TNC supports continued strong funding for the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, the Cooperative Landscape Conservation and Adaptive Science programs and the National Fish Habitat Initiative.

International Programs.—The international conservation programs appropriated annually within the Department of the Interior (DOI) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) are relatively small but are effective and widely respected. They complement U.S. foreign policy and aid goals for biodiversity and climate change. They encompass DOI's Office of International Affairs, FWS Multinational Species Conservation Funds, FWS Wildlife Without Borders regional and global programs, the National Park Service's International Program and the USFS International Program. TNC requests modest increases over FY21 funding levels for these programs.

National Wildlife Refuge System.—Found in every state and territory, national wildlife refuges conserve a diversity of America's environmentally sensitive and economically vital ecosystems, including oceans, coasts, wetlands, deserts, tundra, prairies and forests. TNC supports stronger funding for the system's operations and maintenance accounts. TNC requests $600 million for FY22. This represents the funding necessary to maintain management capabilities for the system.

Investing in Wildfire Resilience.[1]—Congress took major steps toward stabilizing the USFS budget with the 2018 "fire fix." As new conversations about the Budget Control Act and disaster funding is underway, we request that the fire fix remains durable and comprehensive, as intended by the Congress. In addition, the fire fix will not be durable and fully successful without substantial reinvestments in programs that increase forest resilience. TNC recommends investing in the USFS's Hazardous Fuels Program at $700 million and DOI's Fuels Management Program at $250 million, in addition to repeating the Subcommittee's FY21 instructions for allocating funds to priority landscapes in both wildland urban interface and wildland settings for prescribed burning. TNC also supports fully funding the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program at $80 million, vegetation and watershed management at $210 million, the Water Source Protection Program at $30 million, dedicating $30 million for a new ecological reforestation initiative and reinstating and funding the Legacy Roads and Trails Program at $100 million.

Research and Joint Fire Science—Found in every state and territory, national wildlife refuges conserve a diversity of USFS's Forest and Rangeland Research Program offers the scientific basis for policies that improve the health and quality of urban and rural communities. This program is vital to the long-term health and utility of our forests and rivers. TNC requests funding the program at $315 million. TNC requests the Subcommittee include $8 million for each USFS and DOI joint fire science programs, which have successfully supported practical science that reduces fire risk and enhances economic, ecological and social outcomes.

Sage Grouse Conservation—Found in every state and territory, national wildlife refuges conserve a diversity of TNC requests continued investment in ongoing efforts to restore and conserve sagebrush habitat and the greater sage grouse across federal, state, tribal and private lands. These resources are needed to implement on-the-ground projects and monitor habitat treatments, address rangeland fire and noxious and invasive grasses, fund suppression and restoration efforts and facilitate the partnership and science necessary for effective conservation in western states. To do this, appropriated sagebrush resources should specifically support the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) five-year integrated program of work, which holistically identifies landscapes with the highest likelihood for conservation and restoration. Congress should consider asking for an annual report from BLM on acres treated in priority areas for conservation and restoration in the sagebrush biome and outcomes of partnerships with federal bodies outside of DOI. TNC requests $85 million to support the implementation of the Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Strategy (BLM: $75 million, FWS: $5 million, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS): $5 million), which includes funding Greater Sage-Grouse friendly projects such as removal of juniper trees, eradication of invasive weeds and prescribed burns.

TNC asks for the Subcommittee's continued support as this process moves forward to ensure the final FY22 spending bill does not contain the language in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 that bars FWS from proposing a rule to list the Greater Sage-Grouse under the Endangered Species Act. This language undercuts good faith conservation efforts by removing the critical backstop of a listing, should conditions on the ground warrant such a step.

BLM Land Management and Renewable Energy Development—Found in every state and territory, national wildlife refuges conserve a diversity of TNC supports smart planning and management of public lands through rapid ecoregional assessments, resource management planning, regional mitigation planning, landscape conservation cooperatives and the Assessment, Inventory and Monitoring Strategy. Many BLM programs contribute to these cross—cutting initiatives, including the National Landscape Conservation System ($44.8 million), the Resource Management Planning Program ($67 million) and the consolidated Wildlife and Aquatic Habitat Management budget line ($132.8 million). TNC supports continued funding for BLM's renewable energy development program at no less than the FY21 level of

[1] In the FY2020 appropriations process, Congress directed the USFS to modernize their budgeting practices. This resulted in programs appearing differently as cost pools, salaries and expenses have been removed from programs. TNC is providing funding levels under the old budget model for USFS programs as the organization continues to gain a better understanding of the new modern structure. TNC looks forward to working with the Subcommittee and the agency to develop recommend funding levels that reflect budget modernization.

$30.5 million. Collectively, these efforts will help BLM manage its lands efficiently and effectively for energy development, species and habitat conservation, recreation and other uses.

Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Geographic Programs—Found in every state and territory, national wildlife refuges conserve a diversity of EPA's geographic programs, including the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and Chesapeake Bay, Puget Sound, Long Island Sound and Gulf of Mexico programs, make significant contributions to protecting habitat, improving water quality and enhancing resilience in the large landscapes they encompass. These programs have a proven record of supporting the states' voluntary restoration efforts. TNC supports the funding for the geographic programs contained in the FY22 budget request and urges the Subcommittee to continue strong funding in FY22 for these programs.

Colorado River Basin Recovery Programs—Found in every state and territory, national wildlife refuges conserve a diversity of The Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program take a balanced approach to recovering four endangered fish species in the Colorado River basin. These programs are highly successful, collaborative conservation partnerships involving New Mexico, Colorado, Utah and Wyoming, in addition to tribal nations, federal agencies and water, power and environmental interests. These programs provide critically important ESA compliance for more than 2,450 federal, tribal, state and private water projects across the upper Colorado River basin. Through these efforts, water use and development have continued in growing western communities in full compliance with the ESA, state water and wildlife law and interstate compacts. TNC supports robust funding at FWS for the Colorado River basin recovery programs as well as fish hatchery needs associated with the recovery plans.

Federal Priority Streamgage (FPS) Network—Found in every state and territory, national wildlife refuges conserve a diversity of USGS operates the FPS Network to provide continuous streamflow information at over 8,400 locations across the country. Water managers, scientists and other decision—makers rely on data from the FPS Network to plan for floods, droughts and other extreme events, design infrastructure, facilitate energy generation, protect aquatic species, restore habitat and manage federal lands. Budget constraints led to 29 gages being discontinued last year. TNC supports $28.7 million for the FPS Network to reinstate lost gages. TNC also requests $33 million in Cooperative Matching Funds to leverage USGS funding to expand this program to over 5,000 sgages. Lastly, TNC supports the FY22 budget request of $30.9 million for the Next Generation Water Observation System to expand this program and allow USGS to modernize water data delivery systems across the United States.

Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) Program—Found in every state and territory, national wildlife refuges conserve a diversity of WIFIA provides authority for low—cost credit that can leverage private investment for water infrastructure. The criteria include whether a project protects against extreme weather events or helps maintain the environment. TNC supports the FY22 budget request of $80 million for WIFIA.

3D Elevation Program (3DEP)—Found in every state and territory, national wildlife refuges conserve a diversity of As sea levels rise and extreme weather becomes more frequent, local officials and property owners need topographical information to keep communities safe and resilient. 3DEP sponsors satellite topographical mapping, providing communities high—quality elevation mapping to better understand flood risks. This mapping is used for management of flood risk, wildfire, water supply and renewable energy siting. 3DEP provides baseline mapping at a relatively low cost. Knowledge of flood risks can help prevent communities from developing in unsafe areas and allow risk mitigation in developed areas. TNC supports robust funding for 3DEP to promote resilient communities and environments.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit TNC's recommendations for the FY22 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill.

[This statement was submitted by Kameran Onley, Director of North American Policy and Government Relations.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit recommendations for fiscal year 2022 (FY22) appropriations. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is an international, non-profit conservation organization whose mission is to conserve the lands and waters upon which all life depends.

America's public forests have tremendous national importance, but their health puts them at severe risk unless the nation invests in proper stewardship and forestry. America's forests store and filter more than half of our nation's water supply, provide jobs to nearly one million forest product workers, generate $13.6 billion in recreation—based economic activity from the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) U.S. Forest Service (USFS) lands alone, are habitat to thousands of forest—dependent wildlife and plant species, offer a million square miles to sportsmen and families for outdoor recreation and are a major carbon sink that sequester 15 percent of all fossil fuel emissions in the United States.

However, megafires, pests and drought, exacerbated by climate change, place forests at risk. An area larger than the state of Oregon is in immediate need of restoration, and that is on national forest lands alone. Unfortunately, forest restoration is significantly obstructed by ballooning fire suppression costs.

Forests are unique as they are both impacted by climate change and are a natural climate solution. The United States must invest in them by:

1. Protecting existing stocks of carbon through the Forest Legacy Program and other initiatives.
2. Maintaining or enhancing the ability of forests to increase their carbon storage through improved forest management, reforestation, avoided conversion and restoration programs such as the Vegetation & Watershed Management program.
3. Reducing emissions from catastrophic wildfires by increasing the use of prescribed fire, working to improve forests' climate resilience and increasing community engagement and collaboration through risk—reduction programs such as the Hazardous Fuels and the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration programs.

TNC thanks the Subcommittee for its previous work on wildfire suppression funding in 2018, commonly known as the "fire fix". However, to fully succeed in this effort, TNC encourages the Subcommittee to sustain and increase the investments gained by the fire fix in forest resilience efforts that protect communities, reduce costs and improve habitats and forests.

In the FY20 appropriations process, Congress directed USFS to modernize its budgeting practices. This has resulted in programs appearing differently, as cost pool and salary expenses have been separated from program costs. TNC recommends funding levels under the old budget model for USFS programs, and, where appropriate, provide an approximation of that level under the modern structure. TNC looks forward to working with the Subcommittee and the agency to develop recommended funding levels that reflect this budget modernization.

Investing in the following USFS and the Department of the Interior's (DOI) Office of Wildland Fire programs is critical to meeting forest restoration goals. Effective and durable restoration requires integrated approaches that address threats and improve forest health and habitat values while at the same time support forest—dependent communities.

Fund the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR) Program at no less than $80 million.—The CFLR Program is demonstrating that forest restoration plans developed collaboratively can be implemented at a large scale with benefits for people and forests. This is an approach that brings citizens, local government and federal staff together to determine effective management that is locally appropriate and provides jobs, sustains rural economies, reduces the risk of damaging fires, addresses invasive species, improves wildlife habitat and decommissions unused, eroding roads. The funding increase will guarantee the existing signature projects covering over 17 million acres can continue and additional critical projects across America's forests can begin.

Fund USFS Hazardous Fuels programs at no less than $700 million (modern level approximation: $244 million).—Strategic, proactive hazardous fuels treatments have proven to be safer and more cost-effective in reducing risks to communities and forests by removing overgrown brush and trees, leaving forests in a more natural condition resilient to wildfires. Drought conditions increase the need for investment in this program to restore and maintain fire—adapted landscapes and habitats. TNC recognizes the Subcommittee's continued support for this program through its increased funding levels, particularly over the last few years.

Create and fund the USFS Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR) initiative at $20 million.—Following on direction from the FY21 spending bill, continue to direct the agency to create a BAR initiative at USFS like the existing program at DOI. This would provide the agency with the authority to plan longer term, post-fire reforestation.

Fund Wildlife & Fisheries Habitat Management at $145 million (modern level approximation: $21 million): This would help to restore, recover and maintain wildlife and fish and their habitats on all national forests and grasslands.

Fund Vegetation & Watershed Management at $210 million (modern level approximation: $33 million).—This would promote forest restoration through watershed treatment activities, invasive plant species control and reforestation of areas impacted by wildfire and other natural events.

Fund Legacy Road and Trail Remediation at $50 million.—This would help restore river and stream water quality by fixing or removing eroding roads while providing construction jobs, supporting vital sportsmen opportunities and reducing flooding risks from future extreme water—flow events.

Fund Land Management Planning, Inventory and Monitoring at $201 million (modern level approximation: $18 million).—This would promote community and science—based planning when updating forest plans. It would also increase efforts to appropriately incorporate climate change into land management planning and project—level documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act.

Fund Water Source Protection Program at $30 million (modern level approximation: $10 million).—The 2018 Farm Bill established this new cost share program authorizing USFS to work with water users to address watershed restoration plans for national forests, including wildfire risk reduction activities.

Fund Forest Health at $66 million for Federal (modern level approximation: $19 million) and $51 million for Cooperative (modern level approximation: $36 million).—Forest health protection programs work to protect forests by minimizing the impacts caused by invasive species. Across the nation, large-scale, non-native insect, disease and invasive plant outbreaks are damaging forest health. These programs help reduce invasions of non-native pests that destroy iconic American trees such as ash, hemlock and California oaks.

Fund State Fire Assistance (SFA) at $87 million (modern level approximation: $77 million).—SFA provides aid to communities for fuels treatments, firefighter capacity building, fire prevention education and pre-fire planning. The SFA program is an important complement to the Hazardous Fuels program for federal lands.

Fund Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) at $20 million (modern level approximation: $20 million).—Through LSR, non-federal lands have access for competitively selected projects that leverage state funding, restore forests of national importance and, whenever possible, complement CFLR and other landscape-scale restoration efforts.

Fund Forest Legacy at $128 million (modern level approximation: $128 million).—The Forest Legacy Program, in partnership with states, supports efforts to acquire conservation easements and fee simple interests on privately owned forest lands from willing sellers. These acquisitions leverage non-federal dollars and support long-term sustainable forestry while protecting other ecological, watershed and recreational values for local communities at risk of development or conversation to other uses.

Fund Urban & Community Forestry (U&CF) at $45 million.—Working with the state forestry agencies, the U&CF program provides technical, financial, research and educational support and services. These services support local government, nonprofit organizations, community groups, educational institutions and tribal governments that manage and steward our nation's urban and community forests. Increased federal investment should focus on preventing and addressing outbreaks of devastating pests like the emerald ash borer and sudden oak death as well as reducing the loss of trees and forests in both urban and rural areas.

Expand and enhance USFS International Programs at $20 million.—This program promotes sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation globally. This investment also complements domestic economic and conservation interests through work on combating illegal logging, protecting migratory species' habitats and controlling invasive species.

Fund Forest and Rangeland Research at $315 million (modern level approximation: $41 million), with $87 million for Forest Inventory and Analysis (modern level approximation: $19 million).—Forest and Rangeland Research offers vital scientific basis for policies that improve the health and quality of urban and rural communities. This program is vital for the long-term health and utility of our American forests and rivers, particularly as we face an uncertain climatic future.

Maintain funding for the Joint Fire Science Programs under USFS and DOI's Office of Wildland Fire at $8 million each.—These programs have proven great success in supporting practical science that reduces fire risk and enhances economic, ecological and social outcomes nationwide.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit TNC's recommendations for funding for USFS and DOI's Office of Wildland Fire in the FY22 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill.

[This statement was submitted by Cecilia Clavet, Senior Policy Advisor.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NEW MEXICO INTERSTATE STREAM COMMISSION

SUMMARY

This Statement is submitted in support of Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations for Colorado River Basin salinity control activities of the Bureau of Land Management. I urge that $2,000,000 be appropriated for salinity specific projects within the Aquatic Habitat Management sub-activity of the Bureau of Land Management.

STATEMENT

The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum (Forum) is comprised of representatives of the seven Colorado River Basin States appointed by the respective governors of the states. The Forum has examined the features needed to control the salinity of the Colorado River. These include activities by the states, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Department of Agriculture, and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The Salinity Control Program has been adopted by the seven Colorado River Basin States and approved by the Environmental Protection Agency as a part of each state's water quality standards.

About 75 percent of the land in the Colorado River Basin is owned, administered, or held in trust by the federal government. The BLM is the largest land manager in the Colorado River Basin and manages public lands that are heavily laden with naturally occurring salt. When salt-laden soils erode, the salts dissolve and enter the river system, affecting the quality of water used from the Colorado River by the Lower Basin States and Mexico.

The water quality standards adopted by the Colorado River Basin States contain a plan of implementation that includes BLM participation to implement cost effective measures of salinity control. BLM participation in the salinity control program is critical and essential to actively pursue the identification, implementation, and quantification of cost effective salinity control measures on public lands.

Bureau of Reclamation studies show that quantified damages from Colorado River salinity to United States water users are about $354 million per year. Modeling by Reclamation indicates that these quantified damages would increase to $671 million per year by 2040 if the Salinity Control Program were not continued. Unquantified damages already increase the total damages significantly.

Control of salinity is necessary for the Basin States, including New Mexico, to continue to develop their compact—apportioned waters of the Colorado River. The Basin States are proceeding with an independent program to control salt discharges to the Colorado River, in addition to cost sharing with Bureau of Reclamation and Department of Agriculture salinity control programs. It is important that the BLM pursue salinity control projects within its jurisdiction to maintain the cost effectiveness of the program and the timely implementation of salinity control projects that will help avoid unnecessary damages in the United States and Mexico.

To continue these efforts in the Colorado River Basin, I request the appropriation of $2 million in FY 2022 for salinity specific projects within the Aquatic Habitat Management sub-activity of the Bureau of Land Management. I appreciate consideration of these requests. I fully support the statement of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum submitted by Don Barnett, the Forum's Executive Director, in request of appropriations for BLM for Colorado River salinity control activities.

[This statement was submitted by Rolf Schmidt-Petersen, Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NORTHWEST INDIAN FISHERIES COMMISSION

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee, for the record my name is Lorraine Loomis, and I am Chairperson of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC). The NWIFC is composed of the twenty tribes in western Washington that are party to United States v. Washington, which upheld the tribes' treaty—reserved right to harvest and manage natural resources on and off-reservation, including salmon and shellfish. On behalf of the NWIFC, we are providing testimony for the record on our natural resources management and environmental program funding requests for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations. These programs support tribes to carry out their natural resource management responsibilities including the management of Pacific salmon fisheries, which contribute to a robust natural resource—based economy and the continued exercise of tribal treaty rights.

SUMMARY OF FISCAL YEAR 2022 (FY22) APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS

Bureau of Indian Affairs

—Provide $66.0 million for Rights Protection Implementation (collective request)
  —Provide $17.146 million for Western Washington Fisheries Management
  —Provide $3.438 million for Washington State Timber-Fish-Wildlife
  —Provide $6.279 million for U.S./Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty
  —Provide $2.4 million for Salmon Marking
—Provide $15.0 million for Fish, Wildlife & Parks Projects (non-TPA)
—Provide $953,000 for the Salmon and Steelhead Habitat Inventory and Assessment Program within the Tribal Management/Development Program Subactivity
—Fully Fund Contract Support Costs
—Provide $2.0 million within Tribal Management/Development Program Subactivity for Western Washington Treaty Tribes Wildlife Management
—Provide $60.971 million for Tribal Climate Resilience

Fish & Wildlife Service

—Provide $8.0 million for Tribal Wildlife Grants

Environmental Protection Agency

—Provide $96.4 million for General Assistance Program
—Provide $50.0 million for Puget Sound Geographic Program

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUESTS

Bureau of Indian Affairs

—*Provide $66.0 million for BIA Rights Protection Implementation Subactivity.* The 41 tribes in the Great Lakes and Pacific Northwest with similar treaty—reserved rights have collectively identified that no less than $66.0 million for the Rights Protection Implementation (RPI) subactivity is necessary to support essential tribal treaty—reserved resource management. This request is a $21.513 million increase over the President's FY22 budget request of $44.487 million. A summary of the accounts of importance to us within RPI are further identified below. Please note the BIA's Budget Justification doesn't provide a breakout of the President's FY22 budget request for these accounts.
  —*Provide $17.146 million for BIA Western Washington Fisheries Management.* We respectfully request $17.146 million, an increase of $6.42 million over the FY21 enacted level of $10.726 million. Funding for this program supports the tribes to co-manage their treaty—reserved resources with the state of Washington, and to continue to meet court mandates and legal responsibilities. For example, funding supports harvest planning, population assessments, data gathering for finfish, shellfish, groundfish, and other natural resource management needs. This funding is critical to support the day-to-day operations of essential fishery management. Reduced abundance and increased regulatory scrutiny of fisheries, coupled with ongoing salmon habitat loss, increased recreational pressures and climate change are greatly increasing the difficulty (and cost) of co-managing salmon and other resources. While we greatly appreciate the modest increase to RPI, funding for Western Washington Fisheries Management account has not kept pace with increasing management obligations and the growing number of threats to treaty—reserved rights and resources, including climate changes.
  —*Provide $3.438 million for BIA Washington State Timber-Fish-Wildlife (TFW).* We respectfully request $3.438 million, which would maintain the FY21 enacted level. Funding for this program is provided to improve forest practices on state and private lands, while providing protection for fish, wildlife and water quality. This funding supports the tribes' participation in the Timber, Fish and Wildlife Agreement—a collaborative intergovernmental and stakeholder process between the state, industry and tribes.
  —*Provide $6.279 million for BIA U.S./Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty.* We respectfully request $6.279 million, which would maintain the FY21 enacted level. This request is consistent with that of the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) and is necessary to implement the Annex chapters of the Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST). Tribes assist the U.S. federal government in meeting its obligations to implement the treaty by participating in fisheries management exercises, including cooperative research and data gathering activities. This funding supports our tribes' participation in the bilateral PST process.
  —*Provide 2.4 million for BIA Salmon Marking.* We respectfully request $2.4 million, an increase of $1.057 million over the FY21 enacted level of $1.343

million. This request would support ongoing coded wire tagging and adipose fin clipping (marking) operations at tribal hatcheries. Marking is used to differentiate hatchery—origin salmon from natural spawning ones. Since 2003, Congress has required that all salmon released from federally funded hatcheries are marked for conservation management purposes. Coded Wire Tags are used to provide a unique identifier to a particular hatchery stock, which is then used in salmonid abundance assessments and catch rates. The NWIFC uses automated trailers to provide efficient centralized tagging and marking services to our 20-member tribes. However, an increasing demand for these important services continues to increase our costs.

—*Provide $15.0 million for BIA Fish, Wildlife & Parks Projects (Non-TPA) for Hatchery Operations and Maintenance.* We respectfully request $15.0 million for Hatchery Operations and Maintenance within the Fish, Wildlife and Parks Projects account, an increase of $44,000 above the President's FY22 budget request of $14.956 million. More specifically, we request $8.0 million for Hatchery Operations and $7.0 million for Hatchery Maintenance. This funding is provided to tribal hatcheries to support the rearing and releasing of salmon and steelhead for harvest by Indian and non-Indian fisheries in the U.S. and Canada. Without hatcheries, tribes would lose their most basic ceremonial and subsistence fisheries that are central to our tribal culture. For example, we currently estimate that more than 80% of the salmon harvested are hatchery-origin fish. Yet despite the central importance of these facilities, tribes face millions of dollars in deferred maintenance costs and significant funding shortfalls in operations.

—*Provide $953,000 for BIA Salmon and Steelhead Habitat Inventory and Assessment Program (SSHIAP) (within the Tribal Management/Development Program).* We respectfully request $953,000 within the Tribal Management/Development Program for SSHIAP, an increase of $123,000 above the FY21 enacted level of $830,000. We are greatly appreciative of Congress's support for this program in FY20 and FY21 conference reports. SSHIAP is vital to the western Washington tribes because it provides essential environmental data management, analysis, sharing and reporting to support tribal natural resource management. It also supports our tribes' ability to adequately participate in watershed resource assessments and salmon recovery work.

—*Fully Fund BIA Contract Support Costs.* We respectfully request that Congress fully fund Contract Support Costs (CSC) and reclassify CSC as mandatory. Funding for CSC ensures tribes and tribal organizations have the capacity to manage federal programs under self-determination contracts and self-governance compacts.

—*Provide $2.0 million within Tribal Management/Development Program Subactivity for Western Washington Treaty Tribes Wildlife Management.* We respectfully request $2.0 million for western Washington treaty tribes' wildlife management programs within Tribal Management/Development Program Subactivity. The member tribes reserved the right to fish, hunt and gather natural resources throughout their ceded territories. Part and parcel with the tribes' reserved right to hunt and gather outside of their reservation boundaries is the need to co-manage wildlife resources with the State of Washington. Requested funding will provide capacity to participate in state-tribal co-management forums, develop wildlife management plans, develop and enhance tribal hunting codes, and design and implement applied research projects. These capabilities are fundamental to the protection of our tribes' treaty rights and there is currently no dedicated account or funding to support this critical work.

—*Provide $60.971 million for BIA Tribal Climate Resilience.* We request $60.971 million for Tribal Climate Resilience, consistent with the President's FY22 budget request of $60.971 million. Climate change is one of the largest threats to tribal rights and resources. Funding from this competitive grant program will support tribal participation in critical issues that impact treaty—reserved resources, adaptation and promote natural climate resiliency. The President's proposal also contains new programs that will greatly benefit the tribes.

Fish & Wildlife Service

—*Provide $8.0 million for FWS Tribal Wildlife Grants.* We respectfully request $8.0 million for the nationwide Tribal Wildlife Grants program, consistent with the President's FY22 budget request of $8.0 million. Funding from this competitive grant program supports the conservation of wildlife and their habitat, including species that are culturally or traditionally important to tribes.

Environmental Protection Agency

—*Provide $96.4 million for EPA General Assistance Program (GAP).* We request $96.4 million for the nationwide GAP, an increase of $18.825 million over the President's FY22 budget request of $77.575 million We also respectfully request: 1) bill or report language that would improve flexibility in the GAP to ensure individual tribal priorities and implementation activities would be eligible; and 2) $5.0 million for a regional pilot project that would demonstrate the flexibility needed to implement individual tribal priorities through a self-determination model that can benefit tribes, EPA and the environment. The GAP builds tribal program capacity to address environmental issues that impact tribes' health, safety and treaty—reserved resources.

—*Provide $50.0 million for EPA Puget Sound Geographic Program.* We request $50.0 million for Puget Sound, an increase of $15.0 million over the President's FY22 budget request of $35.0 million. This Geographic Program provides essential funding that will help protect and restore Puget Sound—an estuary of national significance. Funding for this program supports our participation in a broad range of collaborative Puget Sound recovery work, including scientific research, resource recovery planning and policy discussions that affect our treaty rights.

CONCLUSION

We respectfully urge the Subcommittee to continue to support the protection and restoration of treaty—reserved resources and the communities and economies dependent upon them. We greatly appreciate your attention to our requests and thank you for your continued commitment to the tribes.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NORTHWEST PORTLAND AREA INDIAN HEALTH BOARD

Greetings Chairman Merkley and Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee. My name is Nickolaus Lewis, and I serve as Council on the Lummi Indian Business Council, and as Chair of the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB or Board). I thank the Subcommittee for the opportunity to provide testimony on the FY 2022 Indian Health Service (IHS) budget. I thank the Subcommittee for continuing to support increased funding for IHS every year.

NPAIHB was established in 1972 and is a tribal organization under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA), P.L. 93–638, that advocates on behalf of the 43 federally—recognized Indian Tribes in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington on specific health care issues. The Board's mission is to eliminate health disparities and improve the quality of life of American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) by supporting Northwest Tribes in the delivery of culturally appropriate, high quality health programs and services. "Wellness for the seventh generation" is the Board's vision. In order to achieve this vision, I respectfully ask that this Subcommittee consider tribal sovereignty, traditional knowledge, and culture in all policy initiatives and funding opportunities.

As NPAIHB Chair, I provide the following testimony to address Portland Area/Northwest Tribes' long-standing health care needs, including the need for public health infrastructure:

COVID–19.—Portland Area Tribes appreciate the multiple funding packages for Tribal Nations to address this pandemic, especially the $6.094 billion to the Indian health system under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. As you know, the COVID–19 pandemic highlighted the lack of public health infrastructure in the Indian health system and highlighted the stark health disparities among AI/AN people. AI/AN people had significantly higher rates of COVID–19 cases (3.5x)[1], hospitalizations (5.3x), and deaths (1.8x)[2] than non-Hispanic whites. In the Northwest, AI/AN people were more likely to be hospitalized, and account for 2% of COVID–19 deaths while only making up 1% of the Northwest population. As this pandemic continues into FY 2022, increased funding across all IHS accounts will be critical to ensure tribes have the resources they need to address ongoing health care and service needs.

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[1] Hatcher SM, Agnew-Brune C, Anderson M, et al. COVID–19 among American Indian and Alaska Native persons-23 states, January 31–July 3, 2020. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2020;69:1166–9.

[2] Arrazola J, Masiello MM, Joshi S, et al. COVID–19 Mortality Among American Indian and Alaska Native Persons—14 States, January-June 2020. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2020;69:1853–1856. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6949a3

FY 2021 Funding.—For FY 2021, I thank the Subcommittee for the first time funding for HIV and Hepatitis C, and continued funding for the Community Health Aide Program expansion and IT/EHR Modernization. These initiatives are vital to our tribes to build public health infrastructure and to expand services.

Provide Advance Appropriations for IHS.—We are in support of the historical request by President Biden for advance appropriations for IHS in FY 2023. Previous government shutdowns have caused undue hardship to Northwest Tribes—from federal employees not receiving a paycheck to clinics cutting down their hours. Some Northwest Tribes even considered closing their clinics due to lack of funding. This is unconscionable and must be prevented in the future. Continuing resolutions are no better and also impact continuity of services and create instability. For these reasons, NPAIHB requests that the Committee support the President's request for Advance Appropriations in recognition of trust and treaty obligations to Tribal Nations.

Provide Mandatory Appropriation for ISDEAA Section 105(l) Leases and Contract Support Costs (CSC).—Portland Area Tribes are appreciative of the Committee's support in securing an indefinite appropriation for 105(l) leases at $101 million in FY 2021. For FY 2022, Portland Area Tribes support the request by President Biden to move 105(l) leases and CSC appropriations to mandatory funding to ensure that these appropriations are funded year after year without impacting annual programmatic increases to IHS and Tribal health facilities. We also recommend funding 105(l) leases at $337 million for FY 2022 to fully fund this growing expense; and funding for CSC at $1.142 billion for FY 2022.

Full Funding for IHS.—President Biden and Vice President Harris have acknowledged the chronic underfunding of IHS and pledged to fully fund IHS. We request the same pledge from this Committee. Full funding for IHS is estimated at $48 billion by the National Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup,[3] an amount Portland Area Tribes support. For FY 2022, funding IHS at $12.8 billion, with a commitment to fund IHS at $48 billion in FY 2023, will move us towards ending the growing health disparities and urgent health care needs at IHS, tribal, and urban Indian facilities (I/T/U).

Increase Purchased and Referred Care (PRC) by $1.046 billion.—In FY 2021, the PRC subaccount only received a 1.1% increase. This was a dismal increase given that Portland Area Tribes must purchase all specialty and inpatient care because there is no IHS hospital in the Area. Since one-third of the Portland Area IHS budget is allocated to PRC a more substantial increase is needed to increase PRC services. When there is a minimal increase and no consideration of medical inflation and population growth, Northwest Tribes are forced to cut PRC services.

In addition, with the unknown long-term health care needs of COVID–19 long—haulers and future COVID–19 variants, we request that this Committee commit to increased PRC funding in FY 2022. Thousands of our patients continue to suffer serious, debilitating, and lingering COVID–19 symptoms many months after their initial bout of infection, with major social, health, and economic consequences. Experts say 1 in 10 COVID–19 patients are still unwell 12 weeks after their acute infections, and may suffer for far longer. This is a condition that can be extremely debilitating. For FY 2022, we request that PRC be increased by $1.046 billion for a total of $2.022 billion.

Increase Funding for Mental Health by $600 million and Substance Use by $527 million.—In our Area and nationwide, there are high rates of depression, anxiety, and relapses attributable to prolonged isolation during the pandemic. We are particularly concerned about our AI/AN adolescents and young adults. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for AI/AN adolescents and young adults. AI/AN suicide mortality in this age group (10–29) is 2–3 times greater, and in some communities 10 times greater, than that for non-Hispanic whites. This data supports Portland Area Tribes' requests to this Committee for increased funding to address mental health and substance use provider shortages, expansion of services—particularly youth services, and training needs for I/T/U staff.

The data also supports funding for new mental health and substance use programs that are authorized, but never funded, under the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA), including Sections 702, 704, 705 and 715. These programs would increase prevention and treatment services, community mental health workers and behavioral health research. In order to address our requests, including funding new IHCIA programs, for FY 2022, NPAIHB recommends a $600 million increase for mental health and $527 million increase for substance use.

We also recommend that the Committee include report language directing IHS to provide an option for tribes to receive funding for IHS Behavioral Health Initiatives,

[3] National Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup Recommendation, FY 2022 Summary Recommendations, FINAL__FY22 IHS Budget Book.pdf (nihb.org) (last visited Mar. 31, 2021).

including the new Community Opioid Intervention Pilot Project, through ISDEAA Title I and Title V compacts and contracts.

Fund Information Technology Modernization at $1 billion. Health IT modernization, including replacement of the Resource and Patient Management System (RPMS), must be a priority of IHS with an expedited implementation over the next three to five years, not 10 years as proposed by IHS. Tribes still using RPMS are ready for a new EHR system so implementation must be a priority. In addition, because all specialty care is purchased in our Area, some tribes updated their EHR systems to better manage patient care and streamline referrals. These tribes have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on new EHR systems. For FY 2022, NPAIHB recommends funding at $1 billion for health IT modernization. We also request that the Committee include bill or report language that EHR subaccount funds can be used for reimbursing tribes that have purchased, or will purchase, commercial off the shelf systems, including annual licensing fees, maintenance and training.

Fund Expansion of Community Health Aide Program at $60 million.—Although we appreciate President Biden's request for $25 million for national expansion of the Community Health Aide Program (CHAP) in FY 2022, we believe this amount is insufficient and must be increased. NPAIHB has successfully established the framework for CHAP Expansion in the Portland Area with 12 working Dental Health Aide Therapists and 11 Behavioral Health Aides in training. Portland Area Tribes are also currently standing up the Portland Area CHAP Certification Board, the first to be established in the lower 48. For FY 2022, we request $60 million for continuation of the national expansion with $10 million for Portland Area to continue to expand CHAP. We also request that any funding appropriated for CHAP education programs include the Portland Area to support our education programs for Dental Health Aide Therapists and Behavioral Health Aides.

Increase Indian Health Professions Funding by $25 million. COVID–19 has exacerbated the recruitment and retention issues our Northwest Tribal communities face with health care providers. In order to address these provider shortages, NPAIHB supports an increase for Indian Health Professions to fully fund scholarships for all qualified applicants to the IHS Scholarship Program and to support the Loan Repayment Program to fund all physicians, nurse practitioners, physician's assistants, nurses and other direct care practitioners.[4] For FY 2022, we support the request by President Biden to increase the Indian Health Professions program by $25 million.

Increase Funding for Small Ambulatory Program, Joint Venture Construction Project and New Innovative Approaches for Health Care Facilities Construction by $21 billion. No funds have been allocated to Portland Area Tribes for new facility construction for at least 20 years. For this reason, Portland Area Tribes only support funding for specific construction programs and new innovative approaches for health care facility construction. We request a program increase of $21 billion in FY 2022 to support the Small Ambulatory Program (SAP) with funding for staffing packages, the Joint Venture Construction Program (JVCP), and funding for innovative approaches to address unmet construction needs for health care facilities construction under 25 U.S.C. § 1631(f).

Fund IHCIA Demonstration Projects Construction at $10 billion. In FY 2022, there must be at least $10 billion in facilities construction funding that is available outside of the current IHS Healthcare Facilities Construction Priority System (HFCPS) as a new, equitable source of funding that will provide access to construction funds for demonstration projects under 25 U.S.C. § 1637. The Portland Area Facilities Advisory Committee (PAFAC) completed a pilot study over 10 years ago to evaluate the feasibility of regional specialty referral centers in the IHS system. This innovative facility would provide services such as medical and surgical specialty care, specialty dental care, audiology, physical and occupational therapy as well as advanced imaging and outpatient surgery for 50,000 users. In FY 2022, $10 billion for demonstration projects construction under 25 U.S.C. § 1637 would realize Northwest Tribes long standing request for a regional specialty referral center.

Fund HIV at $60 million and HCV at $600 million. From 2013 through 2017 rates of new diagnosis of HIV for AI/AN people increased to 7.8 per 100,000—although rates of new HIV diagnosis decreased or stayed stable for all other racial and ethnic groups. We thank the Committee for the $5 million for HIV and Hepatitis C initiatives in FY 2021. For FY 2022, NPAIHB requests funding of $60 million for HIV to support Ending the HIV Epidemic. According to the IHS National Data Warehouse, it is estimated that there are at least 40,000 AI/AN people with a current HCV infection being served by IHS, tribal and urban Indian facilities. For FY 2022, $600 million is needed for IHS to provide the life—saving HCV treatment to the 40,000 AI/ANs with HCV.

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[4] NPAIHB Resolution18–03–07.

Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI). We request permanent reauthorization of SDPI at $250 million per year with medical inflation rate increases annually. We also request that an option be created for tribes to receive SDPI funds through Title 1 or Title V compacts or contracts. Specifically, we recommend that 42. U.S.C. § 254c-3(c) be amended with the addition of the following language: *"(2) APPROPRIATIONS.—On request from an Indian tribe or tribal organization, the Secretary shall award diabetes program funds made available to the requesting tribe or tribal organization under this section as amounts provided under Subsections 106(a)(1) and Subsection 508(c) of the Indian Self-Determination Act, 25 U.S.C. § 5325(a)(1) and § 5388(c), as appropriate."*

Thank you for this opportunity to provide recommendations on the FY 2022 IHS budget. I invite you to visit Portland Area Tribes to learn more about the utilization of IHS funding and health care needs in our Area. I look forward to working with the Subcommittee on our requests.[5]

[This statement was submitted by Nickolaus Lewis, Chair.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NORTON SOUND HEALTH CORPORATION

The requests of the Norton Sound Health Corporation (NSHC) for the FY 2022 Indian Health Service (IHS) budget are as follows:

—Increase funding for behavioral health social detoxification programs through the Preventing Alcohol Related Deaths (PARD) program under the Snyder Act or through the creation of a Special Behavorial Health Program for Indians, similar to the Special Diabetes Program for Indians
—Amend the new Indian Health Care Improvement Act to make newly constructed behavioral health centers eligible for staffing package funding
—Allow behavioral health centers newly constructed during COVID–19, to be eligible for reimbursement through the American Rescue Plan
—Move CSC and 105(l) lease costs out of the annual discretionary budget and over to mandatory funding and reform the 105(l)lease program to include the leasing of sanitation facilities by Tribal Health Organizations to support and carry out the delivery of quality, compliant water programs
—Address funding and policy inequities in IHS sanitation funding
—Increase funding for the small ambulatory clinic fund and expand to include staffing quarters to assist Norton Sound Health Corporation for its Wales replacement clinic and housing triplex for staff
—Direct IHS to use American Rescue Plan funds to designate funding for a youth treatment facility in Alaska
—Advance Appropriations for IHS to facilitate efficient budget planning, purchasing, hiring, and innovation for Tribal Health Organizations

Headquartered in Nome, Alaska, Norton Sound Health Corporation is owned and managed by the 20 federally recognized tribes of the Bering Strait region. Our tribal system includes a regional hospital and 15 village—based clinics, which we operate under an Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) agreement.[1] Our rural and remote Arctic region remains unconnected by roads, and we are 500 air miles from Alaska's economic hub of Anchorage. Our service area encompasses 44,000 square miles.

Recommend the IHS increase funding for behavioral health social detoxification programs through the Preventing Alcohol Related Deaths (PARD) program under the Snyder Act or through the creation of a Special Behavioral Health Program for Indians, similar to the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI).

As the alcohol and opioid abuse problem intensifies with the wider availability of heroin, oxycodone, and often—lethal synthuetics such as fentanyl, the demand for treatment services has grown exponentially. As a result, national and state entities and governments have openly recognized and called for the need to arm providers with more resources and funding; however, despite the evidence of rampant substance use concerns, back—logged psychiatric facilities, and reimbursements inadequate to meet the expenses of providing services, there is an imbalance between the magnitude of the problem and appropriate funding.

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[5] For more information, please contact Liz Coronado, NPAIHB, at ecoronado@npaihb.org or (559) 289–9964.

[1] We serve the communities of: Brevig Mission, Council, Diomede, Elim, Gambell, Golovin, King Island, Koyuk, Mary's Igloo, Nome, St. Michael, Savoonga, Shaktoolik, Shishmaref, Solomon, Stebbins, Teller, Unalakleet, Wales, and White Mountain.

The Bering Strait region has many of the same concerns as other areas of the state and country: high rates of substance use, depression, anxiety, and suicide. Because our region is in remote Alaska, resources with which to work are fewer than those in urban areas; this often results in sending our people to Anchorage or Fairbanks for higher levels of care. Individuals have a tough decision to make when considering their options for treatment outside of the region: leave their families for a facility and community that is not reflective of their own cultures and values, or, forego treatment. Unfortunately, the latter is often the choice. Uprooting someone from their culture and families—two supports used as building blocks in recovery—is ineffective treatment and an unfair choice; as a result, further spiraling into addiction and relapses becomes expected. We are destined to see our people with substance and psychiatric concerns repeat those patterns of relapse and crisis without a real choice to access localized treatment.

Amend the new Indian Health Care Improvement Act to make newly constructed behavioral health centers eligible for staffing package funding & allow behavioral health centers newly constructed during COVID–19, to be eligible for reimbursement through the American Rescue Plan.

In May 2021, Norton Sound Health Corporation (NSHC) is opening a Wellness and Training Center for behavioral health services. The Center will provide additional levels of care locally, addressing substance use and behavioral health treatment options in a culturally—sensitive manner. The services at the Center will include detoxification, Outpatient, Intensive Outpatient, Partial Hospitalization, and sober housing. Services will address mental and behavioral concerns, often co-occurring with substance use disorders. This project is essential in the promotion of healing, wellness, and the mitigation of substance abuse within our region.

Despite best efforts over several years to argue for inclusion as an eligible project under the Joint Venture Construction Program, standalone behavioral health facilities remain unsupported. As a result, NSHC has funded 85% of this project without the benefit of receiving a staffing package to offset future operational costs. With a $5.6 million annual operating budget, NSHC will provide these vital services at a significant loss; however, support through designated funding from IHS will ensure these services are sustainable and patients thrive for years to come.

Substance abuse and mental health concerns are healthcare crises; every opportunity for primary care projects supported through Joint Venture partnerships must be extended to these treatment facilities. Between March 2020 and March 2021, the number one diagnosis for people admitted to the inpatient unit at the NSHC hospital was Suicidal Ideation accounting for 25.86% of all diagnoses; Alcohol Abuse and Dependence accounted for 16.59% and 14.22%, the 6th and 7th most often used diagnoses upon admission. NSHC will continue to ask for a staffing package and third-party billing authority for this facility, as is the case with facilities constructed under the IHS Health Facilities Construction Priority List and its Joint Venture program. We would also benefit from the reimbursement of construction costs.

Unfortunately, there are further gaps in the continuum of care that must be developed, none more glaring than the dearth of youth psychiatric treatment facilities across the state. With increasing frequency, NSHC is admitting children and adolescents to its inpatient unit for psychoses, suicidal ideation, and other behavioral concerns. From March 2020 through March 2021, 35 adolescents between ages 11 and 17 were admitted for suicide—related diagnoses. Alarmingly, those 35 were on the unit for a combined 1,480 days. (Six 17 year-olds were present for 364 days, an average of one teenager every day of the year.) This is two times the length of stay totals (702) and almost three times the total length of stay for any one youth age group (164) from the same time period from 2019–2020. These 35 youth also account for 25% of the inpatient census and 943 more days than any other age group 18 years and older combined.

Unfortunately, NSHC currently does not have the capacity to provide the level of care many of these youth need. As a result, they languish on the unit while local staff members try to find a suitable placement out of region; however, there are only four Residential Psychiatric Treatment Centers (RPTC) with a combined 86 beds in Alaska. Admissions to these RPTCs are compromised by bed waits of 30 or more days at times, and because the escalating behaviors exhibited by some of these youth result in declined applications, forcing local providers to search for placements out of state, an unacceptable if not unavoidable circumstance. Additional appropriations to IHS can stand—up a new RPTC in Alaska for Alaska Native youth with staff members skilled in handling a variety of behaviors. This is a priority and a vital need that will increase the psychiatric bed census and keep our youth home.

NSHC expresses gratitude for the availability of small ambulatory clinic funding as a source of funding to support replacement clinics in villages and recommends it be expanded to include staff quarters, when projects are constructed in tandem.

A design for a new clinic and staff housing quarters for Wales, Alaska is underway at NSHC. There is a housing shortage in all the villages in the Bering Strait Region. Staff housing is critical for health aides who work at the local clinics as well as for traveling providers.

Funding for Water & Sewer Projects.—In the authorizing statute for IHS, Congress reaffirmed the Indian Health Service as the agency with "primary responsibility and authority to provide necessary sanitation facilities" and furthermore, "it is in the interest of the United States and it is the policy of the United States, that all Indian communities and Indian homes, new and existing, be provided with safe and adequate water supply systems and sanitary sewage waste disposal systems as soon as possible″(25 USC 1632). We respectfully urge the Appropriations Committee to remind and require IHS to recognize and treat Alaska Native communities as Native communities and eliminate the contribution requirements for critical sanitation public infrastructure.

The health impacts of a lack of sanitation and clean water infrastructure, in combination with a shortage of housing in our communities remains an ongoing public health crisis. The CDC has noted that one in three infants from communities without running water are hospitalized for respiratory infections. The communities of Diomede, Unalakleet & Wales are on the Environmental Protection Agency's EET list of water systems out of compliance with federal regulations for arsenic, uranium, and/or THMs (probable human carcinogen)-levels over what EPA has deemed to be safe for humans to drink in the long-term.

There remains a $1 billion sanitation need in Alaska, with 30 communities or 3300 homes unconnected. In the Bering Strait region we face a $261 million sanitation need. Five communities in our region, Diomede, Wales, Shishmaref, Stebbins, and Teller remain completely unconnected to running water and sewer. Gambell is 70% served, with 43 homes in the village of Gambell remaining unconnected to Water and Sewer. Ongoing sewer and water upgrades and maintenance backlogs remain concerns in seven communities. An estimated 520 homes in the Bering Strait region have no running water, nor flush toilets.

We are opposed to the decision of the IHS to implement in the FY2018 Sanitation Facilities Construction appropriation using a methodology based on the premise that our Alaska Native villages are 'non-Indian'. Our unserved communities average over 90% Alaska Native. The SDS policy places Indian communities in the same category as "non-Indian" communities requiring that tribes find contributions for ineligible buildings such as public schools and teacher housing. All community buildings are for the benefit of the Native community, including schools which serve as in some cases the primary gathering place for healthy community activities. Schools and teacher homes are also often the only facilities connected to sewer and water, creating significant sanitation inequities in a community.

In order to address the sanitation crisis in our communities, we urge that Congress remove the regulatory barriers to our unserved communities, and expand Indian Self Determination compacting with USDA and EPA sanitation funds to allow tribes and tribal organizations to establish pathways to service in response to the increasing environmental threats to our public infrastructure. We urge the Interior approprations committee to:

—Remove IHS Sanitation Deficiency System "Cost Caps". These arbitrary caps determine a project's feasibility prevents a path to service in unserved communities. The increased cost of doing business in Alaska, makes many projects ineligible for IHS funding.

—Urge full funding for Sanitation Facilities Construction $2.67 billion

Advance Appropriations for IHS.—For several years, Tribal Health Organizations have requested advance appropriations to facilitate budget planning, purchasing, hiring, and innovation, similar to the Veterans Administration enacted advanced appropriation in 2009. It has become unfortunately normal for appropriations to become chronically late. We were grateful to see President Biden support IHS advance appropriations in his FY 2022 budget request to Congress which was released on April 9, 2021. We urge the Committee to take the necessary steps in the FY 2022 appropriations bill to move IHS to an advance appropriation for FY 2023 and beyond.

Thank you for your consideration of the concerns and requests of the Norton Sound Health Corporation.

[This statement was submitted by Angela Gorn, President/CEO.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE OCEANA OFFSHORE DRILLING CAMPAIGN

Thank you, Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and members of the Subcommittee for this opportunity to submit testimony. I am the Federal Policy Manager on Oceana's Offshore Drilling Campaign. Oceana is the largest international advocacy organization devoted solely to ocean conservation. I write to urge the Committee to enact moratoria on expanded offshore drilling and seismic airgun blasting for oil and gas in the fiscal year 2022 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Prohibiting funding for new offshore oil and gas leasing activities would effectively ensure a one-year moratorium on the expansion of offshore drilling. There is longstanding precedent for this, as Congress—for nearly three decades—heeded concerns from the communities it represents and restricted spending on offshore federal oil and gas leasing and drilling activities via the appropriations process. More recently, such funding restrictions have been part of the House Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill for the past two years. Oceana asks the Subcommittee to make it a priority to include offshore drilling moratoria in your FY2022 bill.

In January 2018, the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) released its 2019–2024 Draft Proposed Program (DPP). This was the initial draft of the Trump Administration's plan to open more of our coasts to offshore drilling. As proposed, the DPP threatened to radically expand oil and gas leasing to the Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic Oceans, as well as off Florida's Gulf Coast. Subsequently, President Trump joined Presidents Bush, Clinton, and Obama in utilizing his executive authority to protect large areas of the OCS from new offshore drilling by establishing a ten-year moratorium on leasing for offshore oil and gas off North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. This action further exemplified the bipartisan nature of offshore drilling protections.

Earlier this year, President Biden signed an Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad, which paused all new oil and gas leasing on federal lands and waters, including those offshore, pending a review of the nation's fossil fuel leasing program. That review is currently underway. Coastal communities up and down our shores deserve the peace of mind that drilling protections will bring, and Congress has an important role to play.

There is a long history of involvement by Congress during the planning stages of BOEM's five-year programs, regardless of which party controls the White House. Reinstating offshore drilling moratoria through the appropriations process would prevent BOEM from leasing specific areas that Congress wishes to protect from future offshore drilling. Without moratoria provisions, Congress relinquishes its power to influence the future of offshore drilling to the Executive Branch.

Offshore drilling threatens the continued prosperity of coastal communities and states whose economies are directly tied to clean, oil-free shorelines and waters. The expansion of oil and gas activities in federal ocean waters poses a real threat to every business and industry that relies on a healthy marine environment to thrive. A recent Oceana analysis found that tourism, fishing, and recreation—all major drivers of coastal economies—in the Atlantic, Pacific, and eastern Gulf of Mexico support around 3.3 million American jobs and $250 billion in GDP each year.[1] If fisheries are properly managed and coastlines are continuously protected, these jobs can be sustained for generations to come. This stands in stark contrast to offshore drilling for oil and gas, which produces finite resources. When the oil and gas run out, so will the jobs. Coastal communities want a reliable source of revenue—not more dirty drilling for oil and gas. In fact, as of today, opposition and concern over offshore drilling activities has been expressed by:

—East and West Coast governors, including Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine, California, Oregon, and Washington
—More than 390 local municipalities
—Over 2,300 local, state, and federal bipartisan officials
—East and West Coast alliances representing over 55,000 businesses and 500,000 fishing families
—Pacific, New England, South Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic fishery management councils
—More than 120 scientists

[1] Oceana (Jan. 2021) Offshore Drilling Fuels the Climate Crisis and Threatens the Economy. Washington, D.C. Available: https://usa.oceana.org/sites/default/files/2021/01/27/final_climate_economy_fact_sheet_m1_doi.pdf.

—More than 80 former military leaders
—Commercial and recreational fishing interests including the Southeastern Fisheries Association, Snook and Gamefish Foundation, Fisheries Survival Fund, Billfish Foundation, and International Game Fish Association
—California Coastal Commission, California Fish and Game Commission and California State Lands Commission
—Department of Defense, NASA, U.S. Air Force and Florida Defense Support Task Force

Offshore drilling is also fueling the climate crisis, and communities are already facing the devastating impacts of warming oceans, rising seas, and increasingly disastrous weather patterns. The risks posed by new offshore drilling are too great, especially when its climate impacts are considered. A recent Oceana analysis found ending new leasing for offshore oil and gas could prevent emissions of more than 19 billion tons of greenhouse gas, which is equivalent to taking every car in the nation off the road for 15 years—or almost three times the entire U.S annual greenhouse gas emissions.[2] Greenhouse gas pollution drives climate change, which harms human health and our ocean.[3]

Climate change is already impacting everyone, including those who live along the coasts. As a result of increasingly intense and extreme weather, dangerous storm surges push farther inland, expanding their deadly and costly impact.[4] Permanently protecting our coasts from new oil development can prevent over $720 billion in damages to people, property, and the environment.[5] Damages on this scale would be like losing the entire economy of a major city, like Washington D.C., Boston, or Atlanta, for a year.[6]

Developing oil and gas in new areas would require construction and development along much of the coast. Adding large—scale refineries, platforms, offshore and onshore pipelines, and other support infrastructure would drastically transform the character of coastal towns. Heavy industrialization of many coastlines is also likely to harm nearby resources and ecosystems.

In addition to permanently altering the landscape of many towns up and down the East and West Coasts, offshore drilling is a dirty investment with long-term consequences for the environment. Efforts to pursue offshore oil have consistently resulted in spills that are incredibly toxic to living organisms, both physically and biochemically.[7] Large—scale catastrophes such as BP's Deepwater Horizon disaster in 2010 highlight how a single accident can cause enormous and lasting consequences. The Deepwater Horizon tragedy killed 11 rig workers, spilled more than 200 million gallons of oil, fouled thousands of miles of coastline, endangered public health, and killed thousands of birds, dolphins, and fish.[8] Seaside communities on the Gulf are still recovering, physically and economically, from the estimated $36.9 billion in damages caused by the Deepwater Horizon spill.[9]

Offshore oil development is dirty across the board, beyond the catastrophic spills that make headlines. Smaller spills happen on a routine basis during day-to-day rig operations, as well as during exploration, production, and transportation.[10] At least

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[2] Oceana (Jan. 2021) Offshore Drilling Fuels the Climate Crisis and Threatens the Economy.

[3] IPCC (2014) Climate change 2014: impacts, adaptation, and vulnerability: Working Group II contribution to the fifth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

[4] IPCC (2019) Summary for Policymakers. In: IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate [H.-O. Pőrtner, D.C. Roberts, V. Masson-Delmotte, P. Zhai, M. Tignor, E. Poloczanska, K. Mintenbeck, M. Nicolai, A. Okem, J. Petzold, B. Rama, N. Weyer (eds.)]. Available: Available : https://report.ipcc.ch/srocc/pdf/SROCC__FinalDraft__FullReport.pdf.

[5] TBD Economics (2021) Producing Oil and Gas on the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf: CO2e Emissions and the Social Cost of Carbon. Available: https://usa.oceana.org/sites/default/files/4046/
final__ghg__emissions__and__scc__from__ocs__development__tbd__economics__final012221.pdf.

[6] Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2020, Regional Data. https://www.bea.gov/.

[7] 2 NOAA, Office of Response and Restoration, The Toxicity of Oil: What's the Big Deal? (Aug. 27, 2012), https://response.restoration.noaa.gov/about/media/toxicity-oil-whats-big-deal.html.

[8] 3National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling, Deep Water, The Gulf Oil Disaster and the Future of Offshore drilling, (January 2011), https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-OILCOMMISSION/pdf/GPO-OILCOMMISSION.pdf and Haney, J. C., Geiger, H. J., and Short, J. W. (2014). Bird mortality from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Inter-Research Marine Ecology Progress Series, 513.

[9] Lawrence. C. Smith et al., Analysis of Environmental and Economic Damages from British Petroleum's Deepwater Horizon oil spill, 74 Albany L. Rev. 563, 563–85 (2011).

[10] Cheryl McMahon Anderson et al., BOEM, Update of Occurrence Rates for Offshore Oil Spills (2012), available: https://www.boem.gov/uploadedFiles/BOEM/Environmental__Stewardship/Environmental__Assess ment/Oil__Spill__Modeling/AndersonMayesLabelle2012.pdf.

6,500 oil spills occurred in U.S. waters between 2007 and 2017, and a recent study found that spills are typically far larger than what is reported.[11] During that same time period, hundreds of workers were injured every year and on average, a fire or explosion erupted on offshore rigs every three days on the Outer Continental Shelf.[12] Expanding offshore drilling to new frontiers when the industry remains dirty and dangerous is both ill—advised and out of touch with the needs and wishes of those who inhabit the coast.

It is time for Congress to restore the precedent of enacting appropriations moratoria to protect our oceans and coastal communities. We ask the Subcommittee and full Committee to protect our coasts from dirty and dangerous offshore drilling and prohibit the use of any funding provided to the Department of Interior in the FY2022 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill for the purposes of any new oil and gas preleasing, leasing, and related activities. The threats to coastal economies, the climate, marine wildlife, and your own constituents are simply too great to risk expanding the footprint of offshore drilling. Thank you again for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

[This statement was submitted by Michael Messmer, Federal Policy Manager.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE OGLALA SIOUX TRIBE

Recommendations:

1. BIA—Not less than $75 million for the BIA Road Maintenance Program.
2. BIA—$15 million to establish a targeted BIA roads improvement program.
3. BIA—$200 million increase for BIA tribal law enforcement and detention services.
4. BIA OJS—Prioritize and expand opioid and drug crisis funding in Indian Country.
5. BIA—$23 million for the Housing Improvement Program.
6. BIA—$30 million funding for ICWA and child protection services.
7. BIA—Increase support for Welfare Assistance, Social Services, and the Tiwahe Initiative with dedicated funding in each of these categories for the Great Plains Area.
8. IHS—Provide full funding and advance appropriations for the Indian Health Service.
9. IHS—Increase funding for IHS Facilities Construction and Maintenance with dedicated funding to address outstanding needs in the Great Plains Area.
10. IHS—Increase support for IHS Sanitation Facilities Maintenance and Construction.
11. EPA—Increase support for EPA Revolving Funds to complete the Mni Wiconi Project.
12. BIA—Increase funding for tribal water maintenance departments.

INTRODUCTION

Thank you Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to testify on FY 2022 funding recommendations for programs under your jurisdiction. My name is Kevin Killer and I serve as the President of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, a member of the Oceti Sakowin (Seven Council Fires, known as the Great Sioux Nation). The chronic underfunding of Indian Country programs and treaty obligations over the years has taken an enormous toll on our Tribe and our members. The Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 cemented the United States' obligations to the Oglala Sioux Tribe, and we look to you to fulfill those obligations through the federal budget process.

We believe that two ways to do this are through reformation of the budget process so that Department of Interior funds are distributed based on demonstrated need and full funding of Tribal Priority Allocations (TPA) identified in Interior programs. Needs—based funding would more efficiently and effectively make use of federal resources, while also respecting the diverse needs of Tribal Nations. Together, needs—based funding and TPA make for a stronger and more responsive federal budget.

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[11] Oceana. Dirty Drilling: Trump Administration Proposals Weaken Key Safety Protections and Radically Expand Offshore Drilling. (2019), available: https://usa.oceana.org/sites/default/files/offshore_drilling_safety_report_final_0.pdf

[12] Oceana. Dirty Drilling: Trump Administration Proposals Weaken Key Safety Protections and Radically Expand Offshore Drilling. (2019), available: https://usa.oceana.org/sites/default/files/offshore_drilling_safety_report_final_0.pdf

In the spirit of advancing the welfare of my Tribe and other Tribal Nations, I offer the following budget recommendations for FY 2022.

I. TRIBAL GOVERNMENT SUB-ACTIVITIES

Not Less Than $75 Million for the BIA Road Maintenance Program; $15 Million for a New Targeted BIA Roads Improvement Program.—Funding for the BIA Road Maintenance program has been under-resourced for several fiscal year cycles. In FY 2021, for example, the BIA received only $36.79 million despite a deferred maintenance backlog exceeding $60 million in the Great Plains Region and almost $300 million nationwide. Our Tribe is often forced to expend limited tribal funds to cover the difference in roads maintenance needs—a financial strain that is compounded by the costs of the ongoing pandemic response and the annual occurrence of snow and ice control that can consume up to 65% of our budget each winter. Further, precarious road conditions cause extreme wear and tear on emergency vehicles, school buses, and personal vehicles with impacts on response times, school attendance, and employment and medical care.

Such dire circumstances require immediate solutions. One such solution is a significant increase of annual appropriations in the BIA Road Maintenance account so Tribal Nations, such as ours, can receive a funding amount that is actually viable to get the much needed work done adequately. The other needed solution is to create a new BIA roads maintenance account that targets backlogged road and bridge projects by taking mile inventory, remoteness, and weather conditions into consideration. An influx of FY 2022 funding for road construction, maintenance, and equipment would increase public safety, facilitate economic development, decrease costs, and alleviate the hardships our members currently endure. We respectfully request Congress provide not less than $75 million for BIA Road Maintenance along with a separate appropriation of $15 million to establish a targeted BIA roads improvement program that accounts for a Tribal Nation's geographic size, location, and mile inventory.

$200 Million Increase for BIA Tribal Law Enforcement and Detention Services.—Our Tribe is operating with less than 40% of the police officers that the BIA agrees are needed to provide adequate police coverage on our Reservation. They serve in outdated vehicles with no backup and have not received raises in over three years. In FY 2020, the Tribe received 139,206 calls of which 74,032 required an officer response. Because of chronic under-resourcing and unreliable road conditions emergency response times are deplorable, around 30–40 minutes, which creates a dangerous situation for the victims of accidents and crime, and for our officers. To reach the staffing levels required by the BIA's own needs assessment, our Tribe alone needs an increase of $12 million in federal law enforcement funding.

Public safety facilities and housing construction programs have critical needs. When the BIA prepared to condemn our Medicine Root (Kyle) Detention facility in 2010, that building became the last emergency jail design funded by this Subcommittee. The facility remains unbuilt today due to a lack of resources. In the interim, we have prisoners and staff working in a below substandard building that fails to meet federal safety standards, all while the costs of construction continue to rise. Please help end the emergency this Subcommittee declared in 2010 by appropriating the funding necessary to finally replace this building. We stand ready to work with you and the BIA in realizing this long overdue goal. We strongly recommend Congress provide an additional $200 million for tribal law enforcement and detention services in FY 2022.

Prioritize and Expand Opioid and Drug Crisis Funding in Indian Country.—We appreciate the continued focus of Congress and federal agencies on addressing our national substance abuse epidemic—a crisis that has only grown over the course of the pandemic with no signs of relenting. Our Tribe has previously declared a State of Emergency due to the increasing rates of homicide and methamphetamine use on our lands. Such activities are antithetical to the Lakota way of life and balance of society. One of our most pressing needs is for on-Reservation drug treatment facilities. Our existing residential and outpatient treatment facilities, for example, are in desperate need of renovations to accommodate additional patients. We would also like to offer skills—based transitional living facilities to assist patients with their long-term recovery goals, but we lack the necessary resources for development and operations. The ability to provide comprehensive and culturally—appropriate care within our community would be life—changing for Tribal members. We urge Congress to maintain funding for the Tribal Opioid Response grants and continue the expanded scope to include other drugs, such as methamphetamines, that are causing immeasurable harm.

I. HEALTHCARE—THE HEART OF TRIBAL GOVERNMENT AND HUMAN SERVICES

Provide Full Funding and Advance Appropriations for the Indian Health Service.—The IHS strives to provide tribal citizens with access to high quality and comprehensive medical services, no more so than during the ongoing pandemic. It has navigated unimaginable hardships related to supplies, staffing levels, infrastructure and facilities, and high rates of underlying conditions in serving our people at this time. Yet, despite its importance to Indian health, it must still contend with annual uncertainties related to federal funding. This is unacceptable. The time to change is now. IHS should be given parity with the Veterans Health Administration with full advance appropriations on at least a two-year cycle. Full advance IHS appropriations would promote greater stability in services, personnel recruitment and retention, and facilities management.

The IHS Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup has calculated this need at $12.759 billion for full funding. While this represents a dramatic increase in funding, it is imperative that Congress address the true needs of the Indian health system. We, thus, strongly urge Congress to fully fund advance IHS appropriations beginning in FY 2022.

Increase Funding for IHS Sanitation Facilities Construction and Maintenance.—The IHS has a backlog of at least $2.6 billion in unmet Sanitation Facilities maintenance and construction needs. It is critical that these basic resources be increased in tribal communities. Sanitation facilities are directly related to health and these issues have become particularly acute during the pandemic, especially on Pine Ridge. Increased funding for IHS Sanitation Facilities will improve the daily lives of our people and greatly improve health outcomes in the short- and long-term. We urgently recommend that Congress provide an additional increase in the IHS Sanitation Facilities Construction and Maintenance accounts for FY 2022 and we ask that funding within this account be directed to address the critical facilities needs of the Great Plains Region.

Promote Access to Clean Water for Human Health through the Mni Wiconi Project.—Our Tribe is the lead sponsor of the Mni Wiconi Project (Pub. L. 100–516, as amended), which provides potable water from the Missouri River to three reservations and the West River/Lyman-Jones Water District. Funding is needed to complete the necessary community systems upgrades on the Pine Ridge Reservation. We are working with several federal agencies to implement its plan to complete the upgrades. We need in excess of $25 million to upgrade 19 existing systems and transfer them into the Mni Wiconi Project, as intended by the Act. Once transferred, they will be operated and maintained pursuant to authorized funding under the Mni Wiconi Project Act. We recommend Congress increase funding for the IHS Sanitation Facilities Construction account and EPA Revolving Funds to bring this monumental project to completion. We also recommend that Congress establish a 5% tribal set-aside for the National Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and the National Clean Water Act State Revolving Fund.

Increase Funding for Tribal Water Maintenance Departments.—Our Tribe is in dire need of this funding to ensure our reservation has adequate and safe water supplies to be a livable homeland and to keep Reservation residents healthy. We have identified our shovel—ready potable water projects and specific water system needs that we would be glad to share with the Subcommittee as additional context for this request. These include community water systems upgrades, pipe construction and repairs, water well maintenance, water tank needs, and associated maintenance equipment. These are all critical for improving our existing water systems in the pandemic. We recommend Congress provide $10.5 million for the BIA Water Management, Planning and Pre-Development Program and $12 million for the BIA Water Resources (TPA) Program.

II. HUMAN SERVICES SUB-ACTIVITIES

$23 Million for the BIA Housing Improvement Program (HIP).—Our Reservation has an acute housing crisis. Our current unmet need is for over 4,000 new housing units and 1,000 housing repairs—and these numbers are changing every month as pandemic stressors increase wear-and-tear on homes and put pressure on our housing market. Many existing houses in our community are overcrowded, in disrepair, and/or lack the requisite infrastructure for safe and healthy homes. No individual or family on Pine Ridge should live in these home situations. We have no surplus housing to provide temporary housing for victims of violence at this time. HIP has played a central role in assisting families under 150% of the HHS Poverty Guidelines that live in substandard housing and have no other resource for housing assistance become homeowners. A stable living environment translates into improved

family conditions, employment rates, and academic achievement. We recommend that Congress provide $23 million for HIP in FY 2022.

Increase Funding for Welfare Assistance, Social Services, and the Tiwahe Initiative.—The unmet needs of our Reservation are alarming and well-documented. The average Oglala Tribal member must contend with high rates of infant mortality, chronic illness, intergenerational trauma, limited to nonexistent economic development, and limited recreational outlets, among other factors. Social services operated by the Interior and BIA (along with other federal agencies outside of this Subcommittee's jurisdiction) are, therefore, essential to meeting our citizens' complex needs and promoting their personal development and well-being, particularly in the pandemic. To strengthen the delivery of social services in Indian Country we recommend that Congress direct the BIA to develop a 5-year Strategic Plan pursuant to tribal consultation as a funding condition. We recommend Congress increase support for Welfare Assistance, Social Services, and the Tiwahe Initiative in FY 2022. We also urge the Subcommittee to provide dedicated funding within these categories to address the staggering unmet needs in the Great Plains Area.

Protecting Tribal Youth and Communities under ICWA.—Our Child Protection Services (CPS) and ICWA program conduct integrated child and family services on our Reservation. We are challenged by chronic underfunding that limits our ability to deliver services, manage caseloads, and to recruit and retain qualified staff. Our CPS and ICWA programs cost almost $600,000 annually to administer. Additionally, our Emergency Youth Shelter (EYS) Program is in desperate need of additional funding. EYS provides emergency shelter to youth age 12–17, which includes clean bedding, meals, toiletries as well as making health, vision and dental appointments, meeting with school personnel for school needs and cultural and entertainment activities. We currently have one Residential Care Provider, but need a minimum of four to effectively operate the program. We also need funding for building repairs, a program van, sufficient groceries and utility bills. We ask Congress to increase funding for ICWA and child protection services. We also ask Congress to increase the BIA Social Services budget to address our EYS program needs.

[This statement was submitted by Kevin Killer, President.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE OREGON NATURAL DESERT ASSOCIATION

Honorable Jeff Merkley
Chairman

Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member

Dear Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski and Subcommittee Members:

As your Subcommittee considers its priorities for the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies budget for fiscal year 2022, we wish to highlight the need to address comprehensive conservation planning for the National Wildlife Refuge System. Our national wildlife refuges are essential for protecting and enhancing biodiversity, wildlife migration, climate resilient habitats, cultural resources and recreational opportunities nationwide. Unfortunately, planning for dozens of national wildlife refuges has fallen behind schedule, depriving managers, partners and the public of the latest science and best practices to provide for these values. As part of the $600 million advocates are recommending for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to administer the National Wildlife Refuge System, we urge you to allocate $15.7 million for Conservation Planning (account 1265) to support planning on national wildlife refuges.

Allocations for this budget subactivity have dwelled at just four-tenths of one percent of the Refuge System budget over the past several years. Meanwhile, refuge plans have become outdated and even expired under law. The amount recommended here, equal to the sum allocated for FY 2010 (adjusted for inflation) would allow the Service to revise and update refuge plans across the country, in accordance with Congressional direction, with broad public participation, and in support of local and national conservation goals.

Thank you for your consideration of our request, and for your important work on the Subcommittee.

Sincerely,

Oregon Natural Desert Association
Defenders of Wildlife
East Cascades Audubon Society

Friends of Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge
Friends of Nevada Wilderness
Natural Resources Defense Council
Portland Audubon
The Wilderness Society

[This statement was submitted by Mark Salvo, Program Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE OREGON WATER RESOURCES CONGRESS

The Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC) is highly supportive of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Clean Water State Revolving Fund Loan Program (CWSRF) and is requesting appropriations for this program be increased to at least $3 billion in FY 2022. While the President's Proposed FY 2022 Budget increases the program to $1.871 billion, the growing backlog of aging infrastructure necessitates a greater investment. The CWSRF is an effective loan program that addresses critical water infrastructure needs while benefitting the environment, local communities, and the economy.

OWRC was established in 1912 as a trade association to support the protection of water rights and promote the wise stewardship of water resources statewide. OWRC members are local governmental entities, which include irrigation districts, water control districts, drainage districts, water improvement districts, and other agricultural water suppliers that deliver water to roughly 1/3 of all irrigated land in Oregon. These water stewards operate complex water management systems, including water supply reservoirs, canals, pipelines, and hydropower production facilities.

FY 2022 APPROPRIATIONS

We recognize our country must make strategic investments with scarce resources, particularly as our economy recovers from pandemic—related impacts. The CWSRF is a perfect example of the type of program that should have funding increased because it creates jobs while benefitting the environment and is an efficient return on taxpayer investment. CWSRF projects provide much needed construction and professional services jobs, particularly in rural areas facing economic hardship. Moreover, as a loan program, it is a wise investment that allows local communities to leverage their limited resources and address critical infrastructure needs that would otherwise be unmet.

In Oregon, the CWSRF is administered by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), who responsibly maintains the program through repaid loans, interest, fees, and available federal capitalization grants. According to EPA, for every $1 of federal capitalization funding, $3 worth of assistance is provided, leveraging available funds to maximize benefits for local communities, the environment, and the economy. Unfortunately, available funding for water infrastructure projects continues be woefully insufficient to meet the growing water infrastructure funding needs in Oregon and nationwide. Funding for the CWSRF needs to be incrementally increased to support water infrastructure projects that are addressing these critical needs.

BACKGROUND OF CWSRF USAGE BY OREGON IRRIGATION DISTRICTS

Over the course of the program's 30-year history in Oregon, several OWRC member districts have successfully used CWSRF for projects that improve water quality and water quantity associated with water delivery diversions, canals, and pipelines throughout the state. OWRC and our members are highly supportive of the CWSRF, including promoting the program to our members and annually submitting federal appropriations testimony in support of increased funding for the CWSRF. We believe it is an important funding tool irrigation districts and other water suppliers are using for innovative piping projects that provide multiple environmental and economic benefits.

Numerous irrigation districts and other water suppliers need to pipe currently open canals, which significantly reduces sediment, improves water temperature, and provides other water quality benefits to rivers and streams. Piping immediately improves the efficiency of the water delivery system and helps increase available water supplies for fish and irrigators alike. These projects also decrease energy consumption (from reduced pumping) and have opportunities for generating renewable energy, primarily through in-conduit hydropower. However, the lack of robust funding for these types of worthwhile projects has created increased uncertainty for potential borrowers regarding whether adequate funding will be available in future years.

CWSRF is often an integral part of an overall package of local, state, and federal funding that necessitates a stronger level of assurance loan funds will be available for planned water infrastructure projects. Reductions in CWSRF appropriations could lead to loss of grant funding and delay or derail beneficial projects irrigation districts have been developing for years.

The success Oregon districts have had in using the loan program to design and implement multi-beneficial projects has led to increased applications to the CWSRF. Now irrigation districts are once again eligible for a key funding element, principal forgiveness (which was reinstated with the passage of the WIIN Act in 2016 and related state rulemaking in 2017), and we expect to see even more interest in the program. OWRC is hopeful there will be enough funding available to complete projects that will not only benefit the environment and the patrons served by the water delivery system, but also benefit the economy.

CWSRF NEEDS IN OREGON

The appropriations for the CWSRF program over the past few years has been far short of what is needed to address critical water infrastructure needs in Oregon and across the nation. This has led to fewer water infrastructure projects, and therefore a reduction in improvements to water quality and water quantity. However, OWRC is pleased to see a trend of modest increases in appropriations after several years of decreased funding and hope to see this trend continue as infrastructure needs have become more expensive and even more time critical. DEQ's most recent "Proposed Intended Use Plan—State Fiscal Year 2022" includes sixteen loan applications totaling $171,400,305 in requested funding. Currently, the loan program has $261,526,658 net available to lend for state fiscal year 2022. DEQ can award a maximum individual loan amount of $39,228,999.

The following two irrigation district projects are currently ranked by DEQ in the top four by overall score and also meet the Green Project Reserve (GPR) requirement. Increased funding will help catalyze many more projects like the ones below in Oregon and throughout the nation.

North Unit Irrigation District (Deschutes County) $8,150,000 (Ranked #1).—Sec. 319, Design and Construction: Lateral 43 and Juniper Butte Piping Project. The District's System Improvement Plan (2017) proposes to pipe the district's open canal network, including the addition of pressure reducing stations, reuse/retention reservoirs, and metered turnouts for every water user. The current project proposes to start in one portion of the district by piping laterals 31, 32, 34 and 43, which represents a total of 8.2 miles of leaky canal and serves over 9,800 acres of agricultural land. The project will improve water quality in the lower Crooked River, Lake Billy Chinook, and the lower Deschutes River by removing canal seepage and minimizing and eliminating return flow from agricultural lands. Piping of the laterals will also encourage on-farm efficiency by providing pressurized water, which enables the switch from furrow irrigation to sprinkler irrigation, reducing excessive seepage and agricultural runoff from fields.

Rogue River Valley Irrigation District and Medford Irrigation District (Jackson County) $24,334,500 (Ranked #4).—Sec. 319, Design and Construction, Joint System Canal Piping Project. Rogue River Valley Irrigation District and Medford Irrigation District jointly use the Joint System Canal to serve several thousand customers with crop irrigation. Seepage and evaporation are occurring along the canal, which is resulting in lost water and ultimately less water flowing through the canal downstream to other water bodies. The proposed project includes design and construction of piping up to 4.4 miles of canal and diversions, replacement of siphons, improvements to water diversion structures and fish passage. The project will address water quantity and quality for downstream streams, including South Fork Little Butte Creek, which experience low flow in some seasons. The project focuses on best management practices for irrigation to improve water quality from nonpoint sources.

OTHER EXAMPLES OF INNOVATIVE DISTRICTS AND GREEN PROJECT RESERVES IN OREGON

Oregon irrigation districts and other water suppliers are on the forefront of innovative piping projects that provide and leverage multiple benefits, including "green" infrastructure projects. Otherwise known as Green Project Reserve (GPR), DEQ is required to use at least ten percent of annual federal capitalization grants on projects that promote water and energy efficiency, are environmentally innovative, or include green infrastructure. In 2009, the first year GPR was a requirement, four Oregon irrigation districts received over $11 million in funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) through the CWSRF for projects which created valuable jobs while improving water quality. These four projects were essential

to DEQ not only meeting, but exceeding, the minimum requirement that 20% of the total ARRA funding for the CWSRF be used for GPRs. Without the irrigation district projects, it is likely Oregon's CWSRF would not have qualified for ARRA funding. Oregon districts continue to be on the forefront of water innovations; consistently applying for, and successfully implementing, a variety of GPR qualifying projects.

In 2019, four GPR projects were financed by DEQ for a total of $13 million, far exceeding EPA's minimum requirement of $1.8 million for such projects in Oregon. Of those four funded projects, three were irrigation district projects that met several categories of the GPR requirements related to improved water and energy efficiency.

In 2020, another three projects received awards totaling $38 million and all met the GPR criteria:

Lone Pine Irrigation District (Deschutes, Jefferson, and Crook counties) $2,000,000.—Sec. 319, Design and Construction, Irrigation Modernization Project. This project will modernize district—owned canals and laterals to conserve water, improve operational efficiency, reduce electrical and energy costs, reduce O&M for farmers through decreased pumping and improve habitat in the Deschutes River. The project will achieve these goals by piping all the district's open canals using HDPE and steel pipe. The existing suspension bridge over the Crooked River is in disrepair and a new structure is needed to convey the irrigation water across the river. The district will replace the bridge with a siphon under the river.

Middle Fork Irrigation District (Hood River County) $20,000,000.—Sec. 319 Design and Construction, Clear Branch Dam Rehabilitation and Coe Branch Pipeline. The district will implement multiple projects to improve water quality and quantity associated with its irrigation diversions in the Middle Fork Hood River watershed. Specific projects include installing a new deep—water outlet and improving fish passage in Laurance Lake; installing new irrigation pipe to alleviate impacts from current irrigation system and addressing return flows from the irrigation system; improving the spillway at the Clear Branch Dam; and improving irrigation efficiency by district patrons.

Swalley Irrigation District (Deschutes County) $16,000,000.—Sec. 319 Design and Construction, Irrigation Modernization Project. This irrigation piping project includes the installation of pressurized pipe to eliminate seepage and evaporative loss from open ditches; flow regulating and metering devices at service connections; pressurized delivery to eliminate individual pumps system—wide; active education; and a sprinkler exchange program. Piping and pressurizing the irrigation canals will result in approximately 1.1 million kWh/year in energy conservation and conserve up to 16 cubic feet per second of water during the irrigation season.

Providing increased appropriations for the CWSRF program will help implement additional innovative and multi-benefit projects like these in Oregon and across the nation.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we are strongly supportive of increased appropriations to the CWSRF program, allowing Oregon's DEQ to continue make targeted loans that address Clean Water Act issues and improve water quality while incentivizing innovative water management solutions that benefit local communities, agricultural economies, and the environment. This voluntary approach creates and promotes cooperation and collaborative solutions to complex water resources challenges. We respectfully request the appropriation of at least $3 billion for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund for FY 2022.

Sincerely,

April Snell, Executive Director

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE OSAGE MINERALS COUNCIL

Thank you Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski and Members of the Senate Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies for the opportunity to share the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 funding priorities of the Osage Minerals Council. The Council is the tribal government body recognized under the Osage Allotment Act of June 28, 1906, 34 Stat. 539, as amended (1906 Act), and by the Osage Nation Constitution to administer, develop, and protect the Osage Mineral Estate.

We request your continued support for our well plugging program. We began seeking funding five years ago in 2016 to address a long-standing problem with more than 1,600 abandoned and dangerous wells in our Osage Minerals Estate. In FY

2018, Congress provided $3 million in funding. This funding was a great start and we ask for $10 million in additional funding so that we can continue this good work.

We are also pleased to see others joining us in the well plugging effort. The Biden Administration's FY 2022 Budget Request and bills recently introduced in Congress show widespread support and the need to plug abandoned wells. However, until those laws are passed and new programs are established, the Osage Minerals Council has work to do and an ongoing need to plug abandoned and dangerous wells in our Osage Minerals Estate. We ask for your continued support of our program.

FY 2018 FUNDING FOR PLUGGING ABANDONED WELLS

We are grateful for the $3 million in funding provided by Congress in report language in the FY 2018 Omnibus Appropriations Act. The abandoned wells within our Osage Mineral Estate fall under the authority of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), but, for more than a century, BIA never had the funding to plug abandoned wells in our Mineral Estate. The funding Congress provided in FY 2018 was the first time substantial funding was available for this work.

The wells within our Osage Mineral Estate are different than the wells on all other federal and Indian lands. For other federal and Indian lands, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has the authority and funding to plug abandoned wells. This BLM authority does not apply to our mineral estate and the dangers of abandoned wells were not being addressed. Thank you for addressing this unique issue with our Osage Mineral Estate.

PROGRESS MADE WITH FY 2018 WELL PLUGGING FUNDING

The funding provided in FY 2018 allowed us to make substantial progress addressing the dangers of abandoned wells in our Osage Mineral Estate. Many of these wells are near schools, playgrounds and homes, and many are leaking oil, gas, salt water or other chemicals into the air and water. In some cases, these wells also have high fluid levels that can leak into surface water if the casing is cracked. With this funding, we have been able to protect our lands and waters and address the legacy of environmental and health hazards from these abandoned wells.

We used the funding provided in FY 2018 to organize a Well Plugging Committee, investigate abandoned wells, hire well plugging crews, mobilize equipment, and plug 34 wells. We also found 11 wells that are capable of additional oil and gas production. For the wells that are capable of more production, we fixed cracks in the well casing, stopped underground leaking, and secured the wells for future development.

Through all of this we provided jobs for hundreds of people, including many Osage tribal members, that work for the more than 50 vendors we contract with as a part of our well plugging crews. Each of these vendors are required to register and be certified by the Osage Nation which also verifies that they are properly insured. We are pleased to report that all of our well plugging efforts were completed without any serious injuries.

In total, we plugged and secured 45 wells using about $1.6 million of the $3 million provided. We will use up the remaining $1.4 million over the rest of 2021. We have already identified another 48 wells to be plugged this year. Each well can take $40,000 to $70,000 to plug, depending on how hard it is to access the well site and what we learn when we get onsite.

The work we are doing with this funding is a huge success. We have plugged wells that were leaking dangerous liquids and gases near schools, playgrounds, homes, and communities. Surface owners are delighted with our work and many wish that we had additional funding to do further remediation of land resources. A couple examples of our well plugging work are shown here.

The photo to the right is known as the Shambles Well. It cost $238,000 to plug. In order to plug this well, we had to reroute a creek and move a hill to get equipment to the site. We also had to avoid railroad tracks that had been constructed around the well. During our work plugging the well, oil and gas flowed the whole time. In the photo you can see the oil leaking from the well on to the ground.

The railroad tracks around the Shambles Well is just one example of how our communities have grown up around these wells. Oil and gas development in the Osage Mineral Estate occurs in the same place where our families live, work, and play.

In the next photo to the right, we are standing in a softball field at a school where an abandoned well was leaking gas in multiple locations and needed to be plugged. The photo shows the softball field after our plugging efforts. However, once plugged,

the gas began leaking from other areas and we had to continue efforts to stop the gas from leaking. We continue to monitor and address issues at this site to help keep the softball field safe.

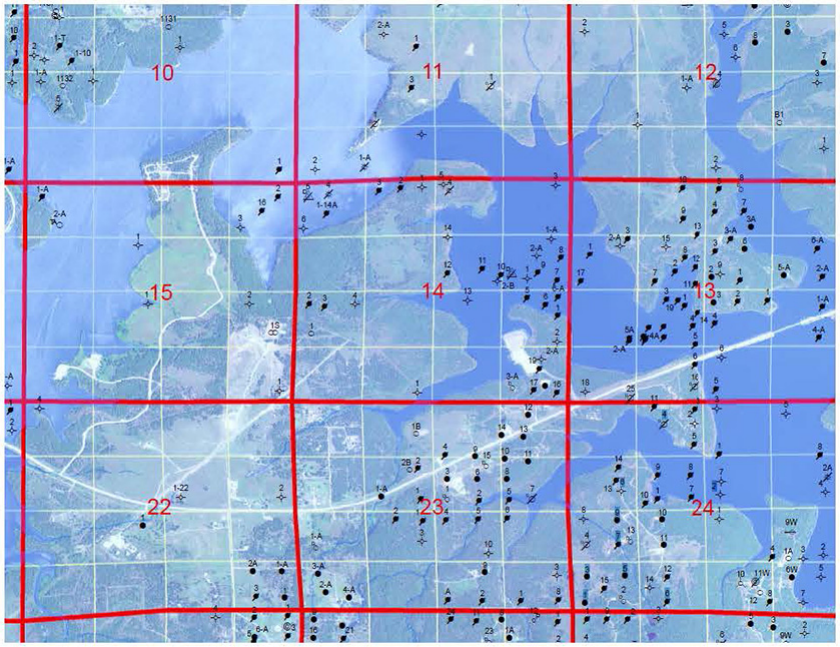
NEED FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING IN FY 2022

To continue this good work and address more than a century of abandoned and dangerous oil and gas wells in our Osage Mineral Estate, we respectfully request that Congress provide $10 million in funding for FY 2022. The BIA already has a list of more than 1,600 wells that need to be plugged in our Minerals Estate and we continue to find new wells every day. We have identified 713 wells that are ready for action. We just need the funding to get the job done and to protect the trust and natural resources of our Mineral Estate and the Osage Reservation.

We have a proven track record and the crews to get the work done. With the initial funding provided, we hired inspectors that meet with surface landowners and oversee the work, hired crews, mobilized equipment, and got to work plugging and cleaning up abandoned wells that are human and environmental hazards. We also hired a geologist to oversee the work and provide daily reports to our Well Plugging Committee. Our well plugging efforts are shovel ready and we can put people to work as soon as the funding is available.

The cost to plug any of these abandoned wells can vary greatly. In our work so far, the most expensive well was over $238,000 and the least was $4,430. Many wells cost about $40,000 to $70,000 to plug. We would also like to begin plugging abandoned wells in the bed of the Arkansas River and in Skiatook Lake that sit

atop our Osage Mineral Estate and are within the Osage Reservation. In 2018, BIA provided the map below which shows 5 of the 8 abandoned wells that have been identified so far in Skiatook Lake.



We estimate that the cost of plugging wells under the Arkansas River and Skiatook Lake to be about $500,000 each. These under water wells are an environmental and health risk and could cost up to $1,000,000 each if they start flowing oil.

CONCLUSION

We appreciate the funding provided by Congress in FY 2018 for our well plugging efforts. We put this funding to work, and it is fully committed through 2021. We respectfully request that Congress provide an additional $10 million in funding so that we can continue our work and begin to address some of the wells under the Arkansas River and Skiatook Lake. Congressional support for our efforts has addressed a serious environmental and health hazard that has gone on too long.

Our efforts can even be a "pilot project" for the Biden Administration and Members of Congress proposing to expand funding and authority for well plugging. We have assembled a team and our well plugging efforts are ongoing and shovel ready. During this tough economic time as a result of the COVID–19 pandemic, we have been able to put people to work doing an important job in the oil field with the funding provided.

We have also been able to address more than a century of neglect in our Osage Mineral Estate. The Federal government is responsible for maintaining and properly managing these trust resources. We ask that Congress to continue supporting these efforts with the funding needed.

Thank you for your continued support and consideration our funding request.

[This statement was submitted by Everett Waller, Chair.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE PACIFIC SALMON COMMISSION

Chair Jeff Merkley and Honorable Members of the Committee, I am Ron Allen, the Alternate Tribal Commissioner and Chair of the Finance and Administration Committee for the U.S. Section of the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC). The US Section prepares an annual budget for implementation of the Pacific Salmon Treaty

(PST). The United States and Canada recently completed the revision of five of the Annex Chapters to the PST. The Annex Chapters contain the details for operations of fisheries under the Treaty and will be in operation for the next ten years.

Funding to implement the PST comes from the Departments of Interior, Commerce, and State. The integrated budget details program needs and costs for Tribal, Federal, and State agencies involved in the Treaty. Tribal participation in the Treaty process is funded within the Bureau of Indian Affairs budget as a line item within Rights Protection Implementation.

In order to meet the increased obligations under the Pacific Salmon Treaty Agreement, the 25 affected tribes identified costs at $6,330,000 for Tribal research projects and participation in the U.S.-Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty process. This represents no change from FY 2021 levels. The funding for Tribal participation in the Pacific Salmon Treaty is a line item in the BIA's budget under Rights Protection Implementation.

Under U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service programs, the U.S. Section identified funding needs as follows:

Funding covers USFWS participation in the Treaty process and support for the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission's Regional Mark Center (PSMFC) from the USFWS to provide data services to the PSC process. The recommended total for the two programs for FY 2022 is $600,000, which represents a decrease of $160,000 from FY 2021 levels. The USFWS received an additional $4,700,000 for Pacific Salmon Treaty Implementation for FY 2021. For FY 2022 the US Section requests $3,040,000 of this funding be directed to hatchery production to support Southern Resident Killer whales ($1,810,00), Sound Science ($500,000), and Southeast Alaska Fisheries Mitigation ($730,000). The US Section also requests that $1,556,000 be directed to support the activities of the Yukon Panel.

The base funding for the USFWS supports critically important on-going work and participation in the process. The funding for Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission's Regional Mark Processing Center is utilized to meet Treaty requirements concerning data exchange with Canada. These program recommendations are integrated with those of participating State and Federal agencies to avoid duplication of effort and provide for the most efficient expenditure of limited funds.

The U.S. Section of the PSC and the treaty tribes appreciate the $900,000 increase in FY 2020 for the tribes to implement the revised chapters of the Pacific Salmon Treaty. Tribal programs are essential for the United States to meet its international obligations. Tribal programs have taken on additional management responsibilities over time. The revised Chinook Chapter includes a new metric for evaluating terminal area fisheries. The CYER (Calendar Year Exploitation Rate) metric requires additional data collection and data management by the affected tribes. All participating agencies need to be adequately supported to achieve a comprehensive US effort to implement the Treaty. The US Section of the PSC is recommending an adjustment in funding to support the work carried out by the twenty-five treaty tribes' participating in implementation of the Treaty. Programs carried out by the Tribes are closely coordinated with those of participating State and Federal agencies.

The USFWS activities are essential, so the U.S. can maintain the coded wire tag database necessary to implement the Treaty. The work of the Regional Mark Processing Center includes maintaining and updating a coastwide computerized information management system for salmon harvest data as required by the Treaty. This work has become even more important to monitor the success of management actions aimed at reducing impacts on ESA—listed salmon populations. Canada has a counterpart database. The U.S. database will continue to be housed at the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission. The U.S. Section appreciates the additional $4,700,000 in the USFWS budget to work with state agencies on producing hatchery fish to mitigate for catch reductions in the revised Chinook Chapter. The U.S. Section recommends maintaining that funding for FY 2022 to support additional hatchery production, Southeast Alaska fisheries, sound science efforts, and Yukon Panel activities.

Funding to support activities under the Pacific Salmon Commission comes from the Departments of Interior, State, and Commerce. The U.S. Section can provide a cross—cut budget summary to the Committee. Adequate funding from all three Departments is necessary for the US to meet its Treaty obligations. All the funds are needed for critical data collection and research activities directly related to the implementation and are used in cooperative programs involving Federal, State, and Tribal fishery agencies and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Canada. The commitment of the United States is matched by the commitment of the Government of Canada.

Mister Chair, the United States and Canada established the Pacific Salmon Commission, under the Pacific Salmon Treaty of 1985, to conserve salmon stocks, provide for optimum production of salmon, and to control salmon interceptions. After thirty-five years, the work of the Pacific Salmon Commission continues to be essential for the wise management of salmon in the Pacific Northwest, British Columbia, and Alaska. For example, upriver bright fall Chinook salmon from the Hanford Reach of the Columbia River are caught in large numbers in Alaskan and Canadian waters. Tribal and non-tribal fishermen harvest sockeye salmon from Canada's Fraser River in the Strait of Juan de Fuca and in Puget Sound. Canadian trollers off the west coast of Vancouver Island catch Washington coastal Coho salmon and Puget Sound Chinook salmon. In the Northern Boundary area between Canada and Alaska, fish from both countries are intercepted by the other country in large numbers. The Pacific Salmon Commission provides a forum to ensure cooperative management of salmon populations. The United States and Canada reached agreements for revised Annex Chapters for management of Chinook, Coho, Chum and transboundary salmon populations for the next ten years. The Annex Chapter for management of Fraser River Sockeye and Pink salmon expires at the end of 2019 and an update is expected to be completed soon. It is critically important to have adequate resources for US participants to implement the revised agreements and protect our Tribal Treaty resources.

Before the Treaty, fish wars often erupted with one or both countries overharvesting fish that were returning to the other country, to the detriment of the resource. At the time the Treaty was signed, Chinook salmon were in a severely depressed state because of overharvest in the ocean as well as environmental degradation in the spawning rivers. Under the Treaty, both countries committed to rebuild the depressed runs of Chinook stocks and recommitted to that goal in 1999 when adopting a coastwide abundance—based approach to harvest management. Under this approach, harvest management has complemented habitat conservation and restoration activities undertaken by the States, Tribes, and other stakeholders in the Pacific Northwest to address the needs of salmon listed for protection under the Endangered Species Act. The updated Annex Chapters continue these commitments. The combination of these efforts is integral to achieving success in rebuilding and restoring healthy, sustainable salmon populations.

Finally, we urge the Congress to consider that the value of the commercial harvest of salmon subject to the Treaty, managed at productive levels under the Treaty, supports the infrastructure of many coastal and inland communities, as well as the cultural value to the Indigenous communities. The value of the commercial, recreational fisheries, and the economic diversity they provide for local economies throughout the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, is immense. The Commission funded an economic study of the fisheries and determined that this resource creates thousands of jobs and is a multi-billion dollar industry. The value of these fish to the twenty-four treaty tribes in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho goes far beyond their monetary value, to the cultural and religious lives of Indian people. A significant monetary investment is focused on salmon due to the listings of Pacific Northwest salmon populations under the Endangered Species Act. Given these resources, we continue to utilize the Pacific Salmon Commission to develop recommendations that help with the development and implementation of solutions to minimizing impacts on listed stocks. We continue to work towards the true intent of the Treaty, and with your support, we will manage this shared resource for mutual enhancements and benefits.

Mister Chair, that concludes my written testimony submitted for consideration by your Committee. I want to thank the Committee for the support that it has given the US Section in the past. Please feel free to contact me, or other members of the US Section to answer any questions you or Committee members may have regarding the US Section of the Pacific Salmon Commission budget.

[This statement was submitted by W. Ron Allen.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE PARTNERSHIP FOR THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of the Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS) regarding Fiscal Year 2022 funding. Use of the National Scenic and Historic Trails (NSHT) has skyrocketed during the pandemic and increased use is expected to continue going forward. Increased investment in our National Trails System (NTS) is required to meet demand and to ad-

dress maintenance and improvement needs to ensure high quality experiences, safety and accessibility to these treasured places for all.

In FY22, PNTS supports an allocation of $900 million for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) with at minimum $23.035 million allocated from the federal land acquisition programs of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the National Park Service (NPS) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) for National Scenic and Historic Trails (NSHT) projects. Additionally, for BLM, PNTS requests at least $10.5 million specifically designated for NSHT and $65.131 million for National Conservation Lands. We request $21 million in NPS Operations for the NSHT. We request $29.35 million for Trails, with $11.521million specifically for NSHT in the USFS Capital Improvement and Maintenance (CMTL) account.

Authorized through the 1968 National Trails System Act, the NTS includes 30 Congressionally designated National Scenic Trails (NST) and National Historic Trails (NHT) that will eventually preserve 55,000 miles of public trails, traversing 50 states and the District of Columbia, connecting 84 national parks, 89 national forests, 70 national wildlife refuges, over 100 public land areas and 179 national wilderness areas. The NTS continues to grow with new trails in the pipeline to be considered by Congress in 2021 and beyond. They represent a broad spectrum of our nation's iconic landscapes and its natural and cultural heritage. From the Southern Appalachian Mountains to the wildest reaches of Alaska, the San Francisco Bay and the breathtaking coast of the "Big Island" of Hawaii, they connect diverse ecosystems while shining a light on the stories of our nation such as the fight for American independence, the trails blazed by indigenous peoples and pioneers, the forced relocation of Native Americans, our struggle for civil rights, and much more. NSHT are collaboratively managed with volunteer based, private nonprofit partners and federal administrators. In 2020 alone, federal funds invested in the NSHT leveraged over $23 million in private funding and volunteer hours valued at almost $26 million.

PNTS is the only national nonprofit focused on NSHT. Our 32 nonprofit members are the primary partners working with the Federal agencies to construct, maintain, protect, and promote NTS. Our members also include affiliate members that actively contribute to the promotion, improvement and activation of NST and NHT.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF)

We thank you for providing ongoing FY21 funding for the NSHT and all trails administered by the NPS, BLM, and USFS. We are especially grateful that Congress passed the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA), which includes funds to tackle deferred maintenance on public lands and full, permanent funding of the LWCF.

It is now up to Congress to ensure that adequate annual funding for the NSHT needs are met, and the administration and federal land managers fully implement the GAOA as Congress intended. These funding streams are vital if we are to complete and maintain the NTS and federally managed trails to the necessary, expected and deserved standard.

With passage of GAOA, we look forward to robust funding as the full $900 million for LWCF is utilized to protect public lands. PNTS respectfully requests $23.035 million be allocated to fully fund FY22 LWCF requests submitted by nonprofit trail organizations for projects on NSHT. Funding for these projects would conserve over 23,000 acres of precious natural resources and crucial sites and segments along five Congressionally authorized trails in 11 states while preserving lands containing high—level biodiversity of plants and animals and significant old growth forests. Further, given the healthy pipeline of forthcoming voluntary land preservation projects on National Trails, over the next three years we ask Congress to increase funding to $50 million per year for LWCF projects on National Trails to complete the NTS.

FY22 LWCF requests will fund:

Bureau of Land Management: $1.98 million

California National Historic Trail (NV and CA)—$1.98 million to protect an 11-mile-long portion of trail that would connect the city of Elko, NV to the California Trail Center.

National Park Service: $3.515 million

Ice Age National Scenic Trail (WI).—$3.465 million to preserve two properties—a 180-acre property near the Cross Plains Complex that would add 1.5 miles of National Scenic Trail and loop or side trails and a 108-acre property at the iconic Table Bluff that would add 1 mile of National Scenic Trail.

Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (NC and TN).—$50,000 to preserve three acres of trail and important historic sites within the Trail corridor.

US Forest Service: $17.540 million

Appalachian National Scenic Trail (VT, ME and TN).—$10.54 million to protect 15,864 acres across three states that would enhance the Trail and its viewsheds, improve public access and protect wildlife habitat and connectivity.

Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (CA).—$7 million to preserve trail resources, create public access to two alpine lakes, and conserve 7,600 acres of biologically rich habitat adjacent to the Trinity Alps and Castle Crags Wilderness Areas.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT (BLM)

The BLM administers, manages, and protects the NSHT as part of its National Conservation Lands. BLM currently protects nearly 6,000 miles of 18 designated trails in 15 States, in addition to thousands of miles of trails under study for potential designation. The BLM is the trail administering agency for the Iditarod National Historic Trail and co-administers the Old Spanish and El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trails with the NPS.

The BLM does not have a specific account in its budget for funding national trails or trails in general, including the three National Historic Trails that it is charged by law to administer and the portions of the 15 other national trails that it manages on public lands. A trails line item in the BLM budget, including at least $10.5 million for NSHT, will address the fragmented funding allocations across sub-activity accounts and create consistent funding for trails. At a minimum, similar to the guidance the Subcommittee provided to the USFS in FY20, we request that the FY22 bill include language directing the Bureau to include unit—level allocations within major sub-activities for each of the scenic and historic trails—as the Bureau has done for the national monuments, wilderness, and conservation areas.

The $10.5 million requested for NSHT will be used to administer, manage, maintain and improve the Trails under BLM jurisdiction on public lands and also add or improve amenities on Trails. For example, the Iditarod NHT will use increased funding ($4 million) to improve sanitary conditions at two public shelter cabins and make necessary roof and other repairs to shelter cabins. Funding will also support trail maintenance, marking and construction projects on the northern segments of the trail, education and outreach projects including booklets, interpretive panels, historic research, education resource guides, and contract for a resource inventory project to update INHT's comprehensive management plan.

PNTS also respectfully requests $65.131 million, an increase of $19.312 million from FY21, for management of the National Conservation Lands. Remarkably, this sharp increase would restore program funding to its FY06 funding level. Such an increase is needed to properly administer the system's expansion by 18 million acres since 2000, and will permit increased inventory, monitoring and protection of cultural resources, enhance proper management of all resources and provide a quality visitor experience. It reflects the important role the National Conservation Lands will play in meeting President Biden's goal for voluntary conservation of "at least 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030."

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE (NPS)

The NPS has administrative responsibility for 23 NSHTs established by Congress. Funding at $21 million within the Park Service Operations account for the NSHTs is essential for keeping these popular trails accessible to Americans during a time of unprecedented use as more Americans have enjoyed the social, physical and mental health benefits of Trails during the COVID–19 pandemic. This request will help the work of NPS trail organization partners to build, maintain, and interpret the Trails.

For example, the Juan Bautista de Anza NHT commemorates the route of the 1775–76 expedition, when he led 240 people on an epic journey to establish the first non-Native settlement at San Francisco Bay. Today, the 1,200-mile Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail connects history, culture, and outdoor recreation from Nogales, Arizona, to the San Francisco Bay Area. As the it prepares to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Anza Expedition, increased funding ($0.904 million) will be used to add three new NPS Interpretive Rangers to work with both urban and rural communities and diverse stakeholder voices to plan and commemorate the anniversary and the Trail's multifaceted history. The anniversary celebrations are expected to attract visitors to rural 'trail towns' and urban neighborhoods, contributing to local economies.

As another example, the NPS needs significantly more resources to do their duty, mandated by Congress, to develop America's longest National Scenic Trail, the

North Country, stretching 4,700 miles across eight states from North Dakota to Vermont and traversing forests and farmlands, remote terrain and nearby communities. Additional compliance and land protection staff are needed to ensure the NPS is able to lead in the planning of this incredible resource and support their many partners in its development, maintenance and protection ($2.2 million).

U.S. FOREST SERVICE (USFS)

The USFS is the lead federal agency for five National Scenic Trails (Arizona, Florida, Pacific Northwest, Continental Divide and Pacific Crest), one NHT (Nez Perce) and manages 16 NSHT in part where they are on Forest System lands.

Funding for the USFS administered and managed portions of the NSHT comes out of the CMTL account. In FY22, PNTS respectfully requests an appropriation of $29.35 million for trails, with $11.521 million specifically allocated to the NSHT. This funding will allow the USFS to meet its administering agency responsibilities such as trail—wide coordination, guidance, technical assistance, and consultation with National Trail managers. Congressionally designated NSHT are special places and have specific legislative requirements that are broader than typical trail construction and maintenance activities on National Forest System trails. These legislative requirements, particularly the requirement for volunteer engagement and partnerships with volunteer organizations, are unique to NSHT programs and form a core component of their administration. Funding the USFS NSHT at $11.521 million will assist the Service meet its management responsibilities.

As an example, increased funding for the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail ($2 million) will be used to support robust USFS management staff, forest/project planning and optimal trail location reviews, trail maintenance, construction, reconstruction, information for trail users, including Leave No Trace permit applications, educational materials, management and operations. Funding will also be used for Youth and Corps trail crew programs and a Challenge Cost Share Agreement with the Pacific Crest Trail Association and other private partners to support volunteer trail maintenance and public education programs.

PNTS and its member organizations stand ready to work with you to secure full and consistent funding for the LWCF and the other critically important programs that help fund, maintain and protect the NSHTs across the nation. The examples provided in the testimony of how the funding will be used represent a small portion of the work being done and funding needs of the NTS. Increase investment in the National Trails System will enable public and private partners to work collaboratively to protect our landscapes and preserve important stories of our national heritage while also improving results for climate resiliency, economic recovery, equitable accessibility and public health. PNTS will provide additional detailed information as needed. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony and your consideration of our request for greater investment in our National Trails System.

[This statement was submitted by Valerie Rupp, Executive Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE PORT GAMBLE S'KLALLAM TRIBE

REQUESTS

1. $6.5 million for a ramp and dock for tribal fishers;
2. $6 million for a new natural resources building for the Tribe;
3. $8 million for new tribal justice center for the Tribe;
4. Funding to support the Tribe's Heronswood Botanical Gardens;
5. $1.75 million for the Tribe's sewer project;
6. $3 million for the Tribe's water project; and
7. $300,000 for the Tribe's roads project.

INTRODUCTION

The Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe is a sovereign Indian nation comprised of over 1,342 citizens located on the northern tip of the Kitsap Peninsula in Northwest Washington State. The 1855 Point No Point Treaty reserved hunting, fishing, and gathering rights for our Tribe, and the United States agreed to respect the sovereignty of our Tribe and to protect and provide for the well-being of our Tribe. The United States, therefore, has both treaty and trust obligations to protect our lands and resources and provide for the health and well-being of our citizens. The current COVID–19 pandemic has necessitated the need for more resources and services to provide for the health, safety, and welfare of our tribal citizens.

OVERARCHING COMMENTS

Thank you for your commitment to honor and uphold the United States' trust and treaty obligations, strengthen the government-to-government relationship between the United States and tribes, and empower tribes to govern their own communities and make their own decisions. As you know, federal funding is critical to support strong tribal governments across the country in various ways. We look to the Subcommittee to help address the chronic underfunding of unmet federal obligations and duties owed to Indian Country. This includes providing funding and support for the delivery of reliable and quality health care to American Indian and Alaska Native people, ensuring tribal communities are safe and secure, and expanding economic opportunity and community development in tribal communities. We ask the Subcommittee support our congressionally directed spending requests that will benefit the Tribe and our members for future generations.

Boat Ramp and Dock

The Tribe is poised to begin construction of a new tribal boat ramp and floating dock, critically necessary for the long-term exercise of tribal fishing and shell-—fishing rights from the tribal homeland. The $6.5 million project is currently expected to be funded exclusively with tribal hard dollars, including over $1 million in environmental mitigation required under a US Army Corps of Engineers permit. The project is fully designed, permitted and shovel ready. Federal assistance would be much appreciated for this particular project given the treaty obligations represented as well as the environmental mitigation burden imposed by the Corps, the Tribe's limited resources for its several other needs. The Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe's treaty rights, as established with the signing of the Treaty of Point No Point, play a significant role in the day-to-day life of most tribal members. Like our ancestors before us, we practice the traditional ways to put food on the table by fishing or harvesting shellfish. A new tribal boat ramp and floating dock is necessary for the long-term exercise of tribal fishing and shell—fishing rights from the tribal homeland.

Natural Resources Building

The Tribe's current Natural Resources Building is crowded and is jointly used as the Tribe's Tribal Court. The Tribe needs a Natural Resources Building to house all of its offices in one location. The Tribe has estimated that a new Natural Resources Building would cost $6 million to construct. Our vision is to provide optimal and sustainable management of the Tribe's natural and cultural resources for now and generations to come. We pay special attention to the health and vitality of subsistence and commercial species populations and their associated ecosystems, while providing valuable conservation, research, monitoring, and education to help ensure their health and abundance far into the future. The Tribe's Natural Resources department is committed to sustainably managing, protecting, enhancing, conserving, and restoring culturally—relevant species, landscapes, and seascapes integral to the unique identity of the S'Klallam People.

Tribal Justice Center

The Tribe has expanded its tribal court programs to include healing and wellness services, domestic violence advocates, and re-entry programs. Staff are spread through different buildings. With the growth of the program and more sophisticated courts, a new tribal justice center is critical. The Tribe has estimated that a new tribal justice center would cost $8 million to construct. A new tribal justice center would allow staff to work in one single building and allow the Tribe to continue to expand its tribal justice services and programs to improve the lives of our tribal members.

Heronswood Botanical Gardens

The Tribe owns and operates Heronswood Botanical Gardens, a botanical garden located in Kingston, Kitsap County, Washington. The Tribe is committed to maintaining the garden for the local community as well as gardening enthusiasts. The garden showcases an impressive collection of plants, trees, shrubs, and flowers from around the world and is recognized internationally for its environmentally friendly and creative use of plants and garden design. Heronswood Botanical Gardens boasts a unique collection of planting from Asia, Central and South America, Eastern Europe, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. The garden, however, is in need of several new updates, including fire mitigation/safety, sewage system attached to the Tribes system, drainage system upgrades, emergency shelter buildings/warming center to use of a new event center at Heronswood and or/new administration building, broadband at Heronswood campus, and improvements to parking at the garden.

The Tribe anticipates that the project would create job opportunities as well as volunteer opportunities. The Tribe has not yet determined an estimated cost to make the improvements to Heronswood Botanical Gardens.

Sewer Project

The Tribe is currently planning to a sewer project that is estimated to cost $1.75 million to complete. Federal assistance would be greatly appreciated in light of the Tribe's limited resources for its several needs. The Tribe is scheduled to replace three mainline sewer lift stations, vitally important to the health and well—being of the community. These three sewer lift stations replace three existing lift stations that have exceeded their life expectancy. The request funds would be spent on materials and construction for the sewer project. A well—functioning sewer system for the Tribe is essential, and is without question a worthy use of taxpayer dollars for the long-term investment of the project.

Water Project

The Tribe is currently planning to water project that is estimated to cost $3 million to complete. A breakdown of the components involved with this water project include making the following improvements: upsizing piping at three separate sections, additional reservoir capacity, and replacement of aging hydrants. The Tribe provides water to the majority of the reservation via two existing wells and 50,000 + feet of water distribution piping. A third well is slated to go on line in the next year. However, there are additional improvements identified by an engineering firm that will be needed to accommodate future population growth and meet fire flow needs for the community. Water is basic necessity for all within our Reservation, and is without question a worthy use of taxpayer dollars.

Roads Project

The Tribe has plans to improve its roads within its Reservation, which is estimated to cost $300,000. The requested funds would be spent on pothole report and/or re-paving of roads within the Tribe's reservation. The Tribe manages the maintenance of many community roads on the Reservation. Several of these roads are in need of pothole repair and/or re-paving. The roads in need of most repair are: S'Klallam Hill Lane, Salmonberries Lane, and Eaglewood Lane. On a basic level, the economic and well—being of our tribal members are dependent upon tribal transportation infrastructure. Without safe and reliable roads, we are unable to adequately provide essential services to our members.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for the opportunity to share our interests regarding FY 2022 congressionally directed spending requests that will greatly benefit our Tribe. On behalf of the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, we thank you and your dedication and continued hard work in protecting the tribal interests. We know that you will be fighting for Indian Country in the appropriations process.

[This statement was submitted by Chairman Jeromy Sullivan.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE PORT GAMBLE S'KLALLAM TRIBE

REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Full funding in the amount of $12.75 billion and advance appropriations for the Indian Health Service (IHS) budget;
2. Increase in the overall funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) budget to a minimum of at least $2.8 billion;
3. Increase funding for the BIA Public Health and Safety and Criminal Investigations and Police Services accounts over the FY 2021 enacted levels, especially for tribal courts and criminal investigation and police services; and
4. Increase funding and support for environmental programs benefiting Indian tribes, including at least $60 million for the BIA Rights Protection Implementation Program, $100 million for the Tribal General Assistance Program, a tribal set—aside of at least 20 percent for the Pollution Control (Section 106) Grant, and at least $33.75 million for the Puget Sound Geographic Program.[1]

[1] We also support the National Congress of American Indians' FY 2022 budget requests. See NCAI, Indian Country FY 2022 Budget Request: Restoring Promises, https://www.ncai.org/resources/ncaipublications/NCAI_IndianCountry_FY2022_BudgetRequest.pdf.

INTRODUCTION

The Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe is a sovereign Indian nation comprised of over 1,342 citizens located on the northern tip of the Kitsap Peninsula in Northwest Washington State. The 1855 Point No Point Treaty reserved hunting, fishing, and gathering rights for our Tribe, and the United States agreed to respect the sovereignty of our Tribe and to protect and provide for the well—being of our Tribe. The United States, therefore, has both treaty and trust obligations to protect our lands and resources and provide for the health and well—being of our citizens. The current COVID–19 pandemic has necessitated the need for more resources and services to provide for the health, safety, and welfare of our tribal citizens as well as American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) people across the United States.

OVERARCHING COMMENTS

Thank you for your commitment to honor and uphold the United States' trust and treaty obligations, strengthen the government-to-government relationship between the United States and tribes, and empower tribes to govern their own communities and make their own decisions. As you know, federal programs and services are critical components of building strong tribal governments, economies, and communities. We look to the Subcommittee to help address the chronic underfunding of unmet federal obligations and duties owed to Indian Country. This includes providing funding and support for the delivery of reliable and quality health care to AI/AN people, ensuring tribal communities are safe and secure, and expanding economic opportunity and community development in tribal communities. We ask the Subcommittee to support increased funding for critical Indian programs and the inclusion of helpful report language on many significant issues impacting Indian Country.

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

We appreciate the President's proposed funding increase of $2.2 billion for the FY 2022 IHS budget, however, more funding is needed. Appropriations for the IHS budget are needed to, among other things, address the significant health disparities that persist among AI/AN people, treat chronic diseases that plague tribal communities, update and improve tribal health clinics, and modernize equipment and health information technology within Indian Country. Our Tribe has administered health services to its members for several years, and was one of the first tribes to join the Tribal Self-Governance Project in 1990. We are the only Indian health care provider of both primary and behavioral health services in Kitsap County. Our health programs aim to provide the highest quality medical care and treatment to individuals within our tribal community, but we still face significant challenges related to funding, facilities, and program administration. Due to the COVID–19 pandemic, our health programs have run short of resources and need additional funding to support the services we provide. To strengthen our health programs, we ask for the following in the FY 2022 appropriations:

Full and Advance Appropriations.—We ask for full funding for the IHS to fulfill the United States' obligation to provide Indian health care. We strongly support the National Congress of American Indians' request for $12.75 billion in total funding for the IHS budget. We also ask for advance appropriations for the IHS, as this would ensure that health care to Indian people is exempt from government shutdowns, avoids the need to enact continuing—resolutions to fund the IHS budget, and is on par with the advance appropriations currently provided to the Veterans Health Administration. We request your support for the enactment this important legislation.

Opioid Funding.—Indian Country, including our Tribe's Reservation, has been severely affected by the opioid epidemic. However, tribes and tribal organizations received only $50 million under the State Opioid Response Grant Program in FY 2021. Our Tribe strongly supports increased funding for the State Opioid Response Grant Program to fund our Tribal Healing Opioid Response (THOR) program, which is a multifaceted, cross—governmental approach to address increasing rates of opioid dependence, overdose, and other negative consequences stemming from opioid use. Funding for THOR and related programs is essential to combat the opioid crisis that imposes threats to Indian Country.

Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI).—While Congress recently reauthorized SDPI for a 3-year renewal, which will now expire on September 30, 2023, the funding level did not increase. SDPI, currently funded at $150 million annually, has not had an increase since FY 2004. An increase in SDPI funding is long overdue. For the stability of the program, we advocate for an increase in SDPI's mandatory

funding to $200 million annually to help account for medical inflation and expansion.

Community Health Representatives.—Our Tribe asks that you encourage adequate funding for the Community Health Representatives (CHRs) Program, the Health Education Program, and the National CHAP program. CHRs are at the forefront of much of the preventive health that needs to be emphasized in Indian health programs. CHRs are critical in our community: they provide linkage for our most vulnerable tribal members and patients and clinical care. Our CHRs do home visits, assist with nurse case management of elder and diabetes patients, as well as transport home—bound elders to life—saving treatment like dialysis. They also conduct community education, informal counseling, and advocacy. We ask that you support CHRs in the appropriation process.

Bureau of Indian Affairs Budget.—We greatly appreciate the President's request to provide $2.7 billion, more than $600 million over the FY 2021 enacted level, to fund a range of critically important tribal programs within the Department of the Interior. For FY 2021, the overall BIA budget was approximately $2.1 billion. An increase in funding for all BIA program is much needed as BIA programs delivery community services, restore tribal homelands, fulfill commitments related to water and other resources, execute trust responsibilities, support stewardship of energy and other natural resources, and create economic opportunity. We support the President's request for FY 2022, and ask Congress to ensure at least this level is enacted.

Environmental Protection/Rights Protection Programs.—We strongly support funding increases in key environmental and rights protection programs that are dedicated to preserving the unique resources and natural environment within tribal communities. Our Tribe is situated within the Puget Sound region and our Tribe relies heavily on the natural resources within this ecosystem in many ways. In particular, the harvesting of fish, shellfish, wildlife, and plants for subsistence and commercial purposes is at the heart of our Tribal culture and who are as S'Klallam people. Our Tribal members (many of whom are at poverty level) engage in these harvesting activities for their livelihood and to support their families as well as their physical and mental well—being.

The Treaty of Point No Point promised tribal rights to harvest fish at "usual and accustomed grounds and stations." Subsequent court decisions affirmed our right to continue harvesting salmon and other fish in the region. Our Natural Resources Department works to sustainably manage, protect, enhance, conserve, and restore culturally—relevant species, landscapes, and seascapes to the uniquely identity of the S'Klallam people. The functions of our Natural Resources Department include protection of treaty rights of the natural and cultural resources of the Treaty of Point No Point. Further, the Natural Resources Department pays special attention to the health and vitality of subsistence and commercial species populations and their associated ecosystems, while providing valuable conservation, research, monitoring, and education to help ensure their health and abundance far into the future. Nearly one-third of our Natural Resources Department's funding comes from the EPA either directly or through other partnerships. We depend on EPA funds for 22% of our Natural Resources Department staff. Adequate funding for EPA and BIA programs to support our natural resources is necessary for the United States to satisfy its trust obligation and treaty obligations owed to our Tribe and the S'Klallam people.

BIA Rights Protection Implementation Program.—We appreciate the President's request of $44.5 million to support the Rights Protection Implementation Program, but more is needed. This program provides important resources to tribes in various rights protection issues, including protecting tribal treaty rights, addressing tribal land trespass concerns, defending tribal cultural resources, and issues. The benefits of this program accrue not only to tribes, but to surrounding communities as well. We request a total funding level of at least $60 million for this program.

Tribal General Assistance Program (GAP).—The Tribal GAP provides base environmental funding to assist tribes in the building of their environmental capacity to assess environmental conditions, utilize data, and build their environmental programs to meet their needs. Tribes, including ours, need more funding to maintain our critical environmental programs. For FY 2022, we request a total funding level of at least $100 million for the Tribal GAP.

Pollution Control (Section 106) Grant.—The Tribe requests an increase in funding for the Tribal Clean Water Program, which provides grants to tribes under Section 106 of the Clean Water Act to protect water quality and aquatic ecosystems. We also request a tribal set—aside in the Water Pollution Control Grants of at least 20 percent.

Puget Sound Geographic Program.—The Puget Sound Geographic Program provides funding to state, local, and tribal governments to implement projects to im-

prove water quality, enhance fish passage, increase salmon habitat, and protect shorelines. The Puget Sound is an economic and cultural engine for our Tribe and many other tribes within the region, and all tribes within the region benefit from the federal funding made available under the program. For FY 2022, we request at least the President's FY 2022 request of $35 million in funding for this program.

Community Projects.—We recommend that the Subcommittee appropriate funding to support the development of community projects that would greatly benefit the Tribe and our citizens. This includes $6.5 million for a new boat ramp and floating dock for tribal fishers to exercise our treaty—protected fishing rights, $6 million for a new natural resources building, $8 million for a new tribal justice center to house our expanded programs and sophisticated courts, $1.75 million for the construction of a sewer project, and $3 million for a water project.

Public Safety, Justice and Tribal Courts.—We ask for an increase in funding for the BIA Public Safety and Justice and Criminal Investigations and Police Services accounts over the FY 2021 enacted levels. Our justice system is key to addressing increasing levels of violent crime, methamphetamine and opioid abuse, and the community impacts that result. Our Tribal Court hears approximately 350 cases a year involving child dependency, child support, divorce, domestic violence, vulnerable adults, as well as criminal prosecutions. Our Court Services staff also provide numerous services to the community, including: assistance for juveniles and their families with Court—ordered services; support for children of abuse and their families; help for victims of domestic violence; and aide for addicts who want to get their lives back on track.

Despite our successes, our Tribal Court requires additional resources to continue functioning efficiently and to address our challenges related to facilities and court administration. To strengthen our Tribal Court and Court Services programs, we encourage you to maintain a commitment to public safety and justice on tribal lands, and ask for at least $200,000 to support our tribal courts. The Tribe also requests $1.5 million in funding to support our Police Department in providing adequate staffing for response and security to our tribal lands and housing and commercial development areas.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for the opportunity to share our interests regarding FY 2022 appropriations for programs and services that will greatly benefit us as well as other tribes across the United States. On behalf of the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, we thank you and your dedication and continued hard work in protecting the tribal interests. We know that you will be fighting for Indian Country in the appropriations process.

[This statement was submitted by Chairman Jeromy Sullivan.]

PREPARED STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY, AMERICAN FORESTS, AND NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

PROGRAMS UNDER THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022

Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit recommendations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 appropriations.

American Forests, National Wildlife Federation, and The Nature Conservancy are partnering to support a substantial increase in the pace and scale of ecologically appropriate and climate—informed forest restoration on national forests.

American Forests is the nation's first forest conservation organization, founded in 1875. Our mission is to create healthy and resilient forests from cities to wilderness that deliver essential benefits for climate, people, water and wildlife. We advance our mission through forestry innovation, place—based partnerships to plant and restore forests, and movement building.

The National Wildlife Federation, founded in 1936, is America's largest conservation organization with more than 6 million members and 52 state and territorial affiliates. The National Wildlife Federation works across the country to unite Americans from all walks of life in safeguarding our wildlife, clean water and air, and public lands for future generations.

The Nature Conservancy works to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. Guided by science, we create innovative, on the ground solutions and use collaboration to engage local communities, governments, the private sector, and other partners. Our mission is to conserve the lands and waters upon which all life depends.

America's forests are as essential for our wildlife and quality of life as they are iconic. The United States' unparalleled forest ecosystems are home to a tremendous diversity of wildlife habitat and protect critical watersheds and treasured landscapes. Forest lands also are vital for

U.S. efforts to reduce climate emissions and address climate change. The 193 million-acre National Forest System alone encompasses approximately a quarter of all U.S. forests. These lands provide a net carbon sink in forest sequestration and forest products equivalent to 113 million metric tons of carbon per year, equivalent to taking more than 24 million cars off the road.

Our forests and all the benefits they extend, however, are at risk. An estimated 80 million acres of national forest lands are now in need of restoration due to the impacts of drought, pests, disease, and wildfire—each of which have been exacerbated by our changing climate. Five million of these acres need reforestation.

Congress has made important progress to protect U.S. forests from the effects of climate change, support reforestation efforts, prepare for the new normal of modern megafires, and promote resilience. Our three organizations strongly recommend that Interior allocations that are now covered by the wildfire disaster cap adjustment be reallocated to USDA Forest Service (USFS) and Department of the Interior (DOI) wildfire risk reduction and restoration purposes. The "Fire Fix" is not a complete success without these important reinvestments.

Our FY2022 requests represent an incremental increase to key forest and wildlife programs that would begin to address the breadth of restoration and wildfire risk reduction work on national forests that will improve forest carbon, adaptation and resilience outcomes both on federal lands and across boundaries. We would further recommend direction to the USFS to identify and prioritize projects based on best available climate vulnerability, watershed condition, and fire risk assessments.

In 2019, Congress directed the USFS to modernize their budgeting practices. However, we are continuing to ascertain how the modern levels work and, therefore, we provide funding levels reflecting the agency's old budget model, while also providing approximations for those levels under the modern budget structure.

PROGRAMS AND FUNDING LEVELS

Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR)—$80 million (approximately $25 million under modern budget structure).—The CFLR program is demonstrating that collaboratively—developed forest restoration plans can be implemented at a large scale with benefits for people and the forest. This is a model approach that brings citizens, local government and federal staff together to determine effective management that is locally appropriate and provides jobs, sustains rural economies, reduces the risk of damaging fires, addresses invasive species, improves wildlife habitat, and decommissions unused, eroding roads.

USFS Hazardous Fuels program—$700 million (approximately $244 million under modern budget structure).—Strategic, proactive hazardous fuels treatments have proven safer and more cost-effective in reducing risks to communities and forests by removing overgrown brush and thinning unnaturally dense forests, leaving forests in a more natural condition resilient to wildfires. Climate—driven drought conditions particularly increase the need for investment in this program to restore and maintain fire adapted landscapes and habitats. We additionally recommend funding for programs that support effective and durable restoration, which requires integrated, climate—informed approaches that address threats, improve forest health and habitat values, and encourage climate—adaptation of forest—dependent communities.

Vegetation & Watershed Management—$210 million (approximately $32 million under modern budget structure).—Successful vegetation management ensures that national forests are conserved, restored, and made more resilient to climate change while enhancing water

resources.—This program promotes restoration through watershed treatment activities, invasive plant species control, and reforestation of areas impacted by wildfire and other events. We further recommend establishing a new reforestation initiative funded through the Vegetation & Watershed Management program that complements and leverages the Reforestation Trust Fund and post-fire rehabilitation and restoration to achieve the goals of reforestation.

Post-fire Rehabilitation and Restoration Activities—$20 million for DOI and USFS.—After a fire, the Forest Service has the funding to implement emergency treatments to conduct stabilization activity for one year. However, funding is needed for ecologically appropriate post-fire rehabilitation and restoration activities for up to three years on lands unlikely to recover without human assistance. The Department of the Interior's Office of Wildland Fire has a Burned Area Rehabilitation and

Restoration (BAR) program that accomplishes these activities over a longer timeframe. For USFS, we look forward to the agency's report on developing a new BAR program, as directed in the FY21 Omnibus Appropriations bill and look forward to the establishment of the program for national forests.

Water Source Protection Program—$30 million (approximately $10 million under modern budget structure).—The 2018 Farm Bill established this new cost share program authorizing the Forest Service to work with water users to address watershed restoration plans for national forests, including wildfire risk reduction activities.

Wildlife & Fisheries Habitat Management—$145 million (approximately $21 million under modern budget structure).—Understanding fish, wildlife and their habitats helps to inform land management and address existing and emerging threats, including climate change and habitat fragmentation. The Wildlife & Fisheries Habitat Management program works to restore, recover, and maintain wildlife and fish and their habitats on all national forests and grasslands, including the ecological conditions necessary to sustain populations of native species and provide for their use and enjoyment by current and future generations.

Legacy Road and Trail Remediation (LRT)—$100 million (approximately $30 million under modern budget structure).—The national forest roads system is extensive and in dire need of repair. The Legacy Roads and Trails program focuses on those roads with direct impact to water quality and fish passage. As climate change continues to exacerbate weather events, the impact to water from problem roads increases. These roads impede public lands access, damage habitat, and force water quality problems onto downstream communities. This program works to restore river and stream water quality by fixing or removing eroding roads, while providing construction jobs, supporting vital sportsmen opportunities, and reducing flooding risks from future extreme water—flow events.

Land Management Planning, Inventory and Monitoring—$201 million (approximately $16 million under modern budget structure).—The Forest Service must update many more outdated forest plans, and increase their efforts to appropriately incorporate climate change into land management planning and project—level NEPA documentation focusing both on how management may influence climate change and how climate change affects the national forest system. As more is discovered about climate change science, the agency will need to update its application to adaptation and mitigation strategies, and appropriate analysis at the unit and project scales.

Federal Forest Health program—$66 million (approximately $16 million under modern budget structure).—Forest health protection programs work to protect forests by minimizing the impacts caused by invasive species. Across the nation large—, non-native insect, disease, and invasive plant outbreaks are damaging forest health. These programs help reduce invasions of non-native pests that destroy iconic American trees such as ash, hemlock, and California oaks, providing effective climate mitigation services by maintaining carbon stocks.

Forest & Rangeland Research—$315 million (approximately $38 million under modern budget structure), with $87 million for Forest Inventory & Analysis (approximately $18 million under modern budget structure).—Robust scientific data is critical to manage national forests in a changing climate—from baseline data that describes carbon stocks and helps illuminate fluxes and trends to applied scientific information such as vulnerability assessments that reveal climate—driven threats. The Forest and Rangeland Research program offers vital scientific basis for policies that improve the health and quality of urban and rural communities. This program is critical for the long-term health and utility of our forests and rivers, particularly as we face an uncertain climatic future.

Joint Fire Science—$8 million each for USFS and DOI.—As wildfires have more and more impact on society and nature, applied science and knowledge sharing becomes more important. The small investments in the Joint Fire Science program have led to an exceptionally successful program for science and science delivery. This program is unique among federal research programs in its focus on applied fire science through inter-agency partnerships. Re-establishing this program's historic funding level will bring competitive and focused applied science solutions to improve the management of forests and watersheds while protecting communities, water and air.

TABLE OF RECOMMENDED FOREST & WILDFIRE RESILIENCE LEVELS

(in millions of dollars)

Table includes old and approximate new budget structure levels for USFS	Enacted FY20 (old)	Final FY20 (modern)	Enacted FY21 (modern)	Recommended FY22 (old)
USDA Forest Service				
Hazardous Fuels	445	155	180	700
Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration	40	13	14	80
Wildlife & Fisheries Habitat Management	138	20	21	145
Vegetation & Watershed Management	162	28	29	210
Burned Area Rehabilitation	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Land Mgt Planning, Inventory & Monitoring	180	16	17	201
Legacy Roads & Trails	0	0	0	100
Forest Health—Federal	56	16	15	66
Forest & Rangeland Research	305	39	259	325
Forest Inventory & Analysis	77	20	18	87
Joint Fire Science	0	3	n/a	8
Water Source Protection Program	0	0	0	30
Department of the Interior				
Fuels Management (aka Hazardous Fuels)	194	n/a	n/a	228
Burned Area Rehabilitation	20	n/a	n/a	21
Joint Fire Science	3	n/a	n/a	8

[This statement was submitted by Cecilia Clavet, Senior Policy Advisor, Forest Restoration and Fire; Alexandra Murdoch, Vice President of Conservation Finance & Policy; and Mike Leahy, Director of Wildlife, Hunting & Fishing Policy.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PRESERVATION ACTION

Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski and Members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of Preservation Action's thousands of members and supporters, representing nearly every state, I appreciate the opportunity to present written testimony on the Department of Interior's FY 2022 Appropriations for the National Park Service and its historic preservation programs. My name is Russ Carnahan and I'm the President of Preservation Action. Founded in 1974, Preservation Action is a 501(c)4 nonprofit organization created to serve as the national grassroots advocacy organization for historic preservation. We represent an active and engaged grassroots constituency from across the country, and we appreciate the opportunity to provide their perspective.

On behalf of members and supporters across the country, I'd like to thank the subcommittee for their strong support of historic preservation programs and priorities in the past several Interior Appropriations bills, and especially for the FY21 Interior Appropriations bill which provided record funding for historic preservation priorities. Thanks to your support, programs that have a proven track record of saving places American's value, revitalize communities, combat climate change by reusing infrastructure, and help tell the story of historically marginalized and underrepresented groups; continue to benefit all Americans.

Preservation Action's mission is to make historic preservation a national priority. For 47 years we've advocated for sound preservation policy, including two of the most important tools for historic preservation- the Historic Preservation Fund and the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit (HTC).

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE: HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND

The Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) is the principal source of funding to implement the nation's historic preservation programs. Since 1976 the HPF has helped to recognize, save, revitalize and protect America's historic resources. Preservation Action is extraordinarily grateful for the strong support Congress and especially this Committee have shown for the HPF in recent years, including FY 2021's $143.3 million, the highest level of HPF funding in history. The HPF provides funding to states and tribes to carry out their federally mandated duties and supports critically important competitive grant programs. We especially appreciate this committee's continued support of programs like the African American Civil Rights Grant Program, the History of Equal Rights grant program, the Underrepresented Commu-

nities Grant Program, and others that are helping to tell a more diverse and inclusive American story.

Preservation Action urges this subcommittee to continue their strong support of historic preservation by appropriating the fully authorized $150 million in funding for the Historic Preservation Fund in FY22's Department of Interior budget. Including funding at the following levels:

—$60 million for State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) for heritage preservation and protection programs that create jobs, economic development, and community revitalization. In partnership with the federal government, SHPOs carry out the primary functions of the National Historic Preservation Act including -finding and documenting America's historic places, making nominations to the National Register, providing assistance on rehabilitation tax credit projects, reviewing impacts of federal projects, working with local governments, and conducting preservation education and planning. Additionally, states are required to match at least 40% of the money they receive from the HPF.

—$24 million for Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs). THPOs are designated by federally recognized tribal governments that have entered into an agreement with the Department of the Interior to assume the federal compliance role of the SHPO on their respective Tribal lands. Tribal historic preservation plans are based on traditional knowledge and cultural values, and may involve projects to improve Indian schools, roads, health clinics and housing. Funding levels have not kept pace with the growing number of Indian Tribes with THPO programs, resulting in a lower average grants per tribe.

—$19 million for the African American Civil Rights Initiative Competitive Grants. A competitive grant program to preserve the sites and stories of the African American struggle to gain equal rights in America.

—$7 million for the History of Equal Rights Grant Program. A competitive grant program to preserve the sites and stories related to the struggle of all people to achieve equal rights in America.

—$20 million for Save America's Treasures Program. Save America's Treasures grants program helps preserve nationally significant historic properties and collections that convey our nation's rich heritage to future generations of Americans.

—$10 million for Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Funding would provide grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to preserve and repair historic buildings on the campuses of HBCUs.

—$9 million for the Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Subgrants. Supports the rehabilitation of historic properties and fosters economic development of rural communities through subgrants.

—$1 million for the Under-Represented Communities Grant Program. These competitive grants support the survey and nomination of properties to the National Register of Historic Places and as National Historic Landmarks associated with communities currently under-represented.

—Semiquincentennial Grants. We strongly support funding for the competitive grant program to preserve publicly owned historical sites commemorating the upcoming 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States.

TOTAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND REQUEST: FY 2020 $150 MILLION

National Park Service: National Heritage Areas

We'd also like to express our support for the Preservation Partnership Program which supports National Heritage Areas nationwide. Designated by Congress, National Heritage Areas (NHAs) are community—driven sites that weave cultural, natural, and historic resources together to tell nationally significant stories. NHAs rely on public—private funding where every federal dollar allocated is matched with an average of $5.50 in public and private funds.

While we appreciate Congress's support of NHAs, funding has not kept pace with the need and popularity of the program. Since 2004 the number of NHAs have more than doubled while funding for the program has only increased by 33%. To bring funding in line with the increased number of NHAs, Preservation Action requests, in accordance with the National Alliance of National Heritage Areas, $32 million for National Heritage Areas through the Preservation Partnership Program in the FY22 Department of Interior's budget. Preservation Action also supports the bipartisan National Heritage Area Act of 2021 (H.R. 1316) which establishes standardized criteria of NHAs and ensures long term sustainability.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE: PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Preservation Action would like to thank the subcommittee for including report language in the FY20 Interior Appropriations bill and the FY21 Interior Appropriations bill expressing concern over the previous Administration's proposed rule changes to the National Register of Historic Places. The proposed rule changes would have had a devastating impact on how historic resources are nominated to the National Register and determined eligible. We were very pleased that the Department of Interior announced they would be withdrawing the proposed rule changes.

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) is an independent federal agency that promotes the preservation, enhancement, and sustainable use of the nation's diverse historic resources, and advises the President and Congress on national historic preservation policy. We appreciate the continued support of this important agency and urge the Committee to support $8 million for the ACHP in the FY 2022 Interior Appropriations Bill. In the coming year, the ACHP will implement the findings of its "Digital Information Task Force" to utilize mapping tools to identify and protect historic resources and advance timely delivery of major infrastructure projects. An increase in funding will enhance the critical functions of the agency in ensuring the nation's historic and cultural resources are protected, while advancing tribal consultation and finding efficiencies in federal reviews.

FEDERAL HISTORIC REHABILITATION TAX CREDIT

The Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit (HTC), administered by SHPOs, THPOs and the National Park Service, is the most significant federal investment in historic preservation. The HTC has been a catalyst for development, rehabilitating of more than 45,000 historic buildings across the nation and leveraging over $173 billion in private investment. Since inception, the HTC has created nearly 3 million jobs and produced over 172,000 affordable housing units. In addition to revitalizing communities and spurring economic growth, the HTC returns more to the Treasury than the cost of the program. The HTC has helped to rehabilitate historic structures and revitalize communities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S Virgin Islands.

The Historic Tax Credit Growth and Opportunity Act (H.R 2294) would increase the value of the HTC, improve access to the credit, and make the credit more appealing for smaller projects. The legislation also includes a temporary increase in the credit that would help address pandemic related challenges the industry is facing. Preservation Action and its national members urge Congress to pass the HTC–GO Act and continue to support the Historic Tax Credit by sufficiently funding SHPOs, THPOs and the National Park Service who administer the program.

CONCLUSION

Preservation Action appreciates the opportunity to provide our views on the FY22 Department of Interior budget. We work closely with a broad cross—section of preservation professionals from the state and local level and are pleased to be able to add their perspective.

Preservation Action continues to value the dedicated work of National Park Service employees, the partnership of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as well as the instrumental work of SHPOs and THPOs in preserving America's cultural heritage.

Thank you for valuing the input of the preservation community as you consider the FY22 Department of Interior budget and your past support of vital historic preservation programs. We look forward to working with the committee and are happy to answer any questions you may have.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE PUYALLUP TRIBE OF INDIANS

The Puyallup Tribe is an independent sovereign nation having historically negotiated with several foreign nations, including the United States in the Medicine Creek Treaty of 1854. This relationship is rooted in Article I, Section 8, of the United States Constitution, federal laws and numerous Executive Orders. The governing body of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians is the Puyallup Tribal Council which upholds the Tribe's sovereign responsibility of self-determination and self-govern-

ance for the benefit of the 5,427 Puyallup tribal members and the 25,000 plus members from approximately 355 federally recognized Tribes who utilize our services.

The Puyallup Tribe operates healthcare, social services, law enforcement and corrections, education, and a myriad of other programs and services for our Tribal citizens and individuals within our program and service areas. These programs depend on continued resources and support through federal appropriations—which reflect the federal trust and treaty obligations to American Indian and Alaska Native people and tribes.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES—INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

The Puyallup Tribe strongly supports the Administration's unprecedented $2.2 billion requested increase for the Indian Health Service.

The Puyallup Tribe has operated a healthcare program since 1976 through the Indian Self-Determination Act, P.L. 93–638. The Puyallup Tribal Health Authority (PTHA) operates a comprehensive ambulatory care program serving the Native American population in Pierce County, Washington. The current patient load exceeds 9,000, of which approximately 1,700 are Tribal members.

There are no Indian Health Service hospitals in the Portland Area, so all specialties and hospital care have been paid for out of our contract care allocation. This the full funding of the Purchased and Referred Care (PRC) program is critical to ensuring that Indian people in the Northwest receive adequate health care. The Pandemic highlighted this need, because the hospitalized care our COVID–19 patients needed was paid for by PRC.

On this note, I want to take the time to celebrate our clinic staff who worked tirelessly throughout the Pandemic to provide care, keep our people safe, and when it was time, delivered vaccinations. The fact that COVID–19 did not destroy our community is because of the dedicated health care workers in our clinic.

The Puyallup Tribe strongly supports the Administration's proposal for advance appropriations for the Indian Health Service in 2023. The FY 2020 government shutdown underscored the need for this change. The delays in funding had deeply—felt impacts in tribes' ability to provide health care to our people. We also strongly support the initiative to make contract support costs and 105(l) lease costs mandatory costs so that they do not continue to stress the limited funding allocation that the Subcommittee receives. This is the first important step to making all the Indian Health Service's funding mandatory.

DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR—BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

We strongly support the Administration's $600 million requested increase for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Education. This funding is to focus on the most critical needs of Indian country the safety of: our children, our families, and our environment.

Public Safety & Justice.—The Tribe's top priority is public safety and justice. The lack of financial resources is a significant barrier to the provision of effective public safety services in Indian country. The Bureau of Indian Affairs only provides $588,000 for our Tribal law enforcement services contract, this amounts to 8% of the Tribe's total level of need. The Tribe can supplement these resources, so that we are able to have a Chief of Police, and thirty commissioned officers and two (2) reserve officers.

These officers are charged with the service and protection of the entire 40 square miles of the Reservation and the usual and accustomed areas where we exercise our Treaty protected hunting and fishing rights. The Puyallup Reservation encompasses most of the City of Tacoma, as well as parts of five other different municipalities (Fife, Milton, Puyallup, Edgewood and Federal Way). Furthermore, Interstate 5 runs through the Puyallup Reservation and is a known drug and human trafficking corridor. Our officers are tired, and they need reinforcements.

Detention and corrections funding remains of critical importance to the Puyallup Tribe. The Puyallup Tribe has a 28-bed adult corrections facility. Again, we worked closely with the OJS on an agreed upon operating cost of this facility at $2.7 million. However, the BIA provides only $725,000, approximately 26% of what the Tribe needs to run the facility.

In addition, we operate a Tribal Court program. Our base BIA funding for this program has remained at $194,996 since FY 2015. Like the Law Enforcement and Detention funding, this amount represents only a small amount of the Tribe's needs to fully operate the Tribal Court program.

Natural Resources Management.—The Puyallup Tribe is the steward for the land and marine waters of our homeland, including our usual and accustomed fishing places and shellfish and wildlife areas. The United States has treaty, trust, and gov-

ernmental obligations and responsibilities to manage natural resources for uses that are beneficial to the tribal membership and regional communities. Our resource management responsibilities cover thousands of square miles in the Puget Sound with an obligation to manage production of anadromous, non-anadromous fish, shellfish and wildlife resources. Unfortunately, despite our diligent program efforts, the fisheries resource is degrading, causing economic losses on Native and Non-native fishermen, as well as the surrounding communities.

Existing levels of appropriations are simply inadequate to reverse the trend of resource/habitat degradation in Puget Sound and other areas. A minimum funding level of $17.146 million is necessary for the BIA Western Washington (Bolt) Fisheries Management program, and we urge the Subcommittee to meet or exceed this amount for FY 2022 appropriations. Any increase in funding would provide new monies for shellfish, groundfish, enforcement, habitat, wildlife and other natural resource management needs. As the aboriginal owners and guardians of our lands and waters, it is essential that adequate funding is provided to allow Tribes to carry out our inherent stewardship of these resources.

The Puyallup Tribe also operates several salmon hatcheries in our territory. These hatcheries benefit both Indian and non-Indian commercial and sport fisheries. We work cooperatively with the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, neighboring tribes, federal agencies and state fishery managers to ensure the success and sustainability of our hatchery programs. We urge Congress to increase funding to these important facilities. And finally, the Timber, Fish and Wildlife (TFW) Supplemental and U.S./Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty programs have allowed for the expansion of Tribal participation in the state forest practice rules and regulations, as well as allowed Tribes to participate in inter—tribal organizations to address specific treaties and legal cases relating to multi-national fishing rights, harvest allocations, and resource management practices. This funding must be continued.

One area of critical importance is the need to provide additional resources to fund natural resource infrastructure to ensure that our Natural Resource Programs have the facilities they need to operate. We submitted a directed funding request of $11.2 million to construct a Natural Resources building to ensure that our world renown program can continue to do the work that it has been doing for decades.

Operations of Indian Programs & Tribal Priority Allocations.—The Tribal Priority Allocations (TPA) account within the Operations of Indian Programs include the majority of funding used to support ongoing services at the "local tribal" level, including natural resources management, child welfare, education, and other Tribal government services. These functions have not received adequate and consistent funding to allow Tribes the resources to fully exercise self-determination and self-governance. Further, the small increases TPA has received over the past few years have not been adequate to keep pace with inflation. The Puyallup Tribe requests that the Subcommittee increase funding at least at the President's request for the Operation of Indian Programs and TPA.

BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION

We celebrate the Administration's emphasis on the Tribal Schools. It has been too long since BIE schools received any substantial increase in funding. The Puyallup Tribe operates the pre-K to 12 Chief Leschi School, including the ECEAP and FACE programs, with an enrollment of 640 + students. The costs of operating this school—including staff, supplies, and student transportation—continue to increase. Unfortunately, the amounts that Congress has appropriated are not keeping—up with inflation, let alone sufficient to allow us to dedicate additional resources to improving the education outcomes for our children. We are treading water and if more assistance is not provided, we may begin to drown. This why the Administration's unprecedented support for BIE programs is so important.

[This statement was submitted by Bill Sterud, Chairman.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE RAMAH NAVAJO SCHOOL BOARD, INC.

Honorable Chair, Ranking and Subcommittee Members, Ya'aht'eeh. My name is Maxine Coho, President of the Ramah Navajo School Board, Inc. (RNSB, Inc.) Together with the other four members of the Board of Trustees and on behalf of the Ramah Navajo people, we are grateful to all the Members of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittees on Interior for the opportunity to share our testimony.

RNSB, Inc. oversees different programs, services and initiatives on Ramah Navajo Land. RNSB. Inc. is incorporated by the State of New Mexico and authorized by the

Ramah Navajo Chapter to operate the K–12 Pine Hill Schools, Head Start and Early Intervention Programs and services (including FACE), the Pine Hill Health Center, Behavioral Health and Social Services, Higher Education Program, and a Scholarship Program. Due to our remote location in a mountainous region of New Mexico, opportunities for employment and education outside the campus are very limited and the poverty level is high. The people are in dire need of quality services and different programs to address their needs and uplift their economic conditions.

In order to address these needs, the Board of Trustees must provide adequate infrastructure for our people. We need paved roads, internet connectivity for all the families, dependable electrical systems, building and classroom ventilation, Computer Science Technology Classrooms, a gymnasium for Elementary and Middle School Students, Vocational Classroom for Students, a sustainable water system (Reclamation and Recycling), gas lines for heating, and reliable sewer systems, as well as a Community Services Division building complex. A lot of this infrastructure was built fifty years ago. There is immediate need for repair and replacement for sustainability of operations as maintenance in many parts of the infrastructure has been deferred for too long due to budgetary limitations. The federal funding received is not enough for all the needs of the Navajo people to live as human beings. All these affect the Navajo peoples' lives and these issues will continue to exist until we get help from the Federal Government.

We, the people of the Ramah Navajo Community in the State of New Mexico, represented by the RNSB, Inc. Board of Trustees Members, are here today to ask the Congressional Subcommittees to assist us in funding the immediate needed repairs or replacement of the community's infrastructures. Our priority budget line items in the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) budget are ISEP formula funds, Students' Transportation, Education IT (access to broadband) as well as the BIE Education Construction budget line items for Facilities Improvement and Repair, and School Facility Replacement Construction. On the following pages we provide an estimated cost breakdown of our Priority Projects as well as our priorities for inclusion in the Pending Infrastructure Legislation; Teacher Pay Parity; and DFMC Oversight.

Estimated Costs for Priority Projects. In 2019, the Board of Trustees came to Washington, DC to testify before the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee about the appalling conditions of RNSB Community facilities and to meet with our Congressional Delegation, the Director of the BIE, and the Director of the Office of Facilities, Property and Safety Management (which oversees the Division of Facilities Management and Construction, DFMC). RNSB was able to reach an agreement with the DFMC to address critical facilities issues, including the need for the Gymnasium for the Elementary and Middle School, the need to Replace, Renovate and Repair certain existing infrastructure, and address Road paving and construction. The RNSB Community has identified the following as our most pressing needs and we include estimated costs:

1. Gymnasium for Elementary and Middle School. For more than 50 years now, the elementary and middle school students have not had the benefit of a gymnasium for their physical education classes.
—Estimated Cost—$20 million
2. Water System, Reclamation, and Recycling needs immediate repair.
—Estimated Cost—$20 million
3. Completing the Electrical System Repair and Replacement Project.
—Estimated Cost—$3.5 million (see discussion below)
4. Internet Connectivity for families in Unit 1, Unit 3, and Unit 5 to support students in virtual learning.
—Estimated Cost—$500,000
5. Paved Road Construction.
—Estimated Cost—$10 million
6. Community Services Division Complex (Radio Station, Housing Office, Scholarship Building, and Community Complex).
—Estimated Cost—$2.5 million
7. RNSB Building Needs (Dental Expansion, Wellness Center, Clinical Admin Support, and Behavioral Health Building, with sustainable utilities).
—Estimated Cost—$30 million
8. Career and Technical Education Facility to provide those students who may not be pursuing college with a space to attend classes in construction, woodworking, and welding—for which we have a program grant from New Mexico State University.
—Estimated Cost—$3 million

Inclusion in the Federal COVID–19 Response and the Pending Infrastructure Legislation.—We would like to extend our tremendous gratitude to the Subcommittees for the role you played in ensuring that schools in the BIE school system were in-

cluded in the COVID–19 relief laws in a robust and equitable manner. Thank you. As Congress now turns its attention to our Nation's infrastructure needs, we ask that you similarly ensure that schools in the BIE school system are included. Progress has been made on persistent inequities at BIE system schools because the Subcommittees continue to prioritize funding to address them on a fiscal year basis. This pending infrastructure package provides an opportunity to make significant headway on the tremendous backlog you have been working so hard to address each fiscal year.

Teacher Pay Parity.—We would also like to specifically thank the House Subcommittee for the oversight and FY 2021 report language requesting reports from the BIE on teacher pay parity. The BIE's failure to appropriately request fixed cost increases to provide pay parity for teachers and counselors in the BIE school system with their counterparts in the Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA) puts us and other schools at a competitive disadvantage because it erodes the spending power of our budgets year after year and impedes our efforts to attract and retain quality teachers. We look forward to reading this report and seeing the BIE adjust its subsequent budget requests to comply with federal law.

Ensure Proper Oversight of DFMC regarding Facilities Improvement and Repair.—RNSB's experience with the catastrophic failure of its electrical system demonstrated significant concerns about the DFMC's emergency repair and reimbursement program. RNSB expects there will be important lessons learned from our experience that will enable tribally controlled schools and the DFMC to better respond to emergency facility repairs and improvements. We provide some background on our experience followed by our request to the Subcommittee for a formal program evaluation.

Our electrical system powers the Pine Hill Schools' campus, community health clinic, and water treatment plant. This electrical system is over 50 years old. As the electrical system had not benefited from periodic inspections or maintenance by the BIA, many of its components were at the end of their lifespan, had deteriorated past the point of restoration and/or were not code—compliant. The conductor, which permits electricity to flow throughout the system, is at the end of its useful life and must be replaced entirely. Several components of the system are ineffectively grounded—any person who comes into contact with the lid of a manhole may be electrocuted. Further, many of the transformers are dilapidated (i.e., leaking oil, rusted housing, improper grounding, excess internal dirt) and will expose any person to full, live voltage if the transformer doors are opened. As a result, the electrical system is in violation of several occupational, health, and safety codes, including the National Electrical Safety Code.

Despite RNSB's repeated requests following the power outage in June 2020, the DFMC declined to conduct a site visit due to the COVID–19 pandemic. Yet, the DFMC did send a contractor, who conducted a cursory visit. Based on the contractor's report, DFMC determined that the electrical system did not qualify as an emergency repair situation. RNSB views the DFMC determination as a significant error. DFMC's determination is directly contradicted by licensed, professional high voltage electrical system engineers and contractors. Indeed, given the urgent and dangerous situation, RNSB hired a professional engineering and surveying firm to conduct an independent review of the electrical system. That firm developed a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER), final system maps, cost estimates, and other work product. The engineering firm determined the system required extensive upgrades and recommended that the entire system be replaced and upgraded (estimated at $7.0 million).

RNSB secured $3.5 million in funding from the Navajo Nation (approximately 50% of the total cost of the electrical system replacement project). RNSB contracted with a high voltage electric system contractor to begin constructing the replacement system and hired an independent inspector. RNSB requested that the DFMC provide matching funds to the project pursuant to an amendment to RNSB's Tribally Controlled Schools Act grant in order to complete the project. RNSB understood that DFMC had allocated funding for the electrical system.

Months later, however, DFMC informed us that it had contracted with a different private firm to provide an electrical system design. DFMC took this action without consulting with RNSB, in violation of 25 C.F.R. § 900.119, which prohibits the agency from "spending any funds for a planning, design, construction, or renovation project" without first consulting with the tribe or tribal organization affected. Had DFMC consulted, as required by law, it would have confirmed that RNSB's engineer had already prepared preliminary engineering report and design for the electrical system replacement project. DFMC's actions served to duplicate work that was already completed, added unnecessary delays and costs, and resulted in RNSB having to suspend the project due to lack of funding. Currently, several RNSB facilities are

operating on generators with funding from the DFMC—a costly, impermanent solution to a large—scale infrastructure problem.

Thanks to support from our congressional delegation, over the past two months, DFMC has started to communicate more transparently and RNSB hopes to have a more productive dialogue and to achieve the completion of the electrical system project in the near future. RNSB has proposed to complete the project through an Indian Self-Determination Act construction contract in which DFMC would contribute $3.5 million (50%) to match the amount RNSB has already contributed. Through the contract, RNSB and DFMC can assure the electrical system upgrade is completed in a safe, effective and efficient manner according to applicable electrical system standards and codes at the best value to the federal government.

Another issue we encountered with DFMC is that when creating the program of requirements (POR) for our gym, DFMC inexplicably used incomplete enrollment numbers and made calculations counter to even their own policies. The gym facilities of the RNSB Pine Hill K–12 Schools provide some of the only opportunities in this remote area that our students have for physical education and recreation. Having adequate, appropriately sized facilities for our students is critical but DFMC continues to shift their position on this without a path forward.

In light of our experiences, RNSB asks the Subcommittees to consider a Government Accountability Office evaluation of the DFMC's emergency repair and reimbursement program. That evaluation should consider whether the $100,000 maximum funding threshold should be abandoned. It should also explore whether it would be appropriate for the BIE to establish an electrical system inspection and maintenance program, with licensed personnel performing those inspections. Finally, we hope that the evaluation would consider the advantages of greater transparency, coordination and collaboration between tribal schools and the federal agencies in assessing and managing facility repairs and renovations.

CONCLUSION

The RNSB, Inc. was established to carry out its mission with self-determination in providing for the needs of our people in the Ramah Navajo Community. The RNSB, Inc. has demonstrated the capacity to govern and educate our own people and provide services to three Counties in an inter-governmental and collaborative way. As we continue to provide a safe and promising future of our people, we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for the dependable and trusted leaders in the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE RECORDING ACADEMY

As the only trade association in Washington representing all music creators—songwriters, performers, and studio professionals—the Recording Academy is pleased to offer testimony to the House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies in support of a substantial funding increase for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in Fiscal Year 2022 of no less than $201 million in alignment with President Biden's 2022 Budget Request. The Recording Academy is proud to support the NEA and the important work it has done to enrich American culture, particularly following a year where the agency went above and beyond to support the arts and culture industry in need.

The NEA remains an integral part of the cultural bedrock of the United States, working to bring music and the arts to towns and communities across the country. Its mission has never been more important, and as the creative arts look to recover from the COVID–19 pandemic, the agency will prove to be a key lynchpin in the resumption of arts throughout America. As such, the Recording Academy supports a substantial increase in funding so that the agency can maximize its mission in as many communities as possible.

Through supporting music and the arts, the NEA empowers local communities, improves student development, and advances cultural achievements. Considering that NEA grants yield more than $500 million in matching support—leveraging outside funds at a ratio of 9:1-it is financially one of the smartest investments the government can commit to. In the music industry, the NEA supports more than $50 million in music related grants each year. From Chamber Music Northwest ($20,000, 2018) in Portland to the Yellow Barn ($10,000, 2018) in Vermont; and from the Sitka Summer Music Festival in Alaska ($15,000, 2018) to the Tallahassee Youth Orchestra ($10,000, 2017) in Florida, the NEA has proven to support and foster local music communities and opportunities.

For the coming fiscal year, a substantial increase in its annual budget will expand the NEA's grant—making capabilities leading to an increase in arts participation

across all 50 states. Increased funding will also promote more equitable access to music and the arts, enabling the agency to bring programming to more demographic groups. After a year without art, Congress should strive to enable the NEA to expose as many Americans to music and the arts as possible.

As you finalize appropriations for FY22, please make a strong commitment to the arts and music with robust funding for the NEA.

[This statement was submitted by Daryl P. Friedman, Chief Advocacy Officer.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE RED LAKE BAND OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS

Chair Merkley and Ranking Member Murkowski, thank you and the other distinguished Subcommittee members for this opportunity to testify for the Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians. Red Lake has 15,090 members, and our 840,000 acre Reservation is held in trust by the United States. While diminished in size over time, our Reservation was never broken apart or allotted, and we are exempt from P.L. 83–280. Thus, we are responsible for a large land area over which we exercise full governmental authority and control, in conjunction with the United States. Due in part to our remote location, there are few job opportunities available. While unemployment in Minnesota is 11 percent, ours remains close to 40 percent. The lack of good roads, reliable communications systems, and other necessary infrastructure impedes economic development and job creation at Red Lake. Appropriations are the key way in which the United States fulfills its trust responsibility and honors its obligations to tribes. We request an additional $5.5 million in FY 2022 funding for Red Lake programs as described below.

Covid-19 Pandemic.—In March 2020, Red Lake declared a Public Health Emergency due to Covid-19. We prepared an Emergency Response Plan and implemented a 3-step progressive process to delay its arrival. These steps were based on evolving data and included a curfew, a shelter-in-place order, and Medical Martial Law, which was declared in April 2020, effectively sealing off the reservation. Blockades were established at all entry points, with border security stationed 24/7. Red Lake may have been the only government in the U.S. to impose Medical Martial Law to protect its citizens from Covid-19. Exceptions were allowed to obtain food and medicine, for medical care, and to check on the elderly and vulnerable. Most of our revenue—generating businesses, including gaming, were closed. We had our first Covid-19 case in May 2020. Native Americans suffer greater hospitalization and death rates from Covid-19 than any other group. Red Lake's positive cases, hospitalizations, and deaths were kept very low. We attribute this to several things: Our 3-step process to protect the reservation, including Medical Martial Law; Ongoing efforts of our emergency response and health care teams; Establishment of Covid-19 testing sites; Shuttering of our businesses; Communications with tribal members to follow CDC guidelines; Red Lake members' adherence to CDC guidelines; and, a highly successful vaccination effort in partnership with IHS. The measures were very costly, but the resulting low number of hospitalizations and deaths were worth it.

Provide Robust Funding for BIA, BIE, and IHS.—We greatly appreciate your rejection of the prior Administration's proposed budget cuts, and instead providing much—needed increases for BIA/BIE. President Biden's FY 2022 budget request provides robust investments in Indian Affairs, including increases of $610 million for BIA, $111 million for BIE, and $2.2 billion for IHS. We support these needed funding increases.

Rescissions, Sequestration, and Pay Cost Cutbacks Have Eroded Tribal Program Funding.—Since FY 2000 there were 20, across-the-board rescissions to tribes' government programs, totaling 9.5 percent, including for things like Hurricane Katrina recovery. The needs of the rescissions were met long ago, but the funding cuts continue. Since FY 2013 our programs were cut another 5 percent from Sequestration. These cuts greatly eroded program funding and our ability to maintain public safety. To make things worse, inflation since FY 2000 totaled 50 percent. Pay Costs are the only increase many tribal programs receive and are vital to maintain staff. Since FY 2001, Interior agencies lost more than a billion dollars from the partial funding of Pay Costs. Each of the last three Administrations and OMB have been guilty of this, and Congress has previously stated the Administration should request full funding for Pay Costs in all future budgets. We ask that you renew the call to fully fund Pay Costs, and we ask for $2.5 million for Red Lake to restore what Red Lake has lost since FY 2001.

Fully Fund and expand the BIA Tiwahe and Recidivism Reduction Initiatives (RRI).—The Tiwahe Initiative was established in 2015 to improve the health and wellbeing of families in tribal communities by reducing poverty, substance abuse,

domestic violence, and associated outcomes such as youth suicide. Tiwahe includes two components: (1) a recurring funding increase for all tribes that operate Social Services and ICWA programs and (2) additional funding for a demonstration program at 6 tribal locations (representing 61 tribes and Alaska Native villages). Tiwahe funding includes BIA programs of Social Services, ICWA, Courts, Housing (HIP), Job Placement & Training, and Public Safety RRI program. Upon completion of the 5-year demonstration period, BIA promised if tribes evidenced success through performance measures identified in their Tiwahe plans, the program and funding would thereafter be recurring. Congress has supported the Tiwahe Initiative since it began, citing the importance of providing culturally—appropriate services with the goals of empowering individuals and families through health promotion, family stability, and strengthening tribal communities as a whole.

Tiwahe has improved coordination of and strengthened our youth suicide prevention efforts at Red Lake. We had one youth suicide in the last three years, and only two youth suicides in the last 67 months. Although one suicide is too many, for Red Lake this represents a major reduction, and we have made great progress towards our goal of ending youth suicide.

Tiwahe funding has been essential for us to continue to operate our Juvenile Healing to Wellness Court and our Family Drug Court. These courts were initially established through DOJ grants, but those funds ran out, and it is Tiwahe funding that has allowed us to keep our judge and case managers for these courts employed, and the courts functioning. We've had successes with these alternative courts. Just recently, through intervention of the Tiwahe alternative court judge, we were able to get a juvenile at high risk of harming herself into the Hazelton drug treatment program, with IHS agreeing to cover the costs, which is something IHS normally would not fund. Our alternative courts were also able to take in and nurture several drug addicted young mothers-to-be, with a result that the newborns were born drug free.

Tiwahe Job Placement/Training funds allowed us to develop and offer several training programs to take advantage of current and emerging job needs in our area. During one recent period, we held three CNA classes for 28 students, with 95% receiving their certification. Half of these were immediately employed by our tribal nursing home, increasing the number of elders we were able to serve. One of the CNA classes consisted of all TANF clients, thereby reducing dependency on TANF. Tiwahe and RRI enabled us to open the Red Lake Children's Healing Center (CHC), a juvenile facility that sat vacant for a decade due to lack of funding. The CHC provides vital mental health, substance abuse, domestic abuse, and recidivism reduction services to youth in a culturally—sensitive way. Despite Covid-19 delays, we've completed needed renovations and have staffed—up the facility to implement a 24/7 youth residential treatment program for rehabilitative mental health and substance abuse services. The facility is now serving youth in need, a great achievement for our Tribe and our youth.

The Tiwahe pilot sites have recently completed a comprehensive Tiwahe report, including measures of success and guidelines for other tribes to implement the model. We believe the report validates the success of Tiwahe and justifies program expansion and making Tiwahe a permanent program. The BIA is also nearing completion of its report on Tiwahe, which we believe will further validate its success. It is in the interest of all tribes who operate Social Services and ICWA programs, the tribal demonstration sites, and all of the children and families benefitting, that you fully fund Tiwahe in FY 2022, and we ask consideration that 6 new pilot sites be added in FY 2022, at a total cost of $9 million. And also, that you consider providing an additional amount of $5 million each for Tiwahe Social Services and Tiwahe ICWA programs, with such increases distributed Across-the-Board for tribes that operate Social Services and ICWA programs. Finally, we believe the existing pilot sites' funding should be made permanent, and Tiwahe should be designated a permanent Indian Affairs Policy and Program. We also ask that you continue the Tiwahe explicit language in FY 2022, "with funding distributed in the same amounts to the same recipients, including the funding to support women and children's centers".

BIA Justice Services.—Law Enforcement, Courts, and Community Fire Protection. The Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA) intended to give tribes the resources needed to fight crime. But since TLOA began, BIA law enforcement funding has shrunk, hindering our ability to reduce crime and protect lives. Our greatest need is for funding increases for more tribal officers. The BIA is obligated to provide full funding to meet basic public safety needs but has repeatedly failed to do so. We are understaffed and undersupplied relative to BIA safety standards. Last year, we had to expend $5 million more than the BIA provided, by taking funds from other crit-

ical tribal programs that are already underfunded, just to maintain minimal public safety.

In 2017 Red Lake declared a Public Health Emergency because of the sharp increase in opioid overdoses. I'm sad to report that we are once again in the midst of an almost incomprehensible increase in the number of opioid and fentanyl related overdoses and deaths on our reservation. This year we've experienced more than 100 overdoses, and 11 deaths. We are certain that the various consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic have contributed to this increase. These losses are heartbreaking and we continue our struggle to help our members in fighting this disease. To address this crisis, we've formed a Community Overdose Response Task Force, which is working hard to protect our people. We appreciate your support for BIA funding increases for more tribal police officers to focus on stopping the flow of drugs coming onto our reservation.

Red Lake has waged a fierce war on drugs, and we are holding drug dealers accountable. But we need more resources to end this epidemic. We request an additional $60 million in FY 2022 specifically for tribal law enforcement personnel and operations, $15 million more for tribal detention, and an additional $3 million for Red Lake Law Enforcement to combat our opioid crisis.

Tribal Courts are a top priority for tribes but are severely underfunded. We appreciate the increases in Court funding you provided the last three years, totaling $8.5 million. We ask that you provide an additional $25 million in FY 2022 for Tribal Courts. Community Fire Protection has been neglected for decades. We are responsible for fighting fires on our reservation and protecting lives, on a yearly BIA—funded budget of only $42,500. We ask that you provide $10 million for Community Fire Protection in FY 2022.

Financing for 105 (l) Leases.—Thank you for including "indefinite appropriations" authority for Section 105(l) leases in FY 2021. This is essential for BIA and tribes to negotiate and fund leases without impacting other tribal programs. We ask that you continue this authority in FY 2022.

Housing Improvement Program (HIP).—HIP provides housing assistance for our poorest and elderly members. Thank you for funding HIP in FY 2021, and for providing $1.7 million for Tiwahe pilot tribes. We request an additional $30 million for HIP in FY 2022.

Trust Natural Resources.—Thank you for providing recent increases for tribal natural resource programs. Most tribal natural resources base programs, which fund our day-to-day conservation responsibilities, had not been increased for years. As a result, tribes have been unable to adequately manage their resources (e.g., Red Lake must manage the 6th largest freshwater lake in the U.S. on less than $1 per acre). We support the President's FY 2022 request for more funding for climate resilience and adaptation. Most tribal resource management activities are funded under the BIA budget categories of Tribal Management Development, Natural Resources TPA, Wildlife and Parks TPA, and Forestry TPA. We urge you to increase funding for each of these programs by at least $10 million above FY 2021 enacted levels.

Indian Health Service (IHS).—There is a tremendous unmet need for IHS and tribal health programs, stemming from years of chronic under funding. IHS mandatory increases for inflation, population growth, pay costs, and CSC surpass enacted increases. Per capita expenditures for IHS healthcare in 2018 were only $3,779 person, compared to $9,409 for the general population, a great disparity. We appreciate the President's request for a FY 2022 increase of $2.2 Billion, for a total IHS budget of $8.5 billion. However, we support the IHS Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup request, and ask that you provide $12.8 billion for IHS to begin redressing long—standing health inequities experienced by American Indians and Alaska Natives. In addition, we also support the President's request to include advance appropriations for IHS in FY 2023.

EPA Programs.—Our Tribe has 60% of the Indian trust land in EPA Region 5. We span a geographic area the size of West Virginia. Our water, wetlands, animals, and plants are vital to us. Vital EPA programs like General Assistance (GAP), Clean Water Act Sections 106 Pollution Control and 319 Nonpoint Source, Brownfields, and Clean Air Act Section 105, provide only 50 percent of the staff and support needed. We support the President's FY 2022 request for additional tribal resources, including Air Quality grants to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Thank you for allowing me to present, for the record, some of the most immediate needs of the Red Lake Nation in FY 2022, and for your consideration of these needs.

[This statement was submitted by the Honorable Darrell G. Seki Sr., Chairman.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE REGIONAL AIR POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCY SERVING CLARK, DARKE, GREENE, MIAMI, MONTGOMERY AND PREBLE COUNTIES

Senator Merkley:

The Regional Air Pollution Control Agency (RAPCA) and other state and local clean air agencies across the country are charged with operating essential air quality programs that protect public health. Unfortunately, these programs have been underfunded for many years and need significant increases in resources. Federal grants to state and local air quality agencies under Sections 103 and 105 of the Clean Air Act last year were $229.5 million, which is approximately the same as they were over 15 years ago in FY 2004, even while their responsibilities have increased dramatically. If this amount were adjusted for inflation, level funding would be about

$321.5 million for FY 2022. Therefore, while the need is far greater, we ask Congress to increase state and local air grants by $92 million above FY 2021 levels, for a total of $321.5 million (equal to the Administration's budget request).

Air pollution still causes tens of thousands of early deaths in America. It is still a serious public health problem that causes adverse health impacts to millions every year, including cancer and damage to respiratory, cardiovascular, neurological and reproductive systems. These impacts especially affect overburdened and environmental justice communities. State and local air quality agencies are tasked with putting in place and operating the programs required by the federal Clean Air Act to improve and protect air quality. These responsibilities include, among others, monitoring, planning, modeling, compiling emission inventories, adopting regulations, analyzing data and inspecting facilities. In southwest Ohio, for example, we are particularly concerned about ozone pollution and assuring compliance of high—profile facilities such as the Cargill, Inc.—Dayton and the Fairborn Cement Plant, in addition to being responsive to industry business needs with regards to assisting facilities with obtaining requisite construction air permits. Accordingly, we work with the local Multi-Jurisdictional Planning Organization (MPO), the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission to issue ozone air quality alerts to the public when needed, as well as performing enhanced inspections and ambient air monitoring of high—profile facilities, in addition to meeting "routine" Clean Air Act requirements.

Federal grants for state and local air quality agencies have been inadequate for many years. They have not even kept up with inflation and our costs have increased. Because of these deficits, state and local agencies struggle to continue critical air quality programs. Maintaining adequate staffing levels to manage these critical air quality programs requires sufficient funding. Without the funding and the staff, the community will experience longer response times for requisite air permits to be issued, complaint investigations and compliance assurance efforts, all of which are in place to reduce air pollution in the community. Additionally, this could result in having the most negative effect on businesses looking to expand or modify their operations, because they are left to wait on the issuance of the construction air permit to move forward. This is especially critical as businesses diligently work to ramp up operations following the Covid-19 pandemic emergency.

We at RAPCA work hard to improve air quality, but sufficient federal funding is critical. Please ensure that federal grants to state and local air quality agencies are increased at least to keep pace with inflation. Specifically, grants in the amount of $321.5 million would constitute merely level funding from FY 2004 levels, adjusted for inflation. I would be glad to answer any questions you have or provide more information. Thank you for any assistance you can offer.

[This statement was submitted by The Honorable Jeff Merkley, Chair.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ROCKY BOY HEALTH CENTER

Recommendations:

1. Provide full funding and advance appropriations for the Indian Health Service (IHS).
2. Ensure mandatory funding for Contract Support Costs and 105(l) lease payments
3. Fund Critical Infrastructure investments for the Indian health system
4. Increase funding and authorize a self-governance funding mechanism option for the Special Diabetes Program for Indians
5. Increase funding for Preventive Health programs.
6. Reduce dependence on competitive grants for Indian Country

Introduction:

Thank you, Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to share our funding priorities for the FY 2022 federal budget. My name is Joel Rosette and I serve as CEO of the Rocky Boy Health Center. In 1993 the Chippewa Cree Tribe was one of the first tribes to achieve self-governance under a pilot program that led to the 1994 law. The outcome of this was that Chippewa Cree Tribe of Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation's tribal governing body was able to take over administration of all the programs, and their associated funds, that were previously under the management of the federal government (or Dept of Health and Human Services).

The Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation, home of the Chippewa Cree Tribe (CCT).—The Rocky Boy Health Center (RBHC), the sole health care facility on the reservation, has the responsibility for providing primary health care (including behavioral health and substance abuse services) to all American Indian people within the catchment area. The reservation is the smallest of seven Indian reservations in Montana. The total number of enrolled tribal members is 6,862 of whom 4,031 reside on the Reservation. Our community is isolated, and the nearest supermarket is in Havre, 30 miles from Rocky Boy, and the nearest international airport and major shopping facilities are located in Great Falls, 110 miles away.

We have been grateful that IHS has received significant supplementary appropriations to combat the COVID–19 pandemic. Those dollars have been critical in ensuring that we have the means to serve our patients and fight this deadly disease. The historic funding provided to IHS will translate into real lives saved. It is critical that we use this crisis as an opportunity to make real, sustained investments in the Indian health system. As we have seen with the remarkable distribution of the COVID–19 vaccine in Indian Country, when given adequate resources and when tribal sovereignty is honored, tribal communities can rise to the challenge. It is now time to take the lessons learned from the COVID–19 pandemic—both positive and negative—to renew the Indian health system. Annual appropriations are essential to this effort and in fulfilling the federal government's trust and treaty obligations by ensuring critical programs and services receive adequate funding to fulfill their intended purpose. To further these goals, I offer the following recommendations for your consideration for FY 2022 appropriations for the IHS.

Provide Full Funding for the Indian Health Service.—The IHS and its tribal partners under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act strive to provide tribal people with access to high quality and comprehensive medical services, no more so than during the ongoing pandemic. We have navigated unimaginable hardships related to supplies, staffing levels, infrastructure and facilities, and high rates of underlying conditions in serving our people at this time.

The IHS Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup has calculated this need at $48 billion for full funding. While this represents a dramatic increase in funding, it is imperative that Congress address the true needs of the Indian health system. In FY 2022, the Workgroup requests $12.759 billion for IHS. We support their full request and reiterate the top 5 priorities for program expansion as follows:

1) Hospitals and Clinics: $4.2 billion
2) Purchased/Referred Care: $2 billion
3) Mental Health: $715 million
4) Alcohol and substance Abuse: $778.5 million
5) Dental Services: $649.7 million

Support for Advance Appropriations for IHS.—For many years, tribes have requested that IHS appropriations be funded on an advance appropriations cycle. It has unfortunately become the norm that IHS does not receive its full yearly appropriation until several months (sometimes longer) after the start of the fiscal year. In the recent past, IHS, Tribal and Urban health programs have even had to deal with government shutdowns, when no funding was provided for weeks on end. These funding delays make it impossible for IHS and Tribal health programs to plan and manage their annual budgets. As you know, health systems cannot practically operate on a day to day or week to week basis without knowing what funding will be provided in the future. Unrelated political disagreements in Washington, DC should not impede American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) from receiving the health care they deserve. Full advance appropriations for the IHS would promote greater stability in services, medical personnel recruitment and retention, and facilities management.

We thank the leadership of this subcommittee for supporting this important change in previous Congresses. We were also grateful to see President Biden support IHS advance appropriations in his FY 2022 budget request to Congress which was released on April 9, 2021. We urge the Committee to take the necessary steps

in the FY 2022 appropriations bill to move IHS to an advance appropriation for FY 2023 and beyond.

Fully fund critical infrastructure investments: As Congress considers making dramatic investments in the country's infrastructure, it is critical that the Indian health system not get left behind. Therefore, we request that the subcommittee allocate approximately $3 billion for full implementation of interoperable Electronic Health Records (EHR) and tele-health. This will ensure that IHS can provide services that are similar to other health providers. As you are aware, this investment is especially critical as the Veterans' Administration and Department of Defense move to modernize their systems.

It is also critical that Congress make significant investments in Tribal health facilities construction. IHS and tribal facilities are some of the oldest in the nation, with an average age of 10.6 years. This creates situations where facilities are out of date, or not appropriate for the size of the patient populations they serve. Therefore, consistent with the Budget formulation Workgroup's request, we recommend $15 billion for Health Facilities Construction Funding & Equipment.

Sanitation Facilities Construction.—During the pandemic, we were told to socially distance and wash our hands to keep COVID–19 from spreading. Yet, we still do not have access to clean, potable water. This creates significant health risks for the tribal members living on the Rocky Boy reservation. Yet, with a backlog of almost $3 billion the IHS Sanitation Deficiency list cannot keep pace with need. We urge Congress to prioritize Sanitation Facilities Construction funding in FY 2022 and any infrastructure package moving through Congress.

Mandatory Funding for Contract Support Costs and 105(l) lease payments.—We appreciate the subcommittee's commitment to ensuring that Contract Support Costs (CSC) and 105(l) lease costs are fully funded by including an indefinite discretionary appropriation in FY 2021 for both of these accounts. However, these line items continue to take up a larger and larger percentage of the IHS discretionary budget, thereby leaving little room to expand other services given tight discretionary appropriations caps. We strongly agree with the subcommittee's words in the explanatory statement for the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116–94) regarding 105(l) costs which said, in part: "Obligations of this nature are typically addressed through mandatory spending, but in this case since they fall under discretionary spending, they are impacting all other programs funded under the Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, including other equally important Tribal programs..."

Therefore, we ask you to continue to advocate with your colleagues on authorizing committees to enact mandatory appropriations for CSC and 105(l) lease costs. Doing so will ensure that other areas of the IHS budget are held harmless by these costs and true increases in critical services line items can move forward. This will enhance care for AI/AN patients and reduce health disparities.

Extend Self-Governance Funding Options to the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) and increase funding to $250 million/year.—While we understand that SDPI is not under the jurisdiction of the subcommittee, we appreciate that Congress included a three-year reauthorization of SDPI in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116–260). Communities like ours across Indian Country rely on SDPI resources to address the alarming rates of diabetes and diabetes—related health complications among our people. SDPI's success rests in the flexibility of its program structure that allows for the incorporation of culture and local needs into its services. Consistent with this model, Congress should authorize SDPI participants the option of receiving their federal funds through either a grant (as currently used) or self-governance funding mechanisms under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. This would be a natural and just extension of SDPI in respecting tribal sovereignty.

Additionally, SDPI has not had an increase in funding since FY 2004. Short term reauthorizations also destabilize this health program and make staffing and program continuity difficult. For this reason, we recommend permanent reauthorization for SDPI at a minimum base of $250 million per year with annual adjustments for inflationary increases. Therefore, we urge you to work with your Congressional colleagues to ensure that SDPI receives a funding increase of at least $250 million per year.

Plan for the Future with Dedicated Funding for Preventative Health Services.—Among the many things we have learned from the COVID–19 pandemic is that basic public health functions are critical to preserving life and overall health of Americans, yet public health systems in most tribal communities lag far behind systems in other jurisdictions. Without robust public health systems in place, responding to public health threats means that tribal communities will continue to be a challenge. Like other governments, Tribes have the responsibility to provide public

health services for their people. Yet the federal government provides few resources to tribal communities for this purpose.

AI/ANs experience health disparities for a variety of health conditions such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and other largely preventable chronic conditions. Treating these chronic health conditions imposes unnecessary challenges on Tribal health systems and IHS. We support long-term, sustained, full investment in tribal public health infrastructure so that tribal communities have the resources available to respond quickly when the next crisis hits.

Reduce Dependence on Federal Grants.—In addition to the critical funding needs that are outlined above, we also support moving away from competitive grants for federal funding mechanisms. The federal trust responsibility does not require that we jump through a myriad of hoops and onerous applications to see that services are provided to our people. Grants also unfairly pit tribes against tribes, when all are deserving of critical resources. Therefore, we agree with other tribal leaders and continue to support broad based funding for our health systems across all federal agencies. Too often, tribes are under—resourced to apply for federal grants, and to comply with the associated burdensome reporting requirements, which vary from grant to grant. Applications and reporting requirements force our health system to divert staff time to apply and report, thereby diluting the usefulness of the resources. Instead, we request wide—spread, formula—based funding across all programs. Tribes must also be granted the flexibility needed to respond to the specific needs of their own communities, not those prescribed by federal grants. This also means providing enough resources so funds are provided in meaningful amounts across all tribes.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SAC AND FOX NATION

Chairman Jeff Merkley and distinguished Members of this Subcommittee, on behalf of the Great Sac and Fox Nation, I submit testimony of our Tribal priority requests for funding in the FY 2022 Budget for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) and Indian Health Service (IHS). The Sac and Fox Nation (the Nation) is the home of Jim Thorpe, one of the most versatile athletes of modern sports who earned Olympic gold medals for the1912 pentathlon and decathlon. The Nation would like to thank Congress for providing relief that is allowing Tribes to begin the recovery process from the pandemic that will remain as prominent in the minds of the world as the name Jim Thorpe.

The Nation would like to focus primarily on the Law Enforcement account in the BIA to provide what we deem essential personnel and equipment in response to what will be a direct response to McGirt vs. Oklahoma for the Nation. We believe the impact of the McGirt v. Oklahoma ruling goes beyond the borders of the Five Civilized Tribes. Geographically several other Tribes, including the Sac & Fox Nation, share a boundary with at least one of the Five Civilized Tribes and sit in what is considered eastern or east central Oklahoma. The Sac and Fox Nation is a Self-Governance Tribe headquartered in Stroud, Oklahoma. Our Tribal jurisdictional area covers all or parts of Lincoln, Payne, and Pottawatomie counties. Of the over 4,038 enrolled Tribal members, 2,600 live in Oklahoma.

The western boundaries of the Five Civilized Tribes are the end of reservation jurisdiction, but Federal jurisdiction does not end there. Although the Dawes Act was intended to cut reservation lands in to parcels for individual Indians, it did not give the State of Oklahoma jurisdiction on allotted lands. The Federal government maintains title to all Indian Allotments held in trust status, therefore leaving jurisdiction to Tribal Law Enforcement and Federal Law Enforcement Agencies.

In a post McGirt ruling, the Sac and Fox Nation Police Department (SFNPD) has been giving a lot of thought as to the repercussions of becoming the primary jurisdictional responding agency should a challenge case be presented in the Nation. As we understand it, any Native offender committing a crime within our Federally recognized jurisdictional boundaries would become our primary jurisdictional burden regardless of location of offense. To that end, we are already seeing confusion from some counties and municipalities regarding their ability to enforce and prosecute, despite it not being the case at the moment. Should a challenge case be upheld, the current thinking of some of these agencies that "not our problem" would be valid, and to be blunt, the SFNPD currently has neither the manpower nor resources to respond to every single offender in the entirety of the Federally recognized jurisdictional boundaries. In areas of dense population centers such as the cities of Shawnee or Cushing, we will need to expand the force by quite a bit to provide the necessary response with regards to proper rotational shifts.

The Nation has prepared a basic needs assessment with regards to manpower and equipment to address this issue moving forward. This is an initial assessment and may have to grow as population and call volume increases in the years to come. The Nation Law Enforcement funding request in FY 2022 is as follows:

1. $241,800—Centralized Dispatch Area at Headquarters in Stroud, OK—Our jurisdictional area spans three counties, a centralized dispatch area at our headquarters in Stroud would be necessary. A rotational shift of dispatchers and a dispatch supervisor would be necessary to intake calls and coordinate with field officers and multi—agency dispatches to determine correct officer routing to ensure correct and efficient officer response.

2. $4.375 million—Officers and Equipment—To meet the demands of call response in dense population centers, at a minimum I anticipate a need for an additional 8 officers per shift in the Shawnee, Pottawatomie County area, and 3 per shift to split Lincoln and Payne counties:

a. $2.263 million—Officers, Wages and Fringes
b. $72,000—Uniforms and equipment (weaponry)
c. $2.040 million—Vehicles up-fitted with emergency equipment and cages

TOTAL STARTUP FOR MCGIRT RESPONSE: $4,616,800 MILLION

The Sac and Fox Nation operates a Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) which provides services to 46 Tribes in Oklahoma, Kanas and Texas, as well as the state of Oklahoma with 66 beds which houses juveniles who have come before the court for committing offenses that caused them to be adjudicated "delinquent". These offenses could be related to school, substance abuse or criminal offenses. Sometimes they are placed because they are a runaway risk. The Nation recently entered into an agreement with the U.S. Marshall Service and although our agreement is specific to juvenile offenders, our facility could see a significant increase in the number of juvenile detainees as a result of the McGirt ruling.

Juveniles are placed at the Center in a safe and secure environment until they return to court or to placement. At the Center, their basic needs are met. They attend school in an alternative setting. They receive substance abuse counseling, if needed. They are provided with the opportunity to examine why they are in a juvenile center and are given the opportunity to gain social skills that might prevent them from re-offending.

The JDC employs approximately 25 people who are trained to work with the Juveniles. The standard ratio of one staff member to eight residents is a requirement per detention regulations. It is anticipated that our staff size would see an increase once the impact of the McGirt rulings is finally resolved. Our facility is the closest and only juvenile facility adjacent to the Muscogee (Creek) Reservation.

The Sac and Fox Nation supports the following National Requests:

Bureau of Indian Affairs

1. Fully Fund Fixed Costs and Tribal Pay Costs. We strongly urge full funding of fixed costs and Tribal payCosts. Most Federal agencies receive annual increases to their Fixed Costs rates each year to addressinflationary costs associated with Fringe Benefits and Pay Costs. Historically, Tribes have been disadvantaged because they have never received Fringe Benefit Fixed Cost adjustments.

2. Increase Tribal Base Funding (instead of through grants). Provide increases via Tribal base funding instead of through grants to Tribal governments. Grant funding, particularly inside the BIA, is not consistent with the intent of Indian self-determination. Tribal leaders have grown increasingly frustrated by the increase in Indian Affairs funding offered through grants. Allocating new funds via grant opportunities marginalizes and impedes the exercise of Tribal self-determination. New BIA funding should be distributed via formulas developed through consultation with all Tribes.

3. Law Enforcement. Provide for the following investments and increase in funding for Tribal law enforcement, including Tribal Courts and Detention/Corrections. In 2020, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) submitted a report to Congress estimating that to provide a minimum base level of service to all federally recognized Tribal nations, $1.3 billion is needed for Tribal law enforcement, $1.2 billion is needed for Tribal courts, and $240.6 million is needed for existing detention centers. Based on its latest report, the BIA is funding Tribal law enforcement, detentions/corrections, and Tribal courts at a dismal 14.7 percent of estimated need.

4. BIA Social Services Program—Provide $100 million to fortify child protective services and ensure meaningful technical assistance to Tribal social service programs across Indian Country. The Social Services Program provides a wide array of family support services filling many funding gaps for Tribal programs and ensur-

ing Federal staff and support for these programs. Importantly, the Social Services Program provides the only BIA and Tribal—specific funding available for child protective services for both children and adults in Indian Country. It ensures that Native people living on or near reservations have the support necessary to access the maze of services provided by states and the Federal government.

5. Welfare Assistance—Provide $100 million. The Welfare Assistance program provides five important forms of funding to AI/AN families: (1) general assistance, (2) child assistance, (3) non-medical institution or custodial care of adults, (4) burial assistance, and (5) emergency assistance. We strongly urge Congress to increase the funds for this program, as the needs are much greater than previously appropriated amounts. For example, in FY 2016, based on BIA Financial Assistance and Social Service Reports (FASSR), actual Welfare Assistance expenses were $93 million, leaving Tribal nations with an out-of-pocket shortfall of $18 million. We know that this shortfall has grown since, especially recently due to the COVID–19 pandemic. This leaves families in poverty and caregivers to take children who have been abused or neglected into their homes without sufficient financial support. Funds should be increased to $100 million to provide Tribal nations the resources they need to support families and children in crisis.

6. Office of Self-Governance (OSG): Provide increased funding to the OSG to fully staff the office for the increase in the number of Tribes entering Self-Governance.

7. ISDEAA Section 105(l) Lease Agreements: Provide such sums as may be necessary through mandatory spending and continue to make this a separate line item.

8. ISDEAA Contract Support Costs: Provide such sums as may be necessary through mandatory spending.

BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION

1. Provide $1 billion for system-wide Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) education construction.
2. Provide $230million for Johnson O'Malley
3. Provide $73 million for Student Transportation in the BIE system.
4. Provide $90 million for Tribal Grant Support Costs for Tribally controlled schools.
5. Provide $109 million for BIE facilities operations.
6. Provide $725 million for BIE facilities maintenance.
7. Provide $473 million for the Indian School Equalization Formula.
8. Provide $120 million for Education IT.
9. Provide $5 million for BIE immersion programs.
10. Reinstate $620,000 for juvenile detention education in BIA— facilities.

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

1. IHS mandatory funding (maintaining current services
2. Other IHS Program Services & Facilities Increases:

—Hospital and Clinics: Increase of $569.6 million
—Purchased and Referred Care: Increase of $460.3 million
—Dental Services: Increase of $207.2 million
—Mental Health: Increase of $308.8 million
—Alcohol and Substance Abuse: Increase of $255.0 million
—IHS Facilities: Increase of $266.7 million

3. ISDEAA Section 105(l) Lease Agreements: Provide such sums as may be necessary through mandatory spending and continue to make this a separate line item.

4. Health IT: Take immediate action on repeated requests to allow the IHS to fully fund critical infrastructure investments which directly impact patient care and safety, similar to that afforded to the VA and DoD, specific to: Health IT for full implementation of interoperable EHR systems and tele-health capacity at approximately $3 Billion estimate based on 25% of Veteran's Affairs cost estimates for FY 2022.

5. Support the preservation of Medicaid, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act and other Indian—specific provisions in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (P.L. 111–148), or any subsequent replacement bill, and provide dedicated funding to begin implementing the new authorities and provisions of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA), which have not yet been implemented and funded (approximately $100 Million in FY 2022).

6. Office of Tribal Self-Governance. Provide an increase of $6 million to the IHS Office of Tribal Self-Governance. In 2003, Congress reduced funding for this office by $4.5 million, a loss of 43% from the previous year. In each subsequent year, this budget was further reduced due to the applied Congressional rescissions. As of 2020, there are 363 Self-Governance (SG) Tribes operating $2.4 billion in funding. This

represents 64% of all Federally recognized Tribes. The Self-Governance process serves as a model program for Federal government outsourcing, which builds Tribal infrastructure and provides quality services to Indian people.

We support the requests of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), National Indian Education Association (NIEA), and the National Indian Health Board (NIHB).

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

[This statement was submitted by Honorable Justin F. Wood, Principal Chief.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SEATTLE INDIAN HEALTH BOARD

Members of the Senate Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, my name is Abigail Echo-Hawk, and I am an enrolled citizen of the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma, currently living in an urban Indian community in Seattle, Washington. I am the Executive Vice President of the Seattle Indian Health Board and Director (SIHB) of the Urban Indian Health Institute (UIHI), an Indian Health Service (IHS) designated Tribal Epidemiology Center, where I oversee our policy, research, data, and evaluation initiatives. To ensure adequate resources and research can be conducted by Tribal Epidemiology Centers I request $24 million to the IHS Hospitals and Clinics: Tribal Epidemiology Center line item to improve culturally attuned research, data, and evaluation services for the 5.2 million American Indian and Alaska Native people across the country.

I am an American Indian health researcher with more than 20 years of experience in both academic and non-profit settings, and am part of numerous local, state, and federal efforts to support and American Indian and Alaska Native communities in research, including serving on the Tribal Collaborations Workgroup for the National Institutes of Health All of Us precision medicine initiative. I am co-author to four groundbreaking research studies on sexual violence and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) where I have called national attention to the institutional barriers in data collection, reporting, and analysis of demographic data that perpetuate violence against American Indian and Alaska Native people. Most recently, I was a committee member for the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine: Framework for Equitable Allocation of COVID–19 Vaccine. As the only representative from the Native community, I worked to ensure the needs of our Indian Healthcare System and tribal and urban Indian communities were appropriately included in the framework that is informing states and policymakers nationwide.

ADVANCING INDIGENOUS HEALTH EQUITY

I would like to thank the Subcommittee for the FY 21 appropriations which included a $5 million increase to the Tribal Epidemiology Centers line item (now $10.4 million total). This increase in funding has disrupted the flat line in funding experienced by the 12 Tribal Epidemiology Centers for the last fifteen years. I would also like to thank the Subcommittee for the COVID–19 supplemental funding which included $24 million for Tribal Epidemiology Centers to mobilize and disseminate information regarding COVID–19 to tribes, tribal organizations, urban Indian organizations, and government agencies; and I am encouraged to see the President's discretionary funding budget for FY 22 proposing a $2.2 billion increase for the IHS, however, lacking investments for Tribal Epidemiology continues with only a $360,000 increase. Increased investments to Indian healthcare are an important step in advancing health equity for American Indian and Alaska Natives and honoring federal trust and treaty obligations.

We must continue to increase investments in Tribal Epidemiology Centers. Since their inception, Tribal Epidemiology Centers have been at the forefront of gathering, interpreting, and disseminating American Indian and Alaska Native data at the tribal, local, state, and federal level. With increased and sustainable investment Tribal Epidemiology Centers can fully function in their role as public health authorities tasked with managing information systems, investigating diseases of concern, managing disease prevention and control programs, and responding to public health emergencies like COVID–19 in tribal and urban Indian communities. While supplemental resources and proposed FY 22 funding support Tribal Epidemiology Centers efforts, they fall short of supporting long-term sustainability and capacity building of our tribal public health authorities.

CULTURALLY ATTUNED PUBLIC HEALTH

Before receiving supplemental COVID–19 funding, Tribal Epidemiology Centers mobilized to monitor, evaluate, and respond to COVID–19 on a national level through contract tracing, primary collection and secondary analysis of epidemiological data, and development of culturally attuned public health resources for Indian Health Care Providers. UIHI has released a series of COVID–19 resources, including a recently launched site For the Love of our People and Best Practices for American Indian and Alaska Native Data Collection, COVID–19 toolkits for Indian Health Care Providers, COVID–19 Vaccine Factsheets, and our national culturally attuned COVID–19 Vaccine Posters Series called "VacciNATION". In January 2021, UIHI released Strengthening Vaccine Efforts in Indian Country which is the only national COVID–19 vaccination survey focused on American Indian and Alaska Native communities. This survey found seventy-four percent of American Indian and Alaska Native people are willing to be vaccinated because of our cultural responsibility to protect Elders and the next generation. These resources have given Indian Country a trusted messenger during a time of uncertainty and have informed decision—making among tribal and local public health jurisdictions.

The success and unreplicated services of Tribal Epidemiology Centers efforts demonstrate the need for significantly increased funding. Additional funding will allow Tribal Epidemiology Centers to continue groundbreaking work to address and reduce health disparities experienced in American Indian and Alaska Native communities and build capacities to engage in additional public health services from the local to national level ranging from documenting and addressing epidemiological impacts, improving data—driven decision—making, and addressing gaps in services through culturally attuned and regional specific services.

CONTINUED INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS TO PUBLIC HEALTH DATA ACCESS

In June 2020, UIHI brought national attention to the longstanding barriers Tribal Epidemiology Centers experience when accessing public health data from Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Congressional authorization in the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA) allows Tribal Epidemiology Centers access to any HHS data as a public health authority, yet institutional barriers in accessing public health data have persisted for decades. The continued failure to grant data access perpetuates systemic health inequities in American Indian and Alaska Native communities as Tribal and urban Indian communities plan for both current and future surges of COVID–19 cases and led successful vaccination programs. Our Native communities must be equipped with the right information to implement data—driven decision—making.

Through Congressional oversight, Tribal Epidemiology Centers were able to gain access to a small portion of the COVID–19 case surveillance data for analysis and dissemination to tribes and Urban Indian Health Programs nationwide. Yet, our Tribal Epidemiology Centers continues to lack full access to other public health surveillance data collected through the National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System (NNDSS) that is routinely provided to many other public health authorities. Congressional oversight has also brought a United States Government Office of Accountability (GAO) study on public health data access and Tribal Epidemiology Center and a HHS Office of Inspector General (OIG) evaluation on how CDC uses race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic data to respond to disparities in COVID–19 testing, cases, hospitalizations, and deaths. I ask that this Congress continue to engage in Congressional oversight activities to ensure federal compliance and parity for our tribal public health authorities across all agencies in your jurisdiction and through collaboration with the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Related Agencies.

A NATIONAL DATA FAILURE

Tribal Epidemiology Centers have co-authored two Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports (MMWR) on COVID–19 documenting the disproportionate rates of COVID–19 infection for American Indians and Alaska Natives that are 3.5 times higher than non-Hispanic Whites with COVID–19 mortality rates that are 1.8 times higher among American Indians and Alaska Natives than non-Hispanic Whites. However, the MMWR reports on COVID–19 infections note the authors were only able to include 23 states in the analysis, as they were the only states that had collected at least 70% or more of race and ethnicity data. Data challenges like this highlight the need for Tribal Epidemiology Centers to advise for the improvement of data collection and reporting practices of American Indian and Alaska Native data by local to federal agencies.

On September 16, 2020, the CDC reported 50% of all COVID–19 cases were missing race and ethnicity data, with some states, such as New York, reporting no racial data on their state dashboard. Months later, the collection of race and ethnicity data has only improved marginally. As of June 14, 2021, the CDC reported 43% of COVID–19 cases were missing race and ethnicity with incomplete racial data ranging from 13–92% depending on health jurisdiction. The data failures found in COVID–19 case data are spilling over into COVID–19 vaccination data. A CDC study, found that 48% of COVID–19 vaccination data is missing race/ethnicity.

In February 2021, UIHI, released a national report card, Data Genocide, which analyzes the current status of collecting and reporting COVID–19 case surveillance data on American Indians and Alaska Natives by state. The report revealed a national grade of D+ for our ability to track and report on racial demographic COVID–19 data for American Indians and Alaska Natives. The data issues with our national COVID–19 data are not uncommon for Native people. UIHI's work has highlighted the on-going undercount, misclassification, and gaps of information collected on American Indians and Alaska Natives signifying the erasure of health inequities experienced in Indian Country. To value and uplift the stories across Indian Country told through data, I recommend Congress address the improvement of data collection on race and ethnicity across health agencies, including IHS.

Many of the issues related to the poor collection of data is the chronic underfunding of public health infrastructure across the country and especially in our Native communities. The lack of investment in data modernization effects the quality of data reported out and limits our ability to better understand the health needs of our most impacted communities. I recommend increased funding for data modernization across the Indian healthcare system that will increase inter-operability of data systems and advance data standards so that information care be shared across public health systems.

MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS (MMIWG) AND COVID–19

Over the course of the pandemic there has been horrific murders and numerous Indigenous women and girls who have gone missing. One leading organization reports they have seen a spike in requests for assistance to find missing people and increased need for support services to families of murder victims. These finding echo what many advocates have been sharing, that there is a national increase in violence as COVID–19 continues to increase stress on every American. For those unable to leave, they are now in quarantine with their abusers increasing the likelihood of more violence. This violence impacts entire families and children who are not yet in school and would have normally escaped violence while attending in person schooling.

In May 2021, UIHI released Supporting the Sacred: Community Resources for Native Survivors of Sexual Violence, which captures the experience of 121 Native femme—identifying survivors of sexual violence. The study assesses the availability of culturally appropriate services and resources outside of law enforcement for Native survivors on gender—based violence, intimate partner violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and MMIWG. UIHI found that 20% of the respondents were experiencing an increased lack of physical safety due primarily to domestic violence and 90% of respondents asked for culturally specific services citing their struggles with non-Indigenous methodologies for healing. The soon to be released report builds off UIHI's previous reports on MMIWG, including a first of its kind data report titled Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls. UIHI current series Our Bodies, Our Stories is the only national analysis of MMIWG data from 71 urban areas and highlights gender—based violence issues through culturally attuned data, evaluation, and research. Our work is guided by the voices of our community and the resiliency of these survivors.

To address the on-going violence against American Indian and Alaska Native people, we ask for increased investment in culturally attuned research and evaluation with explicit grant inclusivity to urban Indian organizations and increased resources to our tribal and Urban Indian Health Programs offering culturally attuned gender—based violence prevention and response services. The underfunding to address violence against Native women and girls perpetuates co-occurring health disparities experienced in Indian Country. Expanded grant eligibility to urban Indian organizations, Indian Health Care Providers, and Tribal Epidemiology Centers, support the culturally attuned gender—based violence research, prevention, intervention, and response efforts for Indian Country.

[This statement was submitted by Abigail Echo-Hawk, Executive Vice President, Director of the Urban Indian Health.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SEATTLE INDIAN HEALTH BOARD

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and members of the Senate Committee on Appropriations—Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, my name is Esther Lucero. I am Diné, and of Latino descent and as the third generation in my family to live outside of our reservation, I strongly identify as an urban Indian. I serve as the President & CEO of the Seattle Indian Health Board (SIHB), one of 41 Urban Indian Health Programs nationwide. I have had the privilege of serving SIHB for five years. I am honored to have the opportunity to submit my testimony today, including a request Advanced Appropriations for Indian Health Service (IHS) to ensure Indian healthcare systems are not subjugated to government shutdowns or automatic sequestration cuts.

INDIGENOUS RESILIENCE IN ACTION

I would like to thank the Subcommittee for the FY 21 appropriations which included a $5 million increase to the Urban Indian Health line item ($62.6 million total). I would also like to thank the Subcommittee for the COVID–19 supplemental funding which has included at least $426 million for Urban Indian Health Programs to mobilize and respond to COVID–19 amongst the urban American Indian and Alaska Native community. This funding is demonstrating how successful and resilient our Indian healthcare system can be when properly resourced. I would also like to acknowledge the President's Budget for FY 22 which includes a $2.2 billion increase for the IHS and a $37 million increase to Urban Indian Health ($100 million total) to promote health equity for American Indians and Alaska Natives. We hope President Biden's proposed increase to IHS will support significant investments in Urban Indian Health Programs that will allow us to expand services to meet the demand of the 71% of American Indian and Alaska Native people living in urban areas nationwide.

Throughout the COVID–19 pandemic, our Indian healthcare system has mobilized to respond to emergent healthcare and public health needs of Indian Country. While our community continues to be disproportionately impacted by COVID–19 infections, related hospitalization and mortality, we are also demonstrating our resilience to respond through culturally attuned and community driven care. As an Indian Health Care Provider, we have been able to exercise sovereignty alongside our tribal partners to respond to the needs of our community. In Washington State, the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, Lummi Nation, Suquamish Tribes, and SIHB have demonstrated the success of a community—driven vaccine distribution model to ensure Native Elders and health providers are vaccinated and many of our Native communities supported the vaccination of local teachers to expedite the reopening of schools. The autonomy to exercise sovereign authority and the investments of Congress in the federal trust responsibility are proving that when resourced, our Indian healthcare system drives equitable and efficient culturally attuned health care that benefits both our Native and surrounding communities. I must also thank the Biden Administration for directly resourcing Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) with the COVID–19 vaccination when many FQHCs were left without access to these critical resources for months.

SIHB is an example of how our Urban Indian Health Programs have adapted to emergent issues and championed local COVID–19 prevention and response efforts. As home to a tribal public health authority—the Urban Indian Health Institute (UIHI), we have a unique perspective and experience providing culturally attuned direct service and public health services during this pandemic. In December 2020, SIHB was the first organization in Seattle to receive a shipment of the Moderna vaccine and has since vaccinated over 12,500 individuals. Locally, we created a low—barrier walk-up testing clinic for individuals experiencing homelessness in downtown Seattle; we implemented telehealth services and onsite telehealth kiosks to serve our relatives experiencing homelessness and/or without stable broadband access; we installed ultra-violet (UV) ventilation system across our clinic to safely re-open dental services and increase facility sanitation; we expanded our nutrition services to elders and families with young children to address growing food insecurity; we have kept our Elders program open to provide a safe space; we have distributed rental assistance and moved people into long-term affordable housing; we are developing an intensive outpatient culturally attuned behavioral health program that complements our Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) services.

Our research division and Tribal Epidemiology Center, UIHI, is leading a national conversation on improved data quality and access of COVID–19 case data. UIHI has released dozens of factsheets and resources for Indian Health Care Providers and collected and analyzed the only national data on perceptions of the COVID–19 vaccine among American Indian and Alaska Native people. This data has informed a

national culturally attuned public health campaign titled "vacciNATION" that addresses vaccine hesitancy and cultural strengths among Native communities and has informed a centralized resource website in partnership with Illuminative: For the Love of our People.

COMMITMENT TO ADDRESSING FEDERAL TRUST AND TREATY OBLIGATIONS

We thank the Appropriations Committee and Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies for continued support to the Indian healthcare system. We are especially grateful for the recent two-year temporary extension of 100% Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) to urban Indian organizations under the American Rescue Plan of 2021. This commitment to honoring federal trust and treaty obligations to provide healthcare services to American Indian and Alaska Native people will have a significant positive impact in Washington State. Thanks to our work with tribal and state partners, the new state cost savings that will be reinvested backing our Indian healthcare system, allowing us to provide exemplary healthcare services while maintaining our cultural integrity as an Urban Indian Health Program. In support of this work, we encourage you to support H.R. 1888 to permanently extend 100% FMAP to Urban Indian Organizations and address the CMS "Four Walls" issue at tribal facilities.

CONTINUED GAPS IN INVESTMENTS

Advance Appropriations

The Indian healthcare system is vulnerable to government shutdowns which destabilizes health delivery and access to health care providers for American Indian and Alaska Native people. In 2018, the Government Accountability Office released Indian Health Service: Considerations Related to Providing Advance Appropriation Authority. The report found government shutdowns impacted provider recruitment and retention, conduced administrative burdens and cost, and had financial effects on tribes. As part of the treaty and trust responsibility of the federal government to provide health, human services, education, and other basic services we ask for advance appropriations for IHS and Bureau of Indian Affairs. IHS Advance Appropriations would allow for greater planning, efficient spending, long-term health initiatives, and result in higher quality of care for American Indian and Alaska Native people. Advance Appropriations not only mitigates the funding uncertainties experienced by Indian healthcare providers, it improves program efficiency and ensures parity across federal health programs.

Healthcare Infrastructure

While the historic investment in the Indian healthcare system is making meaningful progress towards Indigenous health equity, the COVID–19 pandemic has revealed the extensive gaps in our nation's public health and healthcare infrastructure. Infrastructure gaps include poorly kept public health data systems that compromise our understanding of the health disparities among racial and ethnic minority populations and our severely aged healthcare facilities that have had to rapidly adapt to COVID–19 prevention and response while continuing to address the growing healthcare needs of our tribal and urban Indian communities.

It is well known that there is no national level data on the infrastructure needs of the Urban Indian Health Program and a decades long backlog of facilities needs at IHS and tribal health facilities. Urban Indian Health Programs do not access to the Health Care Facilities Construction line item in the IHS budget and do not have priority for equipment replacement. A study from UIHI, titled COVID–19 Impact on Urban Indians in Washington State, found that urban Indian organizations were hindered in their ability to respond to COVID–19 due to the limitations of their facilities. The chronic underinvestment of infrastructure in the Indian healthcare system stymies our abilities to address underlying health conditions that contribute to the disproportionate impact of COVID–19 among American Indian and Alaska Native people. Federal funding opportunities have allowed for minor infrastructure improvements to address COVID–19. For example, SIHB transformed a portion of our facility to act as our vaccine distribution site that would not disrupt our clinical operations to provide COVID–19 testing and routine care.

In support of our long-term prevention and recovery from COVID–19, we have developed infrastructure plans for our main clinical site—the Leschi Center and our 95-bed in-patient Substance Use Disorder (SUD) center—Thunderbird Treatment Center. We are in need of significant Congressional infrastructure investments to fulfill our vision of fully implementing our Indigenous Knowledge Informed Systems of Care (IKISC) model to provide integrated and patient—centered care. Our Urban Indian Health Programs around the country share similar visions to modernize and

improve healthcare delivery through new construction, renovations, and equipment upgrades.

We ask that when appropriate, and not to detriment tribal resources, Congress nclude urban Indian organizations in infrastructure funding opportunities to support the federal trust responsibility to American Indians and Alaska Natives, regardless of where they reside.

Maternal and Child Health

The effects of the pandemic have disrupted routine care for many households that found it challenging or dangerous to access routine healthcare due to changes in clinical operations and personal safety concerns of commuting and accessing health care services. An internal analysis at SIHB found a 13% drop in our relatives seeking prenatal care and a 38% decrease in relatives seeking pediatric immunizations in 2020 compared to 2019. According to the U.S Department of Health, there were 30% fewer pediatric vaccines given in 2020, compared to 2019. The concerns of mothers and families visiting health facilities and potentially exposing themselves and their children to COVID–19 is felt across the nation and among Native communities.

To meet the preventative health care needs of our pediatric and prenatal patients, SIHB created a Saturday clinic—open exclusively to pediatrics and prenatal patients and staffed with integrated care teams for wrap around health services. Staffed by residents, medical providers, dental team, nutrition and case management in an initial launch, SIHB attended to many of the critical elements of health for our families. Recently, SIHB expanded this model, by integrating Traditional Indian Medicine and behavioral health services. This work continues to evolve as SIHB gains a better understanding of the demand and needs of the local urban Indian community and patient population. To align with these programmatic efforts, we ask for meaningful investment in research and programs to address maternal and infant mortality in our communities and support of maternal and infant health programming offered by Indian Health Care Providers.

Social Determinants of Health

Like many communities, we have had to respond to complex co-occurring issues exacerbated by COVID–19 including homelessness, substance use, and gender—based violence. In King County, WA, American Indians and Alaska Natives make up 1% of the population, but account for 15% of the population experiencing homelessness. In response, SIHB has enhanced our decades long partnership with a Native—led human service agency focused on eradicating urban Native homelessness to provide culturally attuned healthcare at a permanent supportive housing development that will include a 3,000 sq. ft. satellite SIHB clinic site. We anticipate serving over 1,200 patients annually beginning in January 2022 and continuing to grow our cross—agency collaboration to address the social determinants of health among our relatives.

Looking at our experiences as a model, I ask that this committee leverage federal resources and support to develop braided funding strategies to resource Native organizations to address social determinants of health through culturally attuned services. As our federal partners, you are uniquely positioned to increase mobilization, prevention efforts, and response efforts to improve the health and wellness of American Indian and Alaska Native people through essential human services across IHS and in collaboration with Department of Health and Human Services. As an urban Indian organization, we would like to see more multi—agency cross—systems approaches between IHS, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Health Resources and Services Administration, National Institutes of Health, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to provide braided funding strategies that bring flexible and robust funds to tribes and urban Indian organizations. By working across federal systems, federal partners can reflect a united and multiagency front to address persistent health disparities through direct services, data, research and evaluation, and workforce development.

Thank you for your support and consideration of the requests. We look forward to our continued work to improve the health and well-being of American Indian and Alaska Native people.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SECURE THE GRID COALITION

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, Chairman Leahy, Vice Chairman Shelby, and Members:

In years past, the Secure the Grid Coalition and its members have submitted both outside witness testimony and in-person testimony to both Houses of Congress. David Jonas Bardin (a retired member of Arent Fox LLP who previously served as Deputy General Counsel to U.S. Federal Power Commission [now FERC]) has testified in writing as an individual. Thomas J. Waller Jr. has previously submitted written testimonies representing the Secure the Grid Coalition. Thomas Popik has previously submitted testimonies representing the Foundation for Resilient Societies. And I have previously submitted testimonies as a private individual. There are likely others associated with the Secure-the-Grid Coalition who have made past and current submissions on behalf of the USGS Geomagnetism Program.

The purpose of this letter is to fully endorse the communications provided to this subcommittee by Mr. David Jonas Bardin, which in turn fully supports the FY 2022 REQUEST of appropriation of $5,673,000 and 14 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions for the USGS Geomagnetism Program, to continue the magnetotelluric (MT) survey, to operate ground—level geomagnetic observatories, and to begin adding observatories (for which the Administration requests $1.5 million and two FTEs).

And moreover, to show the materiality and relevance of the USGS Geomagnetism Program and the specifications and intentions of two presidential executive orders:

—Executive Order 13744 of October 13, 2016, titled, Coordinating Efforts To Prepare the Nation for Space Weather Events https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2016-10-18/pdf/2016-25290.pdf (accessed June 21, 2021).

—Executive Order 13865 of March 26, 2019, titled, Coordinating National Resilience to Electromagnetic Pulses https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-03-29/pdf/2019-06325.pdf (accessed June 22, 2021). Portions of this Executive Order was codified into law by section 1740 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2020

The two Executive Orders, President Obama's EO 13744 and President Trump's EO 13865 acknowledge the severe impacts of Geomagnetic Disturbances on Society and Critical Infrastructure and order urgent moves to enhance preparedness. Both Executive Orders—Section 7(a) of EO 13744, and Section 2(e) of EO 13865—define preparedness using precisely the same words:

> *" . . . actions taken to plan, organize, equip, train, and exercise to build and sustain the capabilities necessary to prevent, protect against, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from those threats that pose the greatest risk to the security of the Nation." [Emphasis added.]*

The purpose of the magnetotelluric (MT) survey is to determine the electrical conductivity of the earth's crust. Electrical conductivity/resistivity is not uniform region by region; indeed, there are vast differences in such characteristics over remarkably short distances (separations of less than 50 miles). Having a working model of these variances and mapping them to geographical areas is vital and necessary in order to identify specific places most susceptible to ground induced currents from geomagnetic disturbances and to prioritize protective measures. This purpose is thus in full accord with the desires of the previous two Administrations.

ABOUT THE COALITION

The Secure-the-Grid Coalition (Coalition) is a national network of non-profit organizations and experts drawn from the policymaking, science, engineering, military, and intelligence communities. These include multiple retired personnel—including numerous flag officers—of the U.S. military, two former Ambassadors and a former Director of Central Intelligence. Members also include citizens from nearly every U.S. state and territory stretching from Puerto Rico/US Virgin Islands to the state of Alaska. The primary objective of the Secure the Grid Coalition is to help private industry, policy makers, and governments secure the electric power grid, the nation's most critical infrastructure, against all hazards, since a long-term widespread electric power blackout would spell disaster for our society.

The Coalition applauds the USGS for its work and has faith that this Subcommittee will grant the Administration's Request.

The Coalition welcomes any requests of the Subcommittee for assistance. Please contact at doug.ellsworth@usapact.org

Truly,

Douglas. Ellsworth
Acting Director

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SELF-GOVERNANCE COMMUNICATION & EDUCATION TRIBAL CONSORTIUM (SGCETC)

On behalf of SGCETC, I am submitting this written testimony which identifies national funding priority requests in the FY 2022 budgets for the Departments of the Interior's (DOI) Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) and the Health and Human Services' Indian Health Service (IHS).

We support the President's FY 2022 proposed discretionary requests for Tribal specific funding. As Tribal Nations continue to confront the challenges of recovery from COVID–19, an event that has altered life for the world, we thank you for the investment that you have made to help in the recovery for Indian Country.

Life for Tribes during the pandemic, while challenging because of our unique differences to other sovereigns in the U.S., has revealed many of the similarities we share. It was unfortunate that in Indian Country, we incurred the greatest impacts of all with so much unrecoverable loss. Yet, we cannot afford to keep looking back when there is so much to do going forward. We aspire to recover, reconnect and rebuild our homelands and our Country.

ADVANCE PARITY IN FUNDING FOR INDIAN PROGRAMS

Indian programs face significant disparities compared to similar programs for non-Indians when it comes to adequate funding, program equity and the delivery of services. The failure of the U.S. to provide sufficient and timely funding for these programs undermines the ability of Tribal governments to provide adequate services to their citizens and provide for the general safety and well-being of their communities. For example, IHS's annual per capita spending level (around $4,000) is significantly less than the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) (around $11,000). In the United States Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR) report "Broken Promises" it was recommended that "Congress should provide increased, non-discretionary, and advance appropriations for IHS to bring it to parity with other Federal health programs".[1]

Similarly, advanced appropriations should be provided to the BIA so that critical public safety and justice programs are able to continue to provide services and address the staggering rates of violent crime and victimization that continue to plague Tribal communities. And, for the BIE that funds and operates a total of 183 elementary, secondary, residential, and peripheral dormitories across 23 states, we need to ensure it fulfills the Federal trust relationship and supports the approximately 48,000 American Indian students in Bureau—funded schools across the country.

Tribes need to stabilize costs for distance learning and have a strong voice in shaping their education to provide pathways to access programs that will make them competitive in the learning environment. We need to be able to recruit and retain teachers in schools with high Native populations. American Indian and Alaska Native children should have the same learning opportunities as non-Indian students and access to programs like science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) to prepare them for tomorrow. We need consistent, reliable funding to keep pace with non-Indian schools.

INCREASE BASE BUDGETS AND RECURRING FUNDING FOR INDIAN PROGRAMS AND REDUCE RELIANCE ON GRANT FUNDING

The authority Tribal Nations have to take over the administration of Federal programs is proven successful to the extent that adequate funds are made available to the Tribes to operate these programs and services. Across the board, Federal Indian programs are significantly underfunded. The lack of adequate funding puts the lives of Tribal citizens at risk and limits what services Tribal governments can provide their citizens. Increases to base budgets for Indian Programs will allow Tribal Nations to fund core government programs that serve their citizens and communities and will provide an opportunity for additional Tribal Nations to participate in Self-Governance.

SGCETC supports the growing sentiment expressed by Tribal leaders that we do not want our funding sources to be increasingly supplemented by grants. Short-term competitive grants hinder Tribal Nations' inherent right to self-govern because it creates uncertainty in planning, imposes extensive regulations and reporting requirements, and restricts the use of indirect costs. The signers of the over 400 treaties between Tribal Nations and the United States did not sign with the intent of

[1] U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Broken Promises: Continuing Federal Funding Shortfall for Native Americans,* December 2018

being dependent on grants. Lives were not lost, nor land ceded for our needs to be dependent on a successful grant application package review.

ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE BIA, BIE AND IHS

The Federal budget process has been broken for decades. Since FY 1998, there has been only one year (FY 2006) when the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies budget, which contains the funding for BIA, BIE and IHS, has been enacted by the beginning of the fiscal year. The lateness in enacting a final budget during that time ranged from 5 days (FY 2002) to 197 days (FY 2011). It is even worse when budget inaction causes the government to shut down the longest being in 2018–19 for 35 days. Delayed appropriations mean American Indians and Alaska Natives do not get health care, Tribal governments cannot operate programs for the benefit of their citizens and the education of our children is compromised.

Currently, critical Federal programs at the Department of Education, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Labor, and the Department of Veterans Affairs are authorized for advance appropriations. This process prevents funding lapses and other unintended consequences associated with short-term funding deals from disrupting critical services provided by the Federal government.

To begin an advanced appropriations cycle there must be an initial transition appropriation which contains (1) an appropriation for the year in which the bill was enacted (for instance, FY 2021) and (2) an advance appropriation for the following year (FY 2022). Thereafter, Congress can revert to appropriations containing only one-year advance funding. If the BIA, BIE and IHS funding was on an advance appropriations cycle, Tribes and the respective Federal agencies would know the funding a year earlier than is currently the case and would not be subject to continuing resolutions or government shutdowns.

In the absence of authority for advance appropriations for BIA, BIE and IHS, we ask that the Committee includes report language that this request is feasible and under consideration and for Committee staff to confer with the respective authorizing committees on potential legislation that will explore and/or support this request.

MAINTAIN INDEFINITE APPROPRIATION AND SEPARATE LINE ITEM FOR 105(L) LEASES IN IHS AND BIA

Thank you for listening to our requests for an indefinite appropriations and separate line item for 105(l) leases in IHS and BIA. More than 360 Tribal Nations participate in Self-Governance and have entered into agreements with the DOI and/or IHS to transfer Federal resources and programs from Federal to Tribal administration to better serve the needs of their citizens and communities. Tribal Nations that elect to participate in Self-Governance know that increased Tribal control and decision—making authority results in improved social and economic well-being at the local level.

Tribal Nations assuming administration over programs once administered by Federal agencies does not abrogate the Federal government's treaty and trust obligations. It empowers Tribal governments as sovereign nations to best determine the needs of their citizens and communities while bolstering Tribal economies and job creation for Indian country and surrounding non-Native communities.

INCREASE FUNDING FOR TRIBAL GOVERNANCE CAPACITY BUILDING

In 2019, GAO reported that the capacity of a Tribe to administer a Federal program is a crucial factor that can affect a Tribe's decision to enter into a Self-Governance compact. GAO also noted the need for sustained and consistent funding over time since developing capacity is an ongoing effort. EPA's General Assistance Program (GAP) has proven successful at building Tribal governments capacity.

Ccapacity building is more effective when the Federal government provides funds to Tribal organizations for implementation. Tribal governments work collaboratively sharing best practices and learning from one another about how to address challenges that are unique to Tribes. Federal agencies are often unable to comprehend the obstacles Tribes face and Federal agencies often attempt to implement the one-size-fits-all approach that does not work for many Tribes. SGCETC is an example of a non-profit Tribal consortium that builds capacity by creating and sustaining a Tribal—based community.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit this testimony.

[This statement was submitted by the Honorable W. Ron Allen, Chairman, and Tribal Chairman/CEO, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SHOALWATER BAY TRIBE

Recommendations:

1. Provide increased funding for climate change mitigation efforts including community relocation programs in FY 2022
2. Work with others in Congress and the Administration to facilitate the mandatory trust acquisition of fee lands where a tribe is undergoing forced relocation due to climate change and other threats
3. Create funding opportunities for tribal and intergovernmental agreements for infrastructure between federal, state, local and tribal governments
4. Provide full funding and advance appropriations for the Indian Health Service (IHS).
5. Fund Critical Infrastructure investments for the Indian health system
6. Ensure mandatory funding for Contract Support Costs and 105(l) lease payments

Thank you Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to share our funding priorities for the FY 2022 federal budget. My name is Charlene Nelson, and I am the Chairwoman of the Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe which is located 2,800 miles west by northwest of Washington, D.C., and we are on the beautiful north shore of Willapa Bay, facing out to the Pacific Ocean. Similar to most coastal tribes, we are stewards of the great ocean. As the Chairwoman of the Tribe, and in my former career as an educator and commercial fisherman, I have learned firsthand that vibrant and successful Indian communities are not possible without first attending to the human health of the community members and also ensuring the health of the environment. I appreciate that this Committee is also responsible for those same priorities, and it is in that shared spirit of community responsibility that I speak to you today. The following testimony will provide information about our community's urgent need to relocate in the face of the climate crisis, and support additional funding for climate resiliency programs. The testimony also outlines priorities for the IHS budget in FY 2022.

Like many tribal communities we continue to be impacted by the growing challenge of climate change on our environment. Threats such as flooding, erosion, ocean acidification, increased wildfires, extended drought, and changes in seasons all contribute to the serious challenges that tribal communities currently face. We are forced to reduce emissions, mitigate and adapt, but we need additional support, and we need it urgently. We encourage the committee to provide increased funding for climate change activities targeted at tribal communities in FY 2022.

We have been encouraged by the commitment to addressing the negative impacts of climate change in tribal communities that the subcommittee has exhibited in its committee reports. For example, we were especially pleased to see language in House Report 116–448 that noted the federal government's treaty and trust obligations and encouraged a whole of government approach to "working with at-risk tribes to identify and expedite the delivery of resources and technical assistance necessary to support mitigation and relocation efforts." We also appreciate continued funding for Tribal Climate Resilience at the Bureau of Indian Affairs. However, while these opportunities are worthwhile, we urge this Committee to engage in increased funding for climate change resilience and mitigation in FY 2022.

SHOALWATER BAY TRIBE AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Indian tribes and Alaska Natives are on the front lines of climate issues because, unlike many others in our society, we are rooted to our ancestral homelands. Our lands are us, and we are our lands and waters. If things change due to climate instability—flooding, habitat loss, diminished drinking water, incapacity to engage in subsistence activities—we have nowhere else to go. That is both a challenge, and an opportunity. For the Shoalwater Tribe, the threats are real, we face them every day. But we see the opportunity to now build our community with long-term resilience.

We are a Pacific Northwest coastal Tribe and all of our housing and government buildings are just 15 feet above sea level. Partial federal funding, and a tribal relationship with the Army Corps of Engineers, has led to construction of an embankment in the tidal zone portion of our Reservation, and adjoining lands, but was constructed using native sand and earthen materials, and is now washing away. The erosion follows historic patterns. Our reservation will soon be gone, and yet we are told that with the advent of climate change, and the varying weather patterns and tidal effects, everything has been sped up. A single tsunami event would take out

every home, our government, our economic development opportunities, and what defines us as Shoalwater people.

We need to move to higher ground to survive as a Tribe. Other coastal tribes in our region have been in similar circumstances and Congress has come through with funding for relocation, recognizing the federal trust responsibility. We have committed a lot of our limited resources—both financial and time—to planning for and preparing for the necessary changes to keep our people alive. Fortunately, some of the land adjacent to our reservation is suitable for this. Using Tribal funding, we have purchased 1,200 acres of land at 250 feet above sea level for the relocation of our Tribal village. But this is raw land and there are only dirt roads. We are tapping out our only reserves to meet these exigent needs. We need financial and technical support to build the infrastructure necessary to move uphill. Based on erosion and other projections, this needs to happen immediately.

This support will not just impact our Tribal community, but will support the two counties in our area, both of which have some of the highest rates of poverty in the state. The Shoalwater Bay Tribe is now one of the biggest employers in the county, so support for our Tribe equals support for the entire area. Many of the current key roads are merely a few feet above sea level, so planning for alternate roads is already a critical need for the whole area.

I would urge the Committee to consider the federal trust responsibility to tribes and make a commitment that there if and when there are tribal climate refugees—dispossessed of their lands and waters by climate change—Congress will use its plenary power over Indian and Alaska Native matters to rebuild ancestral homelands. The Shoalwater Tribe can be a test case, establishing how tribal and federal resources can relocate a tribal community to a new, more resilient location.

CONGRESSIONAL ASSISTANCE

Our Tribe does not have the land base we will need to support us indefinitely. We will need federal funding for land acquisition, replacement of roads, utilities, three essential government buildings, and 80 homes. In total, we believe the project would cost approximately $120 million. This total includes $70 million for roads and utilities, $17 million for government buildings and $33 million for homes.

But we do not just need funding. We urge you to work with your colleagues in Congress and the Administration to facilitate the mandatory trust acquisition of fee lands where a tribe is undergoing forced relocation due to climate change, erosion, flooding, tsunami, and other threats to its existing Reservation and trust land base. Tribes should not have to go through a lengthy and expensive fee to trust process for relocation land acquisition, which, by definition will be an off—reservation acquisition for most tribes.

Congress can also create legislation and funding opportunities for tribal and intergovernmental agreements for infrastructure between federal, state, local and tribal governments to make the changes needed to help our communities survive in the face of climate change. The Department of Transportation, for example, will often not release emergency funding for road infrastructure until an existing road completely fails. If that occurs with Washington SR 105, which runs through our Reservation, it will cut the Tribe off from its schools, banks, closest groceries, and many of its employees from their homes, among other impacts. Congress can change these rules to allow for substantial road replacement funding in advance of an existing route becoming impassable. Any funding of this nature should be non-competitive, and be provided directly to tribal governments without matching fund requirements.

Infrastructure investment for land acquisition, road and building construction, and rebuilding economic development opportunities will not only assist the Tribe, but will also support the local economies of Pacific and Grays Harbor counties. A new road system will be a resilient, and necessary coastal connection for the two counties, so it will be a true investment that will create returns.

The cost of us not finding the support to relocate our village is the highest cost any community can pay—sea level rise will mean the annihilation of our Tribal community and culture. Even if we physically survive as individuals by relocating off of traditional lands, it will mean the erasure of our Tribal culture. My Tribe continues as a whole on our traditional lands or we do not survive. I want to thank you for your time and attention and I invite you to come visit us at Shoalwater, our doors are open and we look forward to sharing with you our continued strength and resilience as a sovereign Indian nation.

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE PRIORITIES

In addition to the critical climate change priority outlined above, we also would like to express strong support for increasing the Indian Health Service (IHS) budget.

We were pleased to see President Biden recommend $2.2 billion increase in his FY 2022 budget request to Congress. The IHS Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup has calculated this need at $48 billion for full funding. It is imperative that Congress address the true needs of the Indian health system. In FY 2022, the Workgroup requests $12.759 billion for IHS. We support their full request.

We have also been encouraged by several recent comments from senior House members who have expressed the support in moving the IHS budget to mandatory spending. Indeed, the federal trust responsibility for health is a mandatory obligation and should be treated as such. No other federal health program is funded exclusively on discretionary appropriations in the way that IHS is. We encourage the subcommittee to work with your Congressional colleagues on a bipartisan basis to move IHS to mandatory funding.

Support for Advance Appropriations for IHS.—For many years, tribes have requested that IHS appropriations be funded on an advance appropriations cycle. It has unfortunately become the norm that IHS does not receive its full yearly appropriation until several months (sometimes longer) after the start of the fiscal year. In the recent past, IHS, Tribal and Urban health programs have even had to deal with government shutdowns, when no funding was provided for weeks on end. These funding delays make it impossible for IHS and Tribal health programs to plan and manage their annual budgets. As you know, health systems cannot practically operate on a day to day or week to week basis without knowing what funding will be provided in the future. Unrelated political disagreements in Washington, DC should not impede American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) from receiving the health care they deserve. Full advance appropriations for the IHS would promote greater stability in services, medical personnel recruitment and retention, and facilities management.

We thank the leadership of this subcommittee for supporting this important change in previous Congresses. We were also grateful to see President Biden support IHS advance appropriations in his FY 2022 budget request to Congress. We urge the Committee to take the necessary steps in the FY 2022 appropriations bill to move IHS to an advance appropriation for FY 2023 and beyond.

Fully fund critical infrastructure investments.—As Congress considers making dramatic investments in the country's infrastructure, it is critical that the Indian health system not get left behind. Therefore, we request that the subcommittee allocate approximately $3 billion for full implementation of interoperable Electronic Health Records (EHR) and tele-health. This will ensure that IHS can provide services that are similar to other health providers. As you are aware, this investment is especially critical as the Veterans' Administration and Department of Defense move to modernize their systems.

It is also critical that Congress make significant investments in Tribal health facilities construction. IHS and tribal facilities are some of the oldest in the nation, with an average age of 10.6 years. This creates situations where facilities are out of date, or not appropriate for the size of the patient populations they serve. Therefore, consistent with the Budget formulation Workgroup's request, we recommend $15 billion for Health Facilities Construction Funding & Equipment.

Mandatory Funding for Contract Support Costs and 105(l) lease payments.—While we support moving the whole IHS budget to mandatory spending, we also believe that in the short term, we can greatly improve funding available for IHS services by reallocating other line items to mandatory. We appreciate the subcommittee's commitment to ensuring that Contract Support Costs (CSC) and 105(l) lease costs are fully funded by including an indefinite discretionary appropriation in FY 2021 for both of these accounts. However, these line items continue to take up a larger and larger percentage of the IHS discretionary budget, thereby leaving little room to expand other services given tight discretionary appropriations caps. We appreciate the subcommittee's words in the explanatory statement for the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116–94) regarding 105(l) costs which stated, in part: "Obligations of this nature are typically addressed through mandatory spending, but in this case since they fall under discretionary spending, they are impacting all other programs funded under the Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, including other equally important Tribal programs . . . " Therefore, we ask you to continue to advocate with your colleagues on authorizing committees to enact mandatory appropriations for CSC and 105(l) lease costs. Doing so will ensure that other areas of the IHS budget are held harmless by these costs and true increases in critical services line items can move forward. This will enhance care for AI/AN patients and reduce health disparities.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY

The Society for American Archaeology (SAA) appreciates this opportunity to present its recommendations for Fiscal Year 2022 cultural resources program appropriations at the Department of Interior.

The SAA is an international organization that, since its founding in 1934, has been dedicated to research about and interpretation and protection of the archaeological heritage of the Americas. With nearly 7,000 members, SAA represents professional and avocational archaeologists, archaeology students in colleges and universities, and archaeologists working at Tribal agencies, museums, government agencies, and the private sector. SAA has members throughout the U.S., as well as in many nations around the world.

The SAA wishes to thank the subcommittee for its key role in supporting record levels of funding for cultural resources preservation over the past several years. The federal and federally—supported historic preservation programs included in the annual spending bill help carry out many of the nation's activities that preserve and promote our irreplaceable historic, archaeological, and cultural resources for present and future generations. The following are the SAA's requests for key heritage programs in FY2022.

DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR: INCREASED ARCHAEOLOGIST STAFF: $6.75 MILLION

As noted in the Secretary of Interior's 2004–2007 report to Congress on the federal archaeology program, "The Federal government has too few archeologists to support the Federal Archeology Program. Additional support for agency archeologists and archeological programs is necessary for Federal agencies to accomplish all of their responsibilities regarding the stewardship of Americans' archeological heritage." What was true in 2007 is even more true today.

Federal archaeologists perform a large number of important tasks. These include, but are not limited to, surveys of land for historic and archaeological resources under Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA); review of undertakings on federal land under Section 106 of the NHPA; protection of archaeological materials under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act; preparation of nominations of historic properties to the National Register of Historic Places; development of contracts or cooperative agreements between Federal agencies and private firms or universities for historic preservation activities; technical assistance on archaeological matters; coordination and management of volunteers helping to preserve cultural sites; curation of federal archaeological collections; preservation of sensitive cultural and spiritual tribal objects under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act; and managing the grant program for Tribal Historic Preservation Offices.

Yet today's federal archeology workforce cannot meet all of its current responsibilities because that workforce continues to shrink. Due to attrition from retirement and transfers, and these positions not being back—filled, archaeological staffing throughout the federal government is in fact approaching a critical low level. The table on page four demonstrates the significant erosion of staff capable of carrying out Section 106 compliance work and decision—making at the National Park Service.

In fact, the NPS has nearly 60 fewer archaeologists on staff than it did in 2004. The losses are especially severe at the GS–12 level and above, where the archaeologists have the most experience and the highest levels of education, and thus are best able to oversee Section 106 reviews.

The situation will undoubtedly get worse if new staff persons are not hired in the very near future. Projects authorized under the Great American Outdoors Act, which the SAA and numerous other organizations strongly supported, will require activities necessary for compliance with Section 106 of NHPA if projects are to go forward. This is on top of the work that is already confronting department personnel. At present, Interior does not have a sufficient number of archaeologists on staff to carry out its current statutorily—required responsibilities, not to mention those that will arise in the future, such as projects authorized by a new infrastructure bill. The SAA recognizes that correcting this situation will require a multi-year effort. As a start, we request an additional $6.75 million in FY2022 to fill open NPS archaeologist positions.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE: NATIONAL RECREATION AND PRESERVATION CULTURAL PROGRAMS: $33.5 MILLION

NPS National Recreation Programs are vital for the technical assistance and other support they provide for resource protection within parks, to other federal

agencies, and to state, tribal, and private sector stakeholders. These programs assist communities in preserving their significant historical and archaeological properties. The archaeological component identifies, documents, and inventories archaeological resources in parks; produces archaeological technical and programmatic publications; implements regulations for protecting archaeological resources; and assists other agencies through program development and training. The SAA requests a total of $33.2 million for FY2022, an increase of $2.34 million.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE-HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND: $150 MILLION

The Historic Preservation Fund provides crucial support to state and tribal historic preservation offices and matching grants to numerous recipients to catalog and preserve historic resources. Local communities rely on these grants for historic preservation projects as a means of promoting tourism and economic development. Without the HPF, the preservation system established by the National Historic Preservation Act—particularly with regards to the Section 106 system—simply would not function. SAA endorses the recommendations put forward by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, and others: a total of $150 million for FY2022, which would be the first time in its history that the HPF is funded at its fully authorized level. The funds would be allocated as follows:

—$60 million for State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs);
—$24 million for Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPOs);
—$20 million for the Save America's Treasures grant program;
—$10 million for competitive grants for Historically Black Colleges and Universities;
—$9 million for the Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization grants;
—$1 million for a competitive grant program to survey and document historic resources;
—$19 million for African American Civil Rights Initiative Competitive Grants; and
—$7 million for the newly established competitive grants programs to preserve the sites and stories associated with securing civil rights for All Americans.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT (BLM)—CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT: $21.8 MILLION

The BLM manages the largest and most diverse body of land in the U.S. These lands contain an enormous number of known and as—yet undiscovered cultural resources. To date, only 10 percent of BLM lands have been surveyed for cultural resources. It is important that the BLM be given the resources it needs to fulfill its statutory requirements to research, inventory and protect the cultural resources under its control. In the FY2021 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, the BLM cultural resources program received $20.3 million. The SAA respectfully requests an increase of $1.5 million, to an overall amount of $21.8 million. This additional funding will enable BLM staff archaeologists to continue their work to survey BLM lands, conserve archaeological sites and materials, and integrate cultural resources data through the National Cultural Resources Information Management System. While the BLM is experiencing similar staffing shortages to those facing the NPS, perhaps of greatest concern is the longstanding disruption and dysfunction that occurred in the cultural resources program because of the reorganization of the BLM central office in Washington, DC, and the subsequent relocation of staff to Grand Junction, Colorado, and other offices in the West that resulted in the retirement or resignation of many staff members.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT-NATIONAL LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION SYSTEM: $65.1 MILLION

The National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS), first established in 2000, now contains more than 37 million acres of National Monuments, Wilderness Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and other lands. They contain an extensive and diverse array of the nation's archaeological and cultural resources. The funding needed to carry out sound stewardship of the lands in the system, however, is lacking. Since 2006, when Congress provided $65.1 million for the system, funding has declined repeatedly, to $45.6 million in FY2021, in spite of the system expanding by more than 11 million acres. There has also been a significant increase in visitor traffic. In order to provide adequate management of these lands and the archaeological resources they contain, the SAA strongly supports an allocation of $65.1 million for

the program, an increase of $19.5 million over FY2021. This substantial increase would restore the NLCS to its FY2006 funding level, and allow the BLM to bring to bear the resources necessary to carry out its mission.

NATIVE AMERICAN GRAVES PROTECTION AND REPATRIATION ACT GRANTS: $2 MILLION

As we've stated in previous years, the NAGPRA Grants Program serves a crucial purpose. The funding it provides is often the only resource available to Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, and museums to facilitate repatriation of culturally affiliated human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony under the NAGPRA statute. Unfortunately, funding for the Grants Program has usually fallen short of demand. In FY2019 the total number of grant proposals totaled more than $3 million, while only $1.65 million could be awarded. The amount of requests for FY2020—$1.95 million—was smaller, possibly because of the COVID outbreak, and $1.9 million in grants was awarded. The SAA believes that another increase in grant funding is needed, assuming an increase in requests in 2021 and 2022 as the pandemic eases. We request that the National NAGPRA Grants Program receive $2 million for FY2022, an increase of $100,000.

The SAA greatly appreciates your time and consideration of these important issues. Please contact us at 202–559–5115 or david__lindsay@saa.org if you have any questions or concerns.

NPS Count of GSEGRD	Years																
GS Levels	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Grand Total
GS-05																	
A*	3	9	8	4	8	5	2	2	3				4				48
S**	1	9	4	6	5	6	1	1	4				4				41
GS-07																	
A	9	34	20	22	21	12	9	5	5	10	12	8	9	1	1	4	182
S	5	35	25	18	16	9	8	6	8	10	11	12	10	1	2	1	177
GS-09																	
A	3	17	8	11	12	20	11	14	11	13	15	13	19	15	16	14	212
S	5	15	13	11	14	15	12	13	14	16	18	13	14	13	11	6	203
GS-11																	
A		1	2	6	4	3	4	7	5	5	6	9	10	7	10	5	84
S	1	6	4	9	5	4	2	7	4	3	11	6	8	9	9	7	95
GS-12																	
A		1		3	2	3		1	2		2	2	2	2			20
S		3	2	4	6	2	1	5	5	2	4	4	6	5	4	4	57
GS-13																	
A		1	1					1	1		1	1	1				7
S		4	6	2	2	4	2	3		2	1	1	1	2	1	1	32
GS-14																	
S				1		1								1	1		4
GS-15																	
S						1				2							3
A Count	15	63	39	46	47	43	26	30	27	28	36	33	45	25	27	23	**553**
S Count	12	72	54	51	48	42	26	35	35	35	45	36	43	31	28	19	**612**
Grand Total	**27**	**135**	**93**	**97**	**95**	**85**	**52**	**65**	**62**	**63**	**81**	**69**	**88**	**56**	**55**	**42**	**1165**

*Acquisitions—staff hires

**Separations—staff departures

Decrease of 59 archaeologists

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS

The undersigned organizations are strong supporters of the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program funded by the USDA Forest Service (Forest Service). We rely on the inventory data and analysis of America's forests provided by the program, which make up the backbone of scientific knowledge on the current state of

the nation's forests. This critical information is needed to support sound policy and forest management decisions, both public and private, and is increasingly important for decisions regarding carbon stocks, sustainability, and new and expanding markets. We feel that the needs of our nation's forests coupled with the policy priorities of this Congress make this an ideal time to significantly increase investment in this critical program.

With this in mind, we urge Congress to support FIA at no less than $93.5M in total funding in FY22. Beginning in FY21, Congress restructured the Forest Service program budgets, separating out appropriations for cost pools, salary & expenses, and program funding. Commensurate with this restructuring, we urge Congress to fund FIA program dollars at no less than $32.4M in FY22. This will ensure that state and academic cooperators who partner in the critical data collection and delivery of the FIA program through grants and agreements that help realize programmatic operational efficiencies are fully funded to do their critical work. However, we request that this increase not be realized at the expense of other critical Forest Service Research & Development or State and Private Forestry programs that also support our nations forests.

In 2015, the Forest Service released an updated FIA Strategic Plan, which outlines a variety of potential program deliverables at various funding levels. Recent analysis done by the Forest Service estimates that $93.5M is the funding level needed to deliver "Option C", which includes enhanced timber products monitoring, improved carbon and biomass estimates, enhanced landowner studies, research into land cover and land use change, and urban forest inventory.

These additional items add immense value to the understanding of our nation's forests but are not possible at current funding levels.

The data and information collected by FIA is utilized by a large set of diverse stakeholders and serves as the basis for: identifying trends in forest ownership; measuring carbon stocks; assessing fish and wildlife habitat; evaluating wildfire, insect, and disease risk; predicting the spread of invasive species; determining capital investment in existing forest products facilities and selecting locations for new forest product facilities; and identifying and responding to priorities identified in State Forest Action Plans.

While we are supportive of at least $93.5M in funding for FY 2022, Option D of the 2015 Strategic Plan—which calls for additional investment to implement the five-year annualized program called for in the 1998 Farm Bill and to respond to other emerging needs—would necessitate a funding level of $106M. With the current policy focus on forest carbon monitoring and projection, reducing the cycle length in areas where it would provide more timely carbon data, combined with enhanced remote sensing capabilities, would provide more accurate data to support important forest resource decisions. We look forward to working with Congress to find ways to support funding additional FIA data collection in support of delivering on forest carbon inventory needs.

In addition to more accurate information regarding carbon stocks, there is also a need to make FIA data more robust and useful for other emerging uses, such as forest sustainability monitoring, wildlife habitat assessments, and much more. Furthermore, additional opportunities exist to direct investments in tools to quantify carbon sequestration in forests, forest soils and long—lived forest products. These should include additional investments in the Timber Products Output survey and in new technologies that enhance the core data collection program.

As engaged partners, we are interested in working with Congress and the Forest Service to make program delivery as efficient as possible and to realize additional federal investment to implement many of the useful tools outlined in the FIA Strategic Plan. Further, the 2018 Farm Bill called for "finding efficiencies in the program operations through the use of remote sensing technologies, where appropriate." We look forward to working with the Forest Service as this direction is implemented.

Finally, we are concerned that under the new budget structure there is not a dedicated salary and expenses budget line for FIA, presenting challenges for the Forest Service R&D program to ensure it is spending an appropriate amount of salary and expenses funding on FIA across the agency, and hiring critical positions to ensure program delivery. We request you to work with the Forest Service to establish a budget line item for FIA for salaries and expenses.

Given the increasing pressures facing our forests—climate impacts, wildfire, insects and disease, and development—the FIA program is more important now than ever before. We look forward to working with Congress and the Forest Service to ensure the accurate and timely inventory of America's forests.

SUPPORTED BY 50 ORGANIZATIONS

Alabama Forestry Association
Ecological Society of America
Allegheny Hardwood Utilization Group
Empire State Forest Products Association
American Forest & Paper Association
Florida Forestry Association
American Forest Foundation
Forest Industry National Labor Management Committee
American Forest Resource Council
Forest Investment Associates
American Loggers Council
Forest Resources Association
American Wood Council
Forestry Association of South Carolina
American Woodcock Society
Georgia Forestry Association
Arkansas Forestry Association
Hardwood Federation
Associated Logging Contractors of Idaho
International Society of Arboriculture
Association of Consulting Foresters
Louisiana Forestry Association
California Forestry Association
Mississippi Forestry Association
Composite Panel Association
Montana Wood Products Association
Decorative Hardwoods Association
National Alliance of Forest Owners
National Association of Forest Service Retirees
Resource Management Service, LLC
National Association of State Foresters
Ruffed Grouse Society
National Association of University Forest Resources Programs
Society of American Foresters
National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative
South Carolina Timber Producers Association
National Wooden Pallet and Container Association
Southeastern Wood Producers Association
National Woodland Owners Association
Southern Forestry Consultants, Inc.
New Hampshire Timberland Owners Association
Sustainable Forestry Initiative
Northeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association
Tennessee Forestry Association
Ohio Forestry Association
Treated Wood Council
Oregon Women In Timber
Washington Forest Protection Association
Public Lands Foundation
West Virginia Forestry Association

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SOIL CONSERVATION AND WATER QUALITY DIVISION, IOWA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND LAND STEWARDSHIP

My name is Susan Kozak and I serve as the Director of the Soil and Conservation and Water Quality Division of the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. I am providing this statement on behalf of the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs (NAAMLP), for which I currently serve as President. NAAMLP represents 32 states and tribes, of which 29 implement federally approved abandoned mine land reclamation (AML) programs authorized under Title IV of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA). My address is 502 E. 9th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319. My phone number is (515) 281–7043. My email is Susan.Kozak@iowaagriculture.gov

The 2006 amendments to Title IV of SMCRA significantly changed how state and tribal AML grants are funded. Beginning in FY 2008, these grants are funded primarily by mandatory appropriations consisting of receipts from a fee on coal production held in the AML Trust Fund, a portion of the Secretary's discretionary share in the Fund, and Treasury funds. As a result, and based on current OSMRE projections, the states and tribes should receive approximately $155 million (before sequestration) in FY 2022, which we strongly support. OSMRE's proposed budget includes a discretionary appropriation request of approximately $28 million to fund the agency's own AML work, its administration of the AML Fund, and other activities in support of the AML program.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has requested an amount of $65.3 million to fund its own AML and hazardous materials program related to hardrock mining.

SMCRA has been successful largely as a result of the cooperative federalism model that it employs. While the states and tribes understand and appreciate OSMRE's role in the AML program under SMCRA, we caution against using limited OSMRE funding for unproductive ends, for example OSMRE oversight that second—guesses state/tribal assessments or requires unnecessary levels of supplemental information that does not advance program purposes. Rather than having OSMRE engage in more oversight, the states and tribes would benefit from a more

collaborative relationship with OSMRE in completing the challenging work associated with AML program requirements. For example, we believe that funding for technical assistance and applied science projects related to AML work is particularly important. We also urge the Subcommittee to maintain necessary funding for OSMRE's training program and TIPS, including moneys for state/tribal travel. These initiatives are central to the effective implementation of state and tribal AML programs as they provide necessary training and continuing education for state/tribal agency personnel, as well as critical technical assistance.

We also strongly support maintaining funding for the Watershed Cooperative Agreements in the amount of $1.5 million. This funding serves an important role in facilitating state and local partnerships, thereby helping to leverage outside sources of funding and preserve precious reclamation grant funding.[1]

NAAMLP strongly recommends an increase in annual funding available to minimum program states. These states often have very significant AML inventories but funding under the current grant distribution formula is not enough to make efficient progress with their AML inventories.[2] In the interest of enabling these AML programs to fulfill their potential, NAAMLP believes an increase in minimum program funding to an annual grant amount of at least $5 million would be very beneficial. In this regard, we support provision in recent legislation that has been introduced in the 117th Congress (S. 1455) that would increase minimum program funding.

Further to the goal of efficiency in the use of limited AML grant funding, sequestration of AML grants under the Budget Control Act of 2011 is an increasing concern to the state and tribal AML programs. In FY 2021, a sequestration reduction of 5.7% translated to $9.2 million withheld for a total of approximately $144.7 million withheld since FY 2013.[3] If coal production further declines, thereby reducing fee collections, the funding lost to sequestration becomes increasingly important to maintain strong AML programs.

NAAMLP recommends that Congress consider exemption of the AML fund from sequestration a priority as it pursues legislative initiatives related to AML, as the benefits are patent and every dollar of AML funding is needed. Because the AML fee is paid by the coal mining industry for the exclusive purpose of AML remediation, withholding that funding does not actually reduce the federal budget deficit—but it does mean less money returned to local economies to remediate local safety and environmental hazards. NAAMLP also recommends that the Subcommittee explore mechanisms to release the growing balance of withheld AML moneys related to sequestration as part of the appropriations process.[4]

NAAMLP also recommends attention be given to the way AML emergencies are handled under Title IV. Responding to sudden emergencies such as sinkholes and landslides is one of the AML programs' most important functions. Starting in 2010, OSMRE instituted a policy whereby state and tribal AML programs must fund AML emergencies from their regular AML grants. This change has proven problematic, especially in that it diverts grant funding away from progress with current AML inventories.[5] NAAMLP recommends a return to the pre-2010 system wherein AML programs received reimbursement from the OSMRE discretionary share for emergency projects. This will encourage efficient progress with reclamation as well as ensure that the state and tribal AML programs are well equipped to fulfill their important public safety role.

The Committee's recognition of the important role played by the AML program is evidenced by the ongoing provision of funding for the AML Economic Revitalization (AMLER) Program. The projects underway due to this pilot program exhibit potential economic as well as safety and environmental benefits, though the types of projects undertaken and benefits they hope to achieve have varied among the states. The pilot has also served to inform potential future economic development—focused reclamation efforts. NAAMLP therefore supports OSMRE's increase of $50 million

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[1] Funding for these agreements will also potentially be a key support for Good Samaritan programs and projects should Congress adopt legislative language supporting Good Samaritan clean—up activities such as H.R. 1146.

[2] At the current rate, some minimum program states have AML inventories that would literally take hundreds of years to reclaim completely.

[3] For minimum program states only receiving $3 million per year the loss is especially problematic.

[4] According to OSMRE, the specific amounts that have been withheld from each state or tribe are being tracked so that, once OSMRE has authority to distribute those funds, they could be repaid to the state and tribal AML programs for which they were originally intended. According to OSMRE, there is no authority to distribute withheld funds unless so provided by Congress.

[5] This is a particular problem for minimum program states that have limited annual grant. One emergency project can preempt an entire years' worth of progress against the AML inventory in such states.

in funding for the pilot program in OSMRE's FY 2022 proposed budget (for a total of $165 million). We note that these grants are not redundant to regular AML grant funding; pilot funding has a distinctly economically—focused purpose, whereas regular AML grant funding is focused on human safety and environmental health.

While the pilot program has been generally successful so far, and OSMRE's guidance documentation has been helpful, the states involved with the pilot program urge OSMRE to address a series of recommendations for improving program effectiveness and efficiency, particularly in the areas of project vetting, the application of 2 CFR Part 200 requirements related to sub-recipients versus contractors, and performance reporting. We recommend that OSMRE's project vetting process be more efficient. Several states are awaiting approvals from OSMRE for their pilot project proposals, which could cause delays if construction seasons are allowed to expire before projects can get underway.

Beyond the coal sector, NAAMLP represents many states with significant hardrock AML problems within their borders.[6] In the absence of a hardrock AML funding source comparable to Title IV funding for coal AML, state and tribal hardrock AML programs struggle to maintain adequate funding and make consistent progress. There is no comprehensive account of the scale of the hardrock AML problem, but it is often cited as being in the tens of billions of dollars. In light of the disparity between available funding and the scale of the problem, NAAMLP expressed concern with significant reductions to hardrock AML funding contained in BLM's FY 2019 proposed budget. We were therefore encouraged by the proposed $35 million increase for FY 2022 for the combined AML and hazardous materials programs for a total of $65.3 million.

BLM hardrock AML funding is one of very few resources available for hardrock AML reclamation. Hardrock AML problems occur on both private and federal lands, meaning that the BLM AML program is the primary means of addressing public safety and environmental impacts. What's more, BLM cooperates closely with the state and tribal AML programs to conduct this work, meaning that any cut to BLM funding will have a cascading negative effect on the state level programs. NAAMLP recommends BLM's hardrock AML program funding be maintained going forward.

Returning to discussion of coal AML—with the AML fee on which the Title IV program relies set to expire this September, NAAMLP has been in engaged in serious discussions regarding the program's future. It is clear that the continuing need for the program is strong. The AML pilot highlights the fact that AML work is especially important to the struggling communities in Appalachia who have been hit hardest by downturns in coal related employment—the mitigation of which has been a congressional and Administration priority in recent years. AML sites endanger public health and safety, degrade the environment, and dampen economic prospects, which severely constrains well-being and growth in AML—impacted communities nationwide. AML programs have been contending with these issues for over 40 years and have learned much about the true depth and scale of AML impacts over that time, as well as the health and economic benefits these projects bring to nearby communities. See www.ourworksnotdone.org

Despite the progress that has been made, the time and money allotted to the AML programs to restore impacts from more than two hundred years of unregulated coal mining has not been adequate to complete that mission by the time the AML fee expires in September. Current OSMRE estimates project that over $10 billion in reclamation costs will remain, and NAAMLP believes the true costs are even higher. There can be little question that if the AML program is to complete its mission, and if its fundamental contributions to living conditions and economic circumstances in coalfield communities are to continue, additional AML funding will be required beyond 2021. If the AML fee is not reauthorized, consideration must be given to how the more than $10 billion in public liability represented by remaining coal AML costs will be addressed going forward.

NAAMLP is encouraged that discussions around reauthorization of the AML program have now come to the forefront with the introduction of S. 1447. Important questions are being asked about how much and what type of AML work is being accomplished and what types of AML problems remain. It should be noted that the AML accomplishments data furnished by OSMRE through its budget justifications document and the e-AMLIS database represent only a selective portion of the work that is being accomplished through AML grant funding. This is mainly due to the fact that e-AMLIS only records construction costs and does not include data on costs

[6] For example, Arizona alone estimates that they have in excess of 50,000 hazardous historic—mining hazards. More information about remaining AML reclamation costs and reclamation accomplishments can be found in NAAMLP's 2018 Update of the "Safeguarding, Reclaiming, Restoring" booklet.

such as program administration, project management, and most importantly, project design. NAAMLP has been working with OSMRE to examine data related to the AML program in order to more accurately tell the story of the AML program. As an example of what has so far been produced by that effort, the NAAMLP 2018 Accomplishments report can be found in the footnote below.[7] The state and tribal AML programs have been in the lead role in conducting reclamation and tracking progress for the last 40 years. We look forward to working closely with the Committee as it considers the future of the AML program.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SOUTHCENTRAL FOUNDATION

My name is April Kyle and I am the interim President/CEO for the Southcentral Foundation (SCF). SCF is the Alaska Native tribal health organization designated by Cook Inlet Region, Inc. and eleven Federally—recognized Tribes—the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island, Igiugig, Iliamna, Kokhanok, McGrath, Newhalen, Nikolai, Nondalton, Pedro Bay, Telida, and Takotna—to provide healthcare services to beneficiaries of the Indian Health Service (IHS) pursuant to a government-to-government contract with the United States under authority of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA), P.L. 93–638. SCF is a two-time recipient of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award for health (2011 and 2017).

SCF, through our 2,600 employees, provides critical health services, including pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, Native men's wellness, dental, behavioral health and substance abuse treatment to over 65,000 Alaska Native and American Indian people. This includes 52,000 people living in the Municipality of Anchorage and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough to the north, and 13,000 residents of 55 rural Alaska Native villages. Our service area encompasses over 100,000 square miles, an area the size of Wyoming. More so than any other affiliation of tribes, Alaska Native people have assumed the broadest responsibilities under the ISDEAA to own and manage healthcare systems which, together with the Alaska Public Health System, serve 150,000 Alaska Native and American Indian people and thousands of non-Native residents in rural Alaska.

I want to take the time to acknowledge the nation—leading COVID–19 vaccine rollout that SCF had. To date we have vaccinated over 24,000 people. We opened our facility to all Alaskans aged 16 and older earlier than any other provider in the state of Alaska. We were nimble in our vaccine distribution program. We were able to fill in the cracks when federal, state, and local political considerations could not fully protect the health of marginalized populations. We pro-actively launched vaccination campaigns, for both IHS beneficiaries and other community members, in homeless shelters and prisons, and opened our vaccine allocation up to local teenagers before the state government could lower their minimum age for doses. As a Tribal health organization, we are committed to healing trauma, and stopping that vicious cycle before it starts. Every life saved, or a lesson learned in a classroom is a chance for healing to begin anew. The customer—owners we serve live in relationship with so many other community members—we felt it our duty to protect those folks as well.

I want to express my strong support for the Administration's historic proposed $2.2 billion increase in Indian Health Service funding. I also strongly support the proposal to advance appropriations for the Indian Health Service. My remarks today are simple, this requested unprecedented increase in federal funding for IHS programs and services is necessary to address the ongoing and deadly health disparities that exist between Alaska Native and American Indian people and other Americans. This disparity was on high display this last year with the pandemic,

where Alaska Native and American Indian people died from this horrible disease at unprecedented rates. Most tragically, we lost the most sacred among us, far too many elders perished including some of our last fluent language speakers. This disease is a threat to our culture, our livelihood, and our future. There should never be a time again in history, where Tribal people must bear the weight of this Nation's failed health care system.

1. ADVANCE APPROPRIATION IS CRITICAL TO THE STABILITY OF THE TRIBAL HEALTH CARE DELIVERY SYSTEM.

SCF strongly supports the Administration's proposal for advance appropriations of the Indian Health Service in 2023. The FY 2020 government shutdown under-

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[7] http://naamlp.net/includes/SafeguardingReclaimingRestoringBooklet%202018__web__version.pdf

scored the need for this change. The delays in funding had deeply—felt impacts in Alaska Native and American Indian communities across the country. As Congresswoman McCollum has said, "[d]uring the government shutdown, basic everyday needs like health clinics, tribal justice services, and social services for children, families, and seniors went unfunded, putting Native American communities at risk." We completely agree that "[t]hese programs are critical to life, health, and safety in these communities, and the federal government has a legal and moral responsibility to ensure funding for our trust and treaty responsibilities is not interrupted. Advance appropriations for Indian Country is a promising avenue for making good on our commitments to our Native American brothers and sisters."

Much has been said in this Subcommittee, year after year, about how the programs and departments subject to this appropriations process are reflections of the trust relationship the Federal Government has with American Indian and Alaska Native people. The problems that arise from shutdowns and other delays in the context of a lack of advance appropriations exacerbate the problems caused by the funding shortfalls and disparities discussed above.

2. CONTINUE TO PROVIDE INCREASES FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

We cannot state strenuously enough how important it is to increase available funds for behavioral health. Alaska Native and American Indian people are disproportionately represented in substance abuse, especially opioid addiction, and suicide statistics. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and confirmed by IHS Chief Medical Officer, Rear Admiral Michael

E. Toedt, Alaska Native and American Indian people "had the highest drug overdose death rates in 2015 and the largest percentage increase in the number of deaths over time from 1999–2015 compared to other racial and ethnic groups." During that time, deaths rose more than 500% among Alaska Native and American Indian people. The CDC also found that the suicide rate among Alaska Native people is almost four times the U.S. general population rate and at least six times the national average in some parts of the State.

Behavioral health funds are critical to our most vulnerable population—our youth. SCF runs several programs that provide mental health care for Alaska Native youth which focus on building academic, vocational and leadership skills through culturally—appropriate methods. It is our firm conviction that only by addressing the root causes that drive individuals to drug misuse and addiction—domestic and child abuse, poverty and unemployment—can we help them heal.

We also support specific appropriations for an Opioid Prevention, Treatment and Recovery program for Alaska Native and American Indian people. We recommend that these funds be distributed among tribes and tribal organizations as additions to our self-governance compacts and contracts. Alaska Native healthcare providers, like SCF, recognize that the size of the opioid and substance abuse problem in Alaska demands resources.However, with insufficient funds to address behavioral health challenges, we cannot adequately reach those who suffer from substance abuse, those struggling with PTSD, our military veterans, or victims of violent crime. Prevention, education, and timely medication—assisted treatment (MAT) programs remain our most potent tools to raise a new generation of Alaska Native people who practice positive, life—affirming behavioral traits and who will, in turn, pass on these life skills to their children and grandchildren.

With our available funds, we established The Pathway Home, a voluntary, comprehensive, and individualized mental health program for adolescents aged 13 to 18 years. The Pathway Home teaches life skills to these Alaska Native youths so that they discontinue harmful behavior. Many of these youths have already experienced childhood trauma or have seen family members struggle with drug and alcohol dependency, which puts them at greater risk of turning to drugs and alcohol. The Pathway Home creates a loving and supportive community environment and it is heartwarming to see how proud the graduates of this program are to go back out into the world with these new skills and new hope. This kind of transitional opportunity must be made available to more tribes.

Unfortunately, the FY 2021 appropriations measure provided only a modest increase of $5 million for mental health, and it did not increase funding for the behavioral health integration initiative or for suicide prevention, or the amount available for alcohol and substance abuse programs. More is needed. We look forward to learning how much of the President's $2.2 billion increase will be directed to mental health care.

We do know that the President proposes $1.6 billion for the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant and $10.7 billion to combat the Opioid epidemic. We ask this Subcommittee to work with your colleagues on the Health and Human

Services Appropriations Subcommittee to ensure that Indian country receives an appropriate allocation of this funding, as well.

3. INTEGRATING ORAL HEALTH CARE INTO OUR CUSTOMER—OWNER'S PRIMARY HEALTH SYSTEM

The medical community has finally recognized that oral health care impacts a person's overall health. We now know that oral health can be a leading indicator of heart disease and some cancers. Thus, SCF has established as part of our Nuka System of Care (which is a relationship—based, customer—owned approach to transforming health care, improving outcomes and reducing costs) a goal of including on every customer—owner's primary health care team, an oral health care provider.

This expansion to include oral health as a part of primary care requires an expansion of the SCF's dental clinic to allow for a seamless integration for our customer—owners. We ask the Subcommittee to increase funding the dental program to support this innovative integration of oral health into primary health care.

4. SECTION 105(L) LEASE PAYMENTS

We appreciate the Committee's careful attention to the issue of 105(l) leases in the FY 2021 funding measure, including the inclusion of $101 million for 105(l) leases. We also continue to strongly support that these costs remain an indefinite appropriations, but with the goal to make sure these costs (along with contract support costs) are made mandatory costs so that they do not continue to stress the limited funding allocation that the Subcommittee receives.

5. CONCLUSION

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Southcentral Foundation and the people we serve.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBE

On behalf of the Squaxin Island Tribal Leadership and citizens, it is an honor to provide our funding priorities and recommendations for the FY 2022 Budgets for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) and Indian Health Service (IHS) and related agencies. We request that Tribal program funding throughout the Federal government be exempt from future sequestrations, rescissions, and disproportionate cuts. We support Advance Appropriations for the IHS, BIA and BIE to prevent funding lapses and other unintended consequences associated with short-term funding deals from disrupting critical services provided by the Federal government. We were one of the first 30 Federally recognized Tribes to enter a Compact of Self-Governance with the United States in both BIA and IHS.

We appreciate that Congress continues to fully fund Contract Support Cost (CSC) in the BIA and IHS without impacting direct program funding and further request that the BIA and IHS CSC be reclassified to mandatory (permanent) funding.

The Squaxin Island Tribe supports the indefinite line item and full funding of t 105(l) leases in the President's FY 2022 discretionary funding. We ask this Committee to ensure that the United States honors its trust and treaty obligations to American Indians and Alaskan Natives by providing stable Federal funding for essential Tribal services.

Squaxin Island Tribe Specific Requests

1. $1.8 million—Water Connection Project
2. Northwest Indian Treatment Center (NWITC) Residential Program in IHS
A. $1.5 million—Medicine Building
B. $250,000—Sustain Operations
3. $500,000 Shellfish Management Program—BIA

National Requests and Recommendations—Bureau of Indian Affairs

1. BIA Rights Protection—Increase funding to $66 million for the BIA Rights Protection Implementation
2. Increase Tribal Base Funding (instead of through grants)

Nation Requests and Recommendations—Bureau of Indian Education

1. Provide $1 billion for system—wide Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) education construction
2. Provide $230million for Johnson O'Malley
3. Reinstate $620,000 for juvenile detention education in BIA—funded facilities

National Requests and Recommendations—Indian Health Service

1. Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) has been reauthorized through December 18, 2023 we want to receive these funds through existing ISDEAA funding mechanisms
2. IHS mandatory funding (maintaining current services)—Provide a total of $12.78.4 billion for the Indian Health Service in FY 2022
3. Mental Health Services increase of $500 million
4. $255 million for Opioid Funding—Increase funding and include Tribal set asides in any funding decisions to states

SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBE BACKGROUND

We are native people of South Puget Sound and descendants of the maritime people who lived and prospered along these shores for untold centuries. We are known as the People of the Water because of our strong cultural connection to the natural beauty and bounty of Puget Sound going back hundreds of years. The Squaxin Island Indian Reservation is located in southeastern Mason County, Washington and the Tribe is a signatory to the 1854 Medicine Creek Treaty. Our treaty—designated reservation, Squaxin Island, is approximately 2.2 square miles of uninhabited forested land, surrounded by the bays and inlets of southern Puget Sound. Because the Island lacks fresh water, the Tribe has built its community on roughly 26 acres at Kamilche, Washington purchased and placed into trust. The Tribe also owns 6 acres across Pickering Passage from Squaxin Island and a plot of 36 acres on Harstine Island, across Peale Passage. The total land area including off-reservation trust lands is 1,715.46 acres. In addition, the Tribe manages roughly 500 acres of Puget Sound tidelands.

Our Tribal governance combines our sovereign powers as well as U.S. Congressional acts related to treaties, statutes, and public law. Squaxin Island Tribe, like all Tribal Nations, continue to work through the impacts of the pandemic. Prior to COVID–19, the Tribal government and our economic enterprises constituted the largest employer in Mason County with over 1,250 employees. The Tribe has a current enrollment of 1,040 and an on-reservation population of 426 living in 141 homes. Squaxin has an estimated service area population of 2,747; a growth rate of about 10%, and an unemployment rate of about 30% (according to the BIA Labor Force Report). We continue to need the assistance of Congressional relief funds to mitigate the ongoing challenges to recovery. We are grateful for the support we have received so far.

SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBE SPECIFIC REQUESTS/JUSTIFICATIONS

1. $1.8 million—Water Connection Project—IHS

New Water Source connection project is critically essential to provide for the safety and health of the Squaxin Island Tribal Community. As the largest employer in Mason County, we impact the economy of Grays Harbor, Thurston, and Kitsap Counties. Families rely on the jobs created by the Tribe. This water source allows for us to maintain and build thriving economy that positively impact the businesses in the greater region. When we thrive the State of Washington benefits as well. With this water capacity we would be able to create new jobs for hundreds of families. Our current water source is at capacity and diminishing every year. Along with Taylor Shellfish we have obtained a water right that sits on Land owned by Taylor. This is approximately 1.5 miles away this project would allow for connection to the Squaxin Island Tribe water system. A new water connection study has been completed with pre-engineering design and costs of the connection. We are near shovel ready and could complete in FY 2022. This new water source will allow the tribe to build much needed housing. We have a large waiting list and overcrowding with multigenerational household composition. The pandemic has shown those households create a high-risk situation. Taylor Shellfish fully endorses this project in true collaboration with the Squaxin Island Tribe.

2. $1.750 Million Increase for Northwest Indian Treatment Center (NWITC) Residential Program—IHS—H"D3WXbi Palil" meaning "Returning from the Dark, Deep Waters to the Light"

The Squaxin Island Tribe's Northwest Indian Treatment Center, D3f bi Pa lil, is a residential treatment facility that serves American Indians with chronic substance abuse patterns related to unresolved grief and complex trauma, including generational trauma. The Center is CARF accredited and a recognized national model of treatment for treating trauma in the presence of addiction, uniquely integrating the Best Practice of Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) with Plant Medicines. This culturally infused use of a Best Practice, based on this NWITC program,

has been adapted in many tribal communities since its development. DBT is a model of treatment with good research results for the treatment of substance above and mental health conditions.

In recognition of NWITC's unique model of treatment, the State of Washington Health Care Authority has requested NWITC to create a video-documentary describing the key elements. They have provided over $82,000 to fund this video-documentary so the model can be used by other tribes and to be used to help others understand the requirements of the facility. NWITC has several urgent needs:

A. Medicine Building—this project is shovel ready cost estimated at $1.5 million. This building will support and expand the reach of the activities of the DBT/Plant Medicine program. It will be a place of medicine making, but also have video capacity linking this program to other tribal medicine programs and creating a library available to tribal behavioral health programs and NWITC alumni. The result will be better support for alumni, but also will help build capacity in tribal communities in the Northwest.

B. Because of the pandemic, the relapse rate in tribal communities served by NWITC are high. To better support NWITC alumni, it is necessary to provide more support. Even though NWITC has a Recovery Support Team who actively support alumni for one-year post treatment, in the current environment this is insufficient. NWITC requires a position to provide the DBT/Plant Medicine training/coaching in the tribal communities in which alumni live. Costs include a position to implement this, plus expenses of alumni to participate, including hotel, food, etc. In past events NWITC has verified this as the most successful approach for teaching/coaching alumni. Budget for this is $250,000.

3. $500,000—Shellfish Management—BIA

The Squaxin Island Tribe faces an ongoing budget deficit to maintain and operate the shellfish program at its current level of operation—a level that leaves 20% of treaty—designated state lands and 80–90% of private tidelands unharvested due to lack of funding. To address this shortfall and enable effective growth and development of the program, an annual minimum increase of $500,000 is requested. Shellfish have been a mainstay for the Squaxin Island people for thousands of years and are important today for subsistence, economic and ceremonial purposes. The Tribe's right to harvest shellfish is guaranteed by the 1854 Medicine Creek Treaty. Today, we are unable to fully exercise our treaty rights due to lack of Federal support for our shellfish management program.

NATIONAL REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS—BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

1. BIA Rights Protection—Increase funding to $66 million for the BIA Rights Protection Implementation This sub-activity Account has a clear and direct relationship with the Federal trust obligation to Tribes. This program ensures compliance with Federal court orders by implementing effective Tribal self-regulatory and co-management systems. In addition, this program supports implementation of the United States/Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty.

2. Increase Tribal Base Funding (instead of through grants)—Grant funding, particularly inside the BIA, is not consistent with the intent of Tribal self-determination. Tribal leaders have grown increasingly frustrated by the increase in Indian Affairs funding offer through grants. Allocating new funds via grants marginalizes and impedes Tribal Self-Determination and Self-Governance. Provide increases via Tribal base funding instead of through grants to Tribal governments.

NATION REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS—BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION

1. Provide $1 billion for system—wide Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) education construction
2. Provide $230million for Johnson O'Malley
3. Reinstate $620,000 for juvenile detention education in BIA—funded facilities

NATIONAL REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS—INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

1. Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) has been reauthorized through December 18, 2023 we want to receive these funds through existing ISDEAA funding mechanisms—Increase to $200 million annually. Oppose moving SDPI funds into discretionary spending from mandatory spending.

2. IHS mandatory funding (maintaining current services)—Provide a total of $12.79 billion for the Indian Health Service in FY 2022 to include:

a. Increase of $337 million for full funding of current services
b. Increase of $474.5 million binding fiscal obligations

c. Increase of $2.7 billion for program increases for the most critical health issues (30% above FY2021 recommendations)

3. Other HIS Program Services: Mental Health Services increase of $500 million

REGIONAL Requests and Recommendations:

Squaxin Island Tribes supports the Regional Budget Requests of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI), the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB) and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC)

NATIONAL Requests and Recommendations:

Squaxin Island Tribe supports the National Budget Requests of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the National Indian Health Board (NIHB) and the National Indian Education Association (NIEA)

Thank you for this opportunity to provide the Squaxin Island Tribe funding priorities for FY 2022 and support for the National and Regional recommendations.

[This statement was submitted by Kristopher Peters, Chairman.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE STANDING ROCK SIOUX TRIBETESTIMONY OF

On behalf of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, I submit this testimony concerning the President's FY 2022 budget for the Indian programs within the Department of the Interior, including Tribal Historic Preservation, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Indian Education, and the Indian Health Service. I would like to express our appreciation to this Subcommittee for its support of Indian tribes.

The Standing Rock Sioux Reservation encompasses 2.3 million acres in North and South Dakota. The Reservation's population—approximately 8,500 Tribal members and 2,000 non-members—reside in eight districts, and in smaller communities. The Tribe's primary industries are cattle ranching and farming. The Tribe struggles to provide essential governmental services to our members. It is the Tribe's desire to provide jobs and improve the economic standard of living on our Reservation.

The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe has a government-to-government relationship with the United States of America, reflected in our Treaties which were signed in 1851 and 1868. We ask the government to honor its commitments in these treaties by adequately funding these federal programs enacted for our benefit, so that our members may enjoy a standard of living comparable to that enjoyed by the rest of the Nation. Despite the Tribe's best efforts, our unemployment rate remains above 50%. In fact, over 40% of Indian families on our Reservation live in poverty—more than triple the average U.S. poverty rate. The disparity is worse for children, as 52% of the Reservation population under age 18 lives below poverty, compared to 16% and 19% in North and South Dakota, respectively. The federal programs established and promised by treaty to aid tribes and their members are essential.

Indian Health Service.—We strongly support the Administration's historic requested $2.2 billion increase in IHS funding. We depend on IHS to care for our 15,500 enrolled Tribal members, many of whom suffer from diabetes, heart disease and hypertension.

The COVID–19 Pandemic has brought into stark reality the impact of the lack of adequate health care in Tribal Communities. Standing Rock has suffered significantly, losing not only our most sacred elders, but young people as well. Moreover, many of our people who survived COVID–19 are now dealing with the "long haul" conditions that are associated with it, including depression, fatigue, and diminished cognitive ability. No one knows how long these conditions will last. This nation must do better for Indian country. The federal health care delivery system should have been better prepared to combat the Pandemic.

For example, the Indian Health facility at Fort Yates was built in 1960s and is in need of a facility upgrade. Tragically because of a lack of capacity too many of our people who caught COVID–19 were transported to facilities in Bismarck or Fargo and were far away from family when they passed. In fact, the Tribe had an opportunity to receive a donation for some medical imaging equipment, but the hospital did not have the space to accept the modern imaging equipment. We currently only have 8 dialysis stations. There is a critical need for more. But again, because of space limitations, the Indian Health Service cannot expand these services.

We are thankful the Covid-19 vaccine was developed and has been rapidly disseminated at Standing Rock. But we fear that once we have the virus under control, we will be faced with mental health crisis epidemic. The virus has taken so many family members so quickly that our people have not had the proper time to grieve

as they were burying loved ones consecutively for weeks. We fear that this grief will manifest in unhealthy behaviors including increased substance abuse and suicide.

We need to be prepared for the next epidemic. We must ensure that increased mental health and behavioral funding is available. Congress must work to ensure that counseling is accessible directly in each service unit or at the very least via telehealth. Already, too many of our people are locked in addiction or are dealing with childhood or other trauma, which impacts their ability to be healthy and productive members of our Tribe. The trauma from surviving the COVID–19 pandemic will only add to the burden our people are carrying.

BIA Child Social Services and ICWA.—In North Dakota Indian children make-up approximately 40% of the children in the foster care system and in South Dakota Indian children make-up approximately 50% of the children in the foster care system. According to the Department of Justice, Indians have the highest rate of victimization in the country.

Unfortunately, the BIA Child Social Services and ICWA funding to support these children has not been increased in a number of years. We have a 638-contract with the BIA for this program, but Tribal Council has had to supplement this program with tribal funds. However, this is not sustainable for the Tribe. We have asked the BIA for assistance and they have offered nothing but that their hands are tied—that it is up to Congress to provide more funding. We have one child whose special needs requires care in a facility that costs $500 a day. Again, we are talking about the most vulnerable of our community, and we are worried that a tragedy will happen because we do not have the resources to prevent it, so we are asking for your help.

Again, the Tribe's Child Protection Service program works very hard to address the needs of our children. But there are too few investigators for this program to protect our children in eight widely scattered communities across our Reservation. The CPS program is outstanding, but it is overwhelmed by the scope and magnitude of the problems it must address. Where child victims need to be placed in a different environment for their safety, there are far too few alternatives. We do not have enough approved foster homes on the Reservation. These homes are always at capacity, so we have no choice but to place some of these children—who have faced the trauma of violence in the home—off the Reservation, generally on a temporary basis, again adding trauma and victimizing the victim. There is simply an inadequate supply of safe housing alternatives for children who must be moved for their own safety.

We urge the Committee to increase funding for both the BIA social services program and for the ICWA programs. Without these resources, we will not be able to meet the needs of our most vulnerable population.

Bureau of Indian Education (BIE).—We request a substantial increase in funding for Bureau of Indian Education programs. We appreciate the Biden Administration's focus on the BIE and improving the outcomes for our students. Standing Rock relies on BIE funding for three Tribal grant schools—the Standing Rock Community School (K–12), Sitting Bull School (K–8), and Rock Creek School (K–8). We also have five state public schools on the Reservation (Cannonball, Selfridge, McLaughlin, McIntosh, and Wakpala). These schools depend on federal impact aid to cover the costs of the public school's share of the school operations. The children in the schools on the Reservation are among the most at-risk students in the Nation. At Rock Creek, Cannonball, Selfridge, and Wakpala schools, 100% of the students receive free or reduced—price school lunches because their families live at or below poverty. At other schools, the percentage of children receiving free or reduced—price lunch is comparable—Sitting Bull, 98%; McLaughlin, 85%; Fort Yates, 80%; Standing Rock, 80%. These statistics tell us that it is incumbent on our schools to provide much more to these children than an education.

The recent years' near flat line funding for virtually all aspects of BIE programs did not account for population growth, increased costs, or inflation. Student Transportation funding, intended to cover the costs of buses, fuel, maintenance, vehicle replacements, and drivers, has stayed almost constant for several years. The substantial increases in fuel costs alone make it impossible to cover these costs. For Standing Rock, funds are further strained because we are a rural community, where bus runs for many of our students may take 11/2 to 2 hours each way and can include travel on unimproved roads.

Law Enforcement.—The Tribe has seen firsthand that adequate law enforcement funding was key to reducing crime. A number of years ago, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe was selected to participate in the High Priority Program Goals initiative, which dramatically increased law enforcement positions on our Reservation. This had a significant positive impact in reducing crime. Increased numbers of police officers allowed pro-active policing rather than reactive policing. This initiative enabled

officers to be assigned within each Reservation community, which meant quicker response time to calls and more positive relationships between law enforcement officers and the communities they served. The increased law enforcement presence and patrols deterred crime and resulted in our members feeling safer. The data confirms this. When compared to the number of violent crimes (homicide, rape, robbery, assault) that occurred between 2007 and 2009, the additional staffing reduced such crimes by approximately: 7% in 2010, 11% in 2011, and 15–19% in 2012. This initiative demonstrated the critical importance that adequate law enforcement staffing can have in our community. However, HPPG ended after FY 2013 and the Tribe's law enforcement personnel were reduced from the numbers that served us so well. Now six years later, we are grappling with increased violence, drug trafficking, and human trafficking in our community. We strongly support an increase in funding for law enforcement personnel. It makes no sense that these programs would not be funded in perpetuity since they have been demonstrated to work to reduce crime in Indian country.

Tribal Courts We support an increase in funding for the Tribal Courts Program. The Standing Rock Tribal Court is an independent branch of government consisting of a Supreme Court, Civil Court, Criminal Court, and Children's Court. Key positions in the Tribal Court require licensed attorneys—the Chief Judge; Associate Chief Judge; Chief Prosecutor; and Public Defender. Our Tribe cannot effectively support these courts with our small BIA allocation, even when heavily subsidized by the Tribe. And yet in order to use our Tribe's authorities provided under the Violence Against Women Act of 2013, Sex Offender Registration and Offender Act, and the Tribal Law and Order Act, we must continue to meet appropriate standards. Our Tribal courts are also crowded, even when spread across three separate buildings. The main courthouse outgrew its ability to meet our needs years ago and the lack of space severely limits our ability to adequately handle the Tribal Court case load of 2,000 to 3,000 cases per year. Funding is critical to providing a safe and secure center to house justice programs.

Tribal Roads Funding.—Thousands of tourists visit the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation each year and help contribute to our economy. They expect and deserve to travel on properly engineered and well-maintained roads and bridges to safely transport them from destination to destination. In order for us to attract and maintain businesses and to help our members transport farm produce and cattle to nearby markets, we require infrastructure, including safe drinking water, utilities, telecommunications and all—season roads and bridges. Dialysis patients, students, their parents and grandparents rely on our road system to get them to health centers, jobs and schools.

In July, 2019, we had a tragedy on Reservation. After a heavy storm a culvert on BIA Road 3 washed—out in the middle of the night. In the early morning hours when it was still dark, four cars drove into to the chasm that resulted from the washout. Two people—an Indian Health Service nurse and a UPS driver died. Two people were rescued, including a bus driver for Sitting Bull College, who is still recovering from his injury. Beyond the tragedy of losing two lives and a man having to struggle now to heal and still support his family, is the fact that this culvert was on the list for repair if only we had sufficient money to do this work.

Tribal Historic Preservation Office.—The Tribe supports the National Tribal Historic Preservation Officers Association's request for $20 million for Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPO). The current level of funding means that a THPO receives approximately $64,000 to carry-out the critical job of protecting this Nation's historic and cultural resources that are in tribal territories. This work requires trained and experienced archeologists, historians, anthropologists, and Tribal cultural specialists, who must assess and evaluate every federal action that takes place in our territories. If this work is not done, we risk losing sites and resources that are critical to not only my Tribe's history and culture but the Nation's.

CONCLUSION

We thank the Subcommittee for the opportunity to present this testimony.

[This statement was submitted by Mike Faith, Chairman.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SUSTAINABLE URBAN FORESTS COALITION

The undersigned organizations, many of which are members of the Sustainable Urban Forests Coalition (SUFC), urge you to continue championing robust funding for programs that support and protect neighborhood and community trees and green infrastructure. SUFC comprises more than 35 national organizations and corpora-

tions representing hundreds of thousands of professionals—and millions of supporters—who are passionate about trees and green infrastructure in our nation's communities.

Our nation's current and expanding 138 million acres of urban trees and forests are vital to creating and maintaining healthy, livable communities of all sizes by providing many scientifically proven social, economic, and environmental benefits to people. The ability to reduce air pollution and stormwater runoff, decrease energy consumption, mitigate the heat island effect, and improve human health are just a few of the essential services trees provide to communities. In fact, every year community trees and forests provide $18.3 billion in cost savings related to reductions in air pollution, energy use, and greenhouse gases.

USDA FOREST SERVICE: STATE AND PRIVATE FORESTRY

Urban and Community Forestry Program (U&CF)

U&CF directly assists state government, nonprofit organizations, and partners that manage and steward our nation's urban and community forests. Working with the state forestry agencies, the program provides technical, financial, research, and educational support and services to local government, nonprofit organizations, community groups, educational institutions, and tribal governments.

In FY 2020, U&CF assisted 7,589 urban and rural communities and over 203 million people in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, US Territories, and affiliated Pacific Island Nations.

U&CF is a high—impact program and a smart investment, as federal support is often leveraged 2:1 (or in many cases up to 5:1) by states and partner organizations. For example, over 1.3 million volunteer hours were documented for the program in 2020. U&CF engages residents in cities and towns, brings together diverse partners with public and private resources, and demonstrates that federal investment can have huge and lasting impacts on communities of all sizes. Despite pandemic—related shutdowns, cancellations and postponements, U&CF found new, creative, and innovative ways of delivering the program in 2020, for the well-being and quality of life of residents in cities and towns across the nation, territories, and islands.

The undersigned deeply appreciate appropriator's strong support and understanding of the program's diverse and unique benefits. The programmatic increase provided in FY 2021 is actively helping to prevent and address outbreaks of devastating pests—like the emerald ash borer and sudden oak death—and reducing the loss of trees and forests in both urban and rural areas. The undersigned are committed to the success and growth of this program in FY 2022 and beyond. For context, we would like to highlight the National Urban and

Community Forestry Advisory Council Ten-Year Urban Forestry Action Plan, which estimated annual funding needs in the range of approximately $85 million to maintain current levels of service and manage future increases in our urban forests.

Forest Health Management—Cooperative Lands

To be most effective, the USDA Forest Health Management program must address pests where they are first found, which is almost always in urban or semi-rural forests. This pattern means that the initial responsibility for countering non-native pests falls primarily to the Cooperative Forest Health Management program. This program supports partners' efforts to prevent, monitor, suppress, and eradicate insects, diseases, and invasive plants through technical and financial assistance to state forestry agencies who deal directly with private forest owners. Funding for this partnership has seen a 50% cut from FY10 despite rising numbers of pests. For example, during this period the spotted lanternfly and beech leaf disease have been introduced to the Mid-Atlantic region and rapid ohia death pathogen to Hawai'i.

Once established in cities, the non-native pests and pathogens spread to forests in rural and wildland areas and threaten National Forests. For example, since its introduction a century ago, white pine blister rust has spread throughout the West; 74 percent of the nation's threatened whitebark pine grows within National Forests. Since the 1950s, hemlock wooly adelgid has spread to forests from Georgia to West Virginia and now threatens Manistee National Forest in Michigan. Within 20 years of its first detection, the emerald ash borer has spread from the Detroit area to kill trees in many forests across the Northeast and Midwest. Over an even shorter period, the polyphagous and Kuroshio shot hole borers have entered the Cleveland National Forest.

We are pleased that the FHP program has established an "emerging pest" line, which in FY2021 is funded at $500,000. There will be steep competition to fund projects addressing, among others, the invasive shot hole borers in California, the

coconut rhinoceros beetle in Hawaii, and new beech leaf disease killing beech trees from Ohio to Connecticut. The undersigned recommend $51 million for Cooperative Lands under the Forest Health Management program in FY 2022.

Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR)

National priority Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) projects are a key tool that states, in collaboration with the USDA Forest Service and other partners, address critical forest priorities across the landscape. LSR projects focus on the most critical priorities identified in each state's Forest Action Plan and on achieving national goals as laid out in the State and Private Forestry national themes. The competitive grant process ensures innovative approaches to restoration work are proposed and priority is given to projects that further the advancement of State Forest Action Plans. Therefore, LSR contributes to achieving results across the landscape and making meaningful local, regional, and national impacts. The undersigned recommend $20 million for the Landscape Scale Restoration program in FY 2022.

Community Forests and Open Space Conservation Program (CFP)

CFP helps local government entities, tribes, and nonprofit conservation organizations purchase forestland for local ownership and management. Since FY 2014, Congress has appropriated $20.3 million to the program and a total of 63 projects have been awarded in 21 states, Puerto Rico, and to the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. In total, CFP funds have been used to conserve over 16,000 acres through 2019. CFP prioritizes projects that meet locally identified community needs for natural resource protection, forest—based economic development, and public access. Local residents play the lead role in conservation, stewardship, and governance of any lands acquired with CFP funds. The undersigned recommend at least $5 million for CFP in FY 2022.

USDA FOREST SERVICE: FOREST AND RANGELAND RESEARCH

Improving the health—and maximizing the economic, social, and environmental benefits—of our nation's trees requires a strong investment in USDA Forest Service Research and Development (R&D). The undersigned recommend at least $320 million for the overall R&D program for FY 2022.

Urban and Community Forestry Research

The Forest Service R&D program provides critical financial support for urban forestry research activities to develop information and tools for understanding conditions and trends in our nation's urban and community forests. USDA Forest Service researchers have made huge strides in recent years through collaborative efforts to develop new tools—such as i-Tree-for mapping current tree cover, assessing trends, developing local strategies, and building greater understanding of the environmental, economic, and social services that trees and forests provide to communities. The undersigned urge you to continue including language in Interior Appropriations reports encouraging the USDA Forest Service to maintain a strong and vibrant urban forest research program.

Non-Native Insects and Diseases Research

Funding for research conducted by USFS on ten non-native pests decreased from $10 million in FY 2010 to just $2.5 million in FY 2020-more than 70 percent. As a result of these reductions, the USFS's ability to develop and implement effective tools to manage the growing number of pests threatening the health of the nation's forests has been crippled. Programs targeting hemlock woolly adelgid, white pine blister rust, and the Sirex woodwasp were cut in recent years.

Programs targeting several other high—impact pests, including the Asian longhorned beetle, emerald ash borer, goldspotted oak borer, thousand cankers disease, laurel wilt, and sudden oak death have been funded at a steady rate. Effective measures depend on an understanding of both the pest's biology and factors that motivate people to avoid activities that facilitate pests' spread. The undersigned urge you to include language in the Interior Appropriations report encouraging the USDA Forest Service to increase funding for research targeting non-native insects and pathogens.

Urban Forests in Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA)

The collaborative efforts between SUFC and the USDA Forest Service brought urban forest data into the mainstream of the agency's national data—collection program. FIA has long provided the nation's forest census, but it had not historically included urban areas because of its definition of forests. The undersigned recommend at least $93.5 million (with no less than $32.4 million in program funding) for the FIA program in FY 2022, based on "Option C" from the 2015

FIA Strategic Plan. With that funding level, we ask you to encourage the USDA Forest Service to continue and strengthen its efforts to integrate urban forest data into FIA so that its critical data—collection efforts address all our nation's forests. We also urge this subcommittee to ensure that funding increases for FIA do not come at the expense of other Forest Service R&D programs.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program (ORLP)

The State and Local Assistance Program provides matching grants to states and localities for protection and development of parks and recreation resources. It is the primary federal investment tool to ensure that families have easy access to urban forests in parks and open space, as well as neighborhood recreation resources. This nationally competitive program complements the existing state and local assistance program by creating opportunities for outdoor play while developing or enhancing outdoor recreation partnerships in cities. The undersigned request robust funding for the state and local assistance program, which includes $125 million for ORLPP in FY 2022.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Clean Water State Revolving Funds (CWSRF)

Green infrastructure, including urban forests, can be a cost—effective and resilient approach to managing stormwater. The use of green infrastructure for stormwater control also provides many community co-benefits enumerated above. We are pleased that EPA supports the use of green infrastructure for stormwater management and that green infrastructure is an eligible use under the CWSRF—a critical financing program for local communities investing in water infrastructure. The undersigned support robust funding for CWSRF, along with efforts to expand the use of green infrastructure to 20% to meet Clean Water Act goals.

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

Alliance for Community Trees
American Forests
American Society of Consulting Arborists
Arbor Day Foundation
California ReLeaf
Casey Trees
Center for Invasive Species Prevention
City Parks Alliance
Corazon Latino
Davey Tree Expert Company
Green Infrastructure Center
International Society of Arboriculture
Maryland Forestry Foundation
Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee
National Association of Clean Water Agencies
National Association of Landscape Professionals
National Association of State Foresters
National Recreation and Park Association
NativeScapes
The Nature Conservancy
Openlands
Outdoor Power Equipment Institute
Sacramento Tree Foundation
SavATree LLC
Society of American Foresters
Society of Municipal Arborists
Tree Care Industry Association
Water Environment Foundation
Wildlife Habitat Council

[This statement was submitted by Members.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE TEXAS MID–COAST NWR COMPLEX

Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for inviting public input, and I am delighted to submit testimony to your subcommittee in support of my local refuges of the Texas Mid-Coast NWR Complex. The Refuges are the Brazoria, San Bernard, and Big Boggy in Brazoria and Matagorda Counties in Texas. I am asking that the entire Refuge System be funded for fiscal year 2022 for $600 million. Without funding in that amount, the entire System, which is vital to our country in so many ways, will continue to be underfunded. There are negative consequences to my Refuges, as well as the Refuge System nationwide if they don't have the funds necessary for operations and maintenance.

Although I am a Board Member for Friends of the Brazoria Wildlife Refuges, I present my testimony as a USFW volunteer. I see a lot on the Refuges when I volunteer, so these are my observations.

My local Refuges benefit not only the flora and fauna that make their home, but human kind as well. I live in Lake Jackson in Brazoria County, Texas. My county is directly on the Gulf of Mexico which is to our south. We have Harris County (Houston) to the north, Fort Bend County to the northwest, Matagorda County to the west, and Galveston County to the east. You may have read about the extensive flooding that as occurred over the last few years in Harris and surrounding counties. Our three refuges absorb a tremendous amount of flood water. They not only take in water from inland flooding, but absorb storm surge waters from a storm in the Gulf of Mexico. The flooding problems in this area are the result of many factors. So it is vital that my Refuges have the funds necessary to maintain the reduction of flooding they provide, or a very bad problem will be much worse. In addition, our wetlands do more than help control floods. They also remove pollutants from flood waters.

My Refuges encourage many types of recreation, including hunting, fishing, and birding. The economic impact in my area is significant from birders and hunters. They spend their dollars here.

ON THE BRAZORIA NWR

The Discovery Environment Education Program (DEEP) provides a field trip during the school year for all 4th and 7th graders in the Brazosport Independent School District (BISD), as well as any other school who asks for a field trip. Five different subjects are taught by volunteers. The subjects taught are age appropriate with curriculum that is approved by BISD. The students are provided with a booklet that has questions to answer and educational information on each subject. The kids take their booklet home with them. We get students who have never been to a park or refuge of any kind. They are so excited to see a turtle, much less an allegator. They are taught, depending on age and the weather, everything from seining, bird watching (each student is loaned some binoculars for the day), reptiles, fresh water pond life, mammal skull identification, bird flight and other topics.

The Refuges also have open house weeks, during spring break and between Christmas and New Years. Volunteers provide numerous activities at our Discovery Center, such as touching allegators, snakes, box turtles, and lizards. They learn about animal tracks, scat, pelts and skulls. They can look at various invertebrates that live in a fresh water pond under a microscope. They can hike the boardwalk across Big Slough, and spot a mama allegator with her babies. They can walk a trail that has interpretative signs along the way.

I always see fisherman at the Clay Banks area of this refuge. They are all along the road into the area and at the boat ramp into Bastrop Bayou. I have also spotted bobcats in this area. Many species of birds are a given.

A new unit, Cannon Bend, was recently the added to this Refuge. It has a lake stocked with fish, with kayaking, hiking, and bird watching opportunities. It will open to the public later this year.

ON THE SAN BERNARD NWR

The Refuge has Migration Celebration, which is a two-day event every April that provides education as well as fun for kids and adults. Visitors can kayak, fish, trail walk, ride a marsh buggy, shoot an air rifle, learn archery, and kids can play in the sand pile. The Birds of Prey is a must—see program where these magnificent birds fly above the crowds and return to their handler, with a speaker that provides information on how each bird uses its senses to hunt prey. A tent with butterflies is provided in which kids and adults can hold a Monarch and other butterflies on their finger. It takes at least 100 volunteers to make this event happen.

This Refuge has wonderful hiking trails. The San Bernard Oak Trail ends with a view of one of the largest live oaks in Texas. It is massive. Improvements are planned to the trail in the near future.

The Bobcat Wood Trail has recently been completely rebuilt. It has benches for resting, overlooks for birders, and interpretative signs.

The Texas Mid-Coast NWR Complex has many volunteers, but they can't manage the Refuges. The funds that Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges has raised and volunteer labor have assisted with recent trail improvements. But it takes professionals for fire fighting and control burns, education programing and events, issuing permits, management of water levels, trail and other infrastructure maintenance, and documenting both plants and animals on the Refuges. That is the short list. It pains me that positions have been unfilled due to lack of funding. We have a love-

ly Discovery Center that is closed most days due to lack of staff. I have seen the benefit to visitors when a USFW employee is at the Center and educates visitors the options available for their enjoyment.

I have seen the impact of my Refuges on us humans. I saw the flood waters from Hurricane Harvey along Bastrop Bayou which was most likely from inland flooding.

I also see the protection and preservation of wildlife that my Refuges provide. They are a major flyway for migrating birds and Monarch butterflies. The Refuges provide fresh water and food after the long trip over the Gulf of Mexico. They provide bottom land forest that provide shelter. They provide nesting sites for birds that are in need of protection, most recently the black rail. They are part of the estuary system along the Gulf Coast, which is the nursery for salt water fish, and vital to the fishing industry. They are unique ecosystems with estuaries, fresh water ponds, coastal prairie, and river bottomlands.

I look at our nation's entire Refuge System and appreciate that the areas they preserve and protect are all vital. Please appropriate the $600 million that our National Refuge System needs for operations and maintenance. The positive impact on humans and wildlife is extraordinary. It is an investment in our future. Dividends are guaranteed.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Richardson
120 Daffodil Street
Lake Jackson, Texas 77566
lawfirm1@sbcglobal.net

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE TRIBAL LAW AND POLICY INSTITUTE (TLPI)

On behalf of the Tribal Law and Policy Institute (TLPI), this testimony addresses important programs in the Department of Interior (DOI). First, TLPI joins the American Bar Association (see attached letter) in requesting substantially increased funding for tribal courts in response to the $1.2 billion annual shortfall for tribal courts as identified in the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) 2020 report to Congress, Report to the Congress on Spending, Staffing, and Estimated Funding Costs for Public Safety and Justice Programs in Indian Country, 2018.

Secondly, TLPI joins the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) in requesting:

Program	NCAI FY 2021 Request
DOI: Base funding for tribal courts and the Indian Tribal Justice Act, including courts in Public Law 280 jurisdictions.	$123,000,000
DOI: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Law Enforcement and Detention.	$527,400,000
DOI: BIA Funding to Tribal Governments	Provide increases via tribal base funding instead of through grants.
DOI: BIA Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act.	$93,000,000
DOI: BIA Welfare Assistance$	100,000,000
DOI: Indian Child Welfare Act Program	$30,000,000
DOI: BIA Social Services Program	$70,000,000
DOI/Indian Health Service	$12.75 billion
DOI/Indian Health Service: ISDEAA Section 105(l) Lease Agreements.	Provide such sums as may be necessary through mandatory spending.

TLPI is a 100% Native American operated non-profit corporation organized to design and deliver education, research, training, and technical assistance programs which promote the enhancement of justice in Indian country and the health, well-being, and culture of Native peoples.

The federal government's trust responsibility to Tribal nations is at the heart of TLPI's recommendation to follow NCAI's FY 2022 Indian Country Budget Request. Like all other governments, Tribal nations are responsible for the protection and care of their citizens, residents, and visitors on their lands. Through treaties and other agreements, tribal lands were ceded in exchange for the promise of protected

self-governance and adequate resources from the United States. Those promises are the foundation of the government-to-government relationship that exists today.

Core to Tribes exercising those responsibilities of protection and care is sufficient federal government funding resources provided in fulfillment of its trust responsibility. The primary DOI agencies through which the federal government can provide funds critical to the health and safety of tribal citizens and residents of tribal lands are the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and Indian Health Service (IHS). The BIA and IHS provide essential services including hospitals, schools, law enforcement, and social services among others. Programs and services through these agencies affect the lives of around two million people across the country.

Unfortunately, both agencies have been drastically underfunded for decades. Chronic underfunding allows systemic harm to be perpetuated against tribal citizens and residents of tribal lands. The inability of the federal government to live up to its trust responsibility is long—documented, most notably by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (the Commission). The Commission has released three reports since the 1990s chronicling the continued underfunding of Indian country. Most recently, in 2018, the Commission in Broken Promises: Continuing Federal Funding Shortfall for Native Americans found that "Federal funding for Native American programs across the government remains grossly inadequate to meet the most basic needs the federal government is obligated to provide . . . Since 2003, funding for Native American programs has mostly remained flat, and in the few cases where there have been increases, they have barely kept up with inflation or have actually resulted in decreased spending power." [1]

Chronic underfunding also affects tribal justice systems. Tribal courts in particular need resources to protect women, children, and families, address substance abuse, and rehabilitate offenders. In 1991, the Commission found that "the failure of the United States Government to provide proper funding for the operation of tribal judicial systems . . . has continued for more than 20 years." [2] In 2018, the Commission in Broken Promises found that there continues to be "systemic underfunding of tribal law enforcement and criminal justice systems, as well as structural barriers in the funding and operation of criminal justice systems in Indian Country." [3] Finally in 2020, the BIA submitted a report to Congress, Report to the Congress on Spending, Staffing, and Estimated Funding Costs for Public Safety and Justice Programs in Indian Country, 2018. The total annual estimated need for tribal public safety and justice programs included $1.3 billion for tribal law enforcement, $1.2 billion for tribal courts, and $240.6 million for existing detention centers. According to the same report, BIA funding only meets 14.7 percent of estimated need. Leaving tribes to fight for short-term funds via competitive grant processes.

It is time for this history of underfunding to change, especially as the world continues to battle a global pandemic. TLPI urges this committee to support the requests outlined in this testimony and included in the NCAI's FY 2022 Indian Country Budget Request.

Increase base funding for tribal courts and the Indian Tribal Justice Act, including courts in Public Law 280 jurisdictions.—Along with the IHS, the BIA is one of the primary agencies responsible for providing services throughout Indian Country, either directly or through compacts or contracts with tribal governments. One of the most fundamental aspects of the federal government's trust responsibility is the obligation to protect public safety on tribal lands. Congress and the United States Supreme Court have long acknowledged this obligation, which Congress reaffirmed in the Tribal Law and Order Act expressly "acknowledging the federal nexus and distinct federal responsibility to address and prevent crime in Indian Country."

According to the BIA, the minimum base level of funding needed for tribal courts is $1.2 billion.[4] For FY 2021, funding for tribal courts (generally) was $38.9 million and $15 million for tribal courts in PL 280 jurisdictions. This gap between identified need and recent appropriations calls for an increase in base funding for tribal courts, including courts in PL 280 jurisdictions.

Fund BIA Law Enforcement and Detention efforts.—The BIA has also reported on the minimum base level of service needs in the areas of law enforcement and maintaining existing detention centers. The report found that $1.3 billion is needed for

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[1] United States Commission on Civil Rights, Broken Promises: Continuing Federal Funding Shortfall for Native Americans, 4 (December 2018).

[2] United States Commission on Civil Rights, The Indian Civil Rights Act: A Report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights 71 (June 1991).

[3] Supra note 1, at 32.

[4] Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Justice Services. "Report to Congress on Spending, Staffing, and Estimated Funding Costs for Public Safety and Justice Programs in Indian Country, 2018," July 2020.

tribal law enforcement, and $240.6 million is needed to adequately fund existing detention centers.[5] Again, the same report found that Congress is funding tribal law enforcement, detention/corrections, and tribal courts at a mere 14.7 percent of estimated need.

Again, the gap between identified need and level of appropriation is wide. Further, recent experience demonstrates that addressing the lack of justice funding can make rapid and dramatic strides toward improving public safety.[6] Tribal justice systems simply need the resources to put their tools to work to protect tribal citizens, residents, and visitors on tribal lands.

Fund BIA Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act.—The ICPFVPA authorizes funding for two tribal programs: (1) the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Program, which funds prevention programming, investigations, and emergency shelter services for victims of family violence; and (2) the Treatment of Victims of Child Abuse and Neglect program, which funds treatment programs for victims of child abuse. The ICPFVPA also authorizes funding for the creation of Indian Child Resource and Family Service Centers in BIA regions. Child abuse prevention funding will assist Tribal nations in protecting one of their most vulnerable and most sacred populations. Tribes, like states, need adequate resources to effectively prevent and respond to child abuse and neglect in their communities. However, unlike states, Tribes do not have meaningful access to HHS Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Program (CAPTA) grant programs. The ICPFVPA was enacted to fill this gap, but without appropriations for ICPFVPA programs, Tribes are left without funding for child protection and child abuse prevention services.

Fund BIA Welfare Assistance and Social Services.—The Welfare Assistance line item provides five important forms of funding to AI/AN families: (1) general assistance, (2) child assistance, (3) non-medical institution or custodial care of adults, (4) burial assistance, and (5) emergency assistance. The Social Services Program provides a wide array of family support services filling many funding gaps for tribal programs and ensuring federal staff and support for these programs. Importantly, the Social Services Program provides the only BIA and tribal specific funding available for child protective services for both children and adults in Indian Country. TLPI supports NCAI's recommended appropriations for both programs.

Fund the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Program.—ICWA funding is the foundation of most tribal child welfare programs. Current funding levels fall far short of estimates made in 1978 when ICWA was passed, which with inflation would be $193 to $459 million in today's dollars. Funding for off-reservation programs has completely stopped since 1996. TLPI supports NCAI's recommendation to increase the ICWA Program appropriation to $30 million.

Fund the Indian Health Service.—In permanently authorizing the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA), Congress reaffirmed the duty of the federal government to provide all the necessary resources to ensure the highest possible health status for AI/ANs, declaring that "it is the policy of this Nation, in fulfillment of its special trust responsibilities and legal obligations to Indians."[7] Unfortunately, IHS has never received sufficient funding to fully honor its obligations. "Funding for the IHS and Native American health care is inequitable and unequal. IHS expenditures per capita remain well below other federal health care programs, and overall IHS funding covers only a fraction of Native American health care needs, including behavioral health needs to address the suicide epidemic in Indian Country."[8]

In accordance with National Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup recommendations, representing all twelve IHS Areas, TLPI supports a total appropriation of $12.75 billion. Further, TLPI supports American Bar Association policy calling for IHS to be exempt from government shutdowns and federal budget sequestrations.[9]

Fund Indian Self Determination Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) Section 105(l) Lease Agreements.—Ensuring tribal nations have the tools and resources for effective governance is critical to fulfilling the promise of the ISDEAA (P.L. 93–638) ISDEAA promotes self-determination and self-governance, and this nation's trust and treaty obligations, by enabling tribal nations to enter into contracts and compacts with the federal government to operate certain federal programs. Those tribal shares of federal programs make up the "base funding" for tribal governments and

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[5] Id.

[6] Michael S. Black, Acting Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior, Testimony, Briefing Transcript, p. 136; see also Dep't of the Interior, press release, March 4, 2014.

[7] Indian Health Care Improvement Act, 25 U.S.C. § 1602.

[8] Supra note 1, at 8.

[9] 2019A115A.

provide certainty and security to those governments. Congress must support tribal self-determination by increasing tribal base funding, providing funding directly to tribal nations as opposed to passing funds through states, providing formula based funding rather than difficult to navigate competitive grant programs, and promoting accurate data collection so that funding can better target the needs of Indian Country. Additionally, funding for Section 105(l) lease agreements must be provided through mandatory spending that does not affect discretionary spending caps on tribal programs.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for considering this testimony.

[This statement was submitted by Gerald Gardner, Executive Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE UNITED SOUTH AND EASTERN TRIBES, INC.

Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for opportunity to provide testimony regarding the federal government's chronic failure to fully uphold its fiduciary trust and treaty obligations to Tribal Nations and the President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022. The following testimony is submitted on behalf of United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF), and will focus on funding for federal Indian programs at the Department of the Interior (DOI), the Indian Health Service (IHS), and beyond. Broadly, the President's Budget Request for FY 2022 is positive for USET SPF member Tribal Nations and Indian Country generally. After years of requests that neglected trust and treaty obligations, we welcome the more substantial increases, as well as the policy change proposed by this Administration. It is also important to remember, however, that centuries of neglect and hostile federal policies cannot be undone in a single request. In addition to our advocacy for the highest discretionary increases possible each FY, we are seeking a long-term commitment to federal fulfillment of trust and treaty obligations—including full and mandatory funding for federal agencies and programs serving Tribal Nations.

USET SPF advocates on behalf of 33 federally recognized Tribal Nations from the Northeastern Woodlands to the Everglades and across the Gulf of Mexico. USET SPF member Tribal Nations are within the Eastern Region and Southern Plains Region of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Nashville Area of the Indian Health Service, covering a large expanse of land compared to other regions. Due to this large geographic area, USET SPF Tribal Nations have great diversity in cultural traditions, land holdings, and resources.

With hope on the horizon as we look toward recovery from COVID–19, Indian Country finds itself at an inflection point in our centuries—long relationship with the United States. The global pandemic and social injustice brought extreme challenges, sorrow, and upheaval to Tribal Nations and the whole of America. As COVID–19 tore through our communities, our country engaged in a reckoning with its past and looked toward a more honorable future. USET SPF has consistently called upon the United States to deliver and fulfill its sacred promises to Tribal Nations and to act with honor and honesty in its dealings with Indian Country. But the global pandemic has exposed for the world to see the extent to which generations of federal neglect and inaction have created the unjust and untenable circumstances facing Tribal Nations. The time is long overdue for a comprehensive overhaul of the trust relationship and obligations, one that results in the United States finally keeping the promises made to us as sovereign nations in accordance with our special and unique relationship.

As the Subcommittee is well aware, Native peoples have endured many injustices as a result of federal policy, including federal actions that sought to terminate Tribal Nations, assimilate Native people, and to erode Tribal territories, learning, and cultures. This story involves the cession of vast land holdings and natural resources, oftentimes by force, to the United States out of which grew an obligation to provide benefits and services—promises made to Tribal Nations that exist in perpetuity. These resources are the very foundation of this nation and have allowed the United States to become the wealthiest and strongest world power in history. Federal appropriations and services to Tribal Nations and Native people are simply a repayment on this perpetual debt.

At no point, however, has the United States honored these sacred promises; including its historic and ongoing failure to prioritize funding for Indian country. The chronic underfunding of federal Indian programs continues to have disastrous impacts upon Tribal governments and Native peoples. As the United States continues

to break its promises to us, despite its own prosperity, Native peoples experience some of the greatest disparities among all populations in this country and have for generations. It is no surprise, then, that the failures of the federal government are coming into horrifyingly sharper focus due to the global pandemic. Decades of broken promises, neglect, underfunding, and inaction on behalf of the federal government have left Indian Country severely under—resourced and at extreme risk during this COVID–19 crisis.

In December 2018, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights issued the Broken Promises Report, following years of advocacy from Tribal Nations and organizations seeking an update to the 2003 Quiet Crisis report. The Commission concluded that the funding of the federal trust responsibility and obligations remains "grossly inadequate" and a "barely perceptible and decreasing percentage of agency budgets." The report confirms what we in Indian Country already know—with the exception of some minor improvements, the U.S. continues to neglect to meet its "most basic" obligations to Tribal Nations. Though these chronic failures have persisted throughout changes in Administration and Congress, it is time that both the legislative and executive branches confront and correct them.

Above all, the COVID–19 crisis is highlighting the urgent need to provide full and guaranteed federal funding to Tribal Nations in fulfillment of the trust obligation. While we unequivocally support budget stabilization mechanisms, such as Advance Appropriations, in the long-term, USET SPF is calling for a comprehensive reexamination of federal funding delivered to Indian Country across the federal government. Because of our history and unique relationship with the United States, the trust obligation of the federal government to Native peoples, as reflected in the federal budget, is fundamentally different from ordinary discretionary spending and should be considered mandatory in nature. Payments on debt to Indian Country should not be vulnerable to year to year "discretionary" decisions by appropriators.

Recently, some in Congress, as well as the Biden Administration, have called for mandatory funding for specific agencies serving Indian Country. USET SPF strongly supports this proposal, which is more consistent with the federal trust obligation, and urges that this be realized via an entirely new budget component—one that contains all of the funding dedicated to Indian Country. Not only would this streamline access to these dollars, but this mechanism would also reflect true prioritization of and respect for America's trust obligation to and special relationship with Tribal Nations. While some will quickly dismiss this as unrealistic and untenable, when compared against the value of the land and natural resources the United States gained as part of the exchange, both voluntarily and involuntarily, it becomes evident that this is only a matter of will and desire.

Reforming the Office of Management and Budget.—The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) asserts that over $21 billion in federal dollars is appropriated to Indian Country annually. From the perspective of Tribal advocates, this number seems to be widely inflated, with far less actually reaching Tribal Nations and Tribal citizens. We suspect that OMB arrives at this figure by tallying the amount for which Tribal Nations and entities are "eligible", regardless of whether these dollars actually reach Indian Country. Regardless, this represents less than 1/10 of 1% of the annual value that the U.S. enjoys from federal lands and the natural resources derived off of these lands, which once belonged to Tribal Nations. Both USET SPF and the Tribal Interior Budget Council (TIBC) have asked OMB for a full, detailed accounting of federal funding distributed to Indian Country. To date, OMB has not responded to this request, though after holding its first—ever Tribal consultation we are hopeful that the agency will work to compile this document. This information is absolutely essential to the measurement of the federal government's own success in meeting its obligations and the work of Tribal Nations. Congress must hold OMB accountable and require the agency to provide the necessary detail to support this funding claim on an annual basis. In the long-term, we are seeking reforms to OMB that would include a consultation requirement, a dedicated Tribal Affairs department, and a Tribal advisory committee.

Invest in and Rebuild Tribal Infrastructure-A Marshall Plan for Indian Country.—For generations, the federal government—despite abiding trust and treaty obligations—has substantially under—invested in Indian Country's infrastructure. While the United States faces crumbling infrastructure nationally, there are many in Indian Country who lack even basic infrastructure, such as running water and passable roads. Now, the nation and world are witnessing the deadly consequences of this neglect, as COVID–19 has spread through Tribal communities that are unable to implement such simple public health measures as frequent hand washing. As Congress and the Administration turn the focus to a once-in-generation infrastructure, jobs, and social reform package, the United States must commit to supporting the rebuilding and restoration of the sovereign Tribal Nations that exist

within its domestic borders. Much like the U.S. investment in the rebuilding European nations following World War II via the Marshall Plan, the legislative and executive branches should commit to the same level of responsibility to assisting in the rebuilding of Tribal Nations, as our current circumstances are, in large part, directly attributable to the shameful acts and policies of the United States. In the same way the Marshall Plan acknowledged America's debt to European sovereigns and was utilized to strengthen our relationships and security abroad, the United States should make this strategic investment domestically. Strong Tribal Nations will result in a strengthened United States. At the same time, any infrastructure build—out, in Indian Country and beyond, must not occur at the expense of Tribal consultation, sovereignty, sacred sites, or public health.

Mandatory Funding for Binding Obligations.—While USET SPF celebrates the achievement of separate, indefinite appropriations for both 105(l) leases and Contract Support Costs, we note that likely continued growth in these areas threatens future increases for other IHS and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) lines. While we contend that all federal Indian agencies and programs should be subject to mandatory funding, in recognition of perpetual trust and treaty obligations, we strongly support the Administration's proposal to transfer these lines to the mandatory side of the federal budget. This will ensure that funding increases are able to be allocated to service delivery, as opposed to the federal government's binding legal obligations.

Promote Self-Governance through Interagency Transfer Authority.—USET SPF is working toward a future in which all federal dollars are eligible to be contracted or compacted under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA). In the meantime, we urge this Subcommittee and the full Appropriations Committee to ensure all federal Indian funding can be transferred between federal agencies, so that it may be received through contracts and compacts. We cite the unnecessary delays and barriers to the receipt of urgently needed COVID–19 relief funding as an example of why this authority must be confirmed.

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).—USET SPF is pleased to note that President Biden's request for the BIA is $2.7 billion, which is a $610 million increase over the FY 2021 enacted level. We support the targeted investments the proposal makes in for teachers and students in Tribal schools, clean energy development, and tribal law enforcement and court programs to improve safety. We also note the historic and continued unmet funding obligations with regard BIA's diverse line items and are encouraged by the nearly across-the-board increases provided under the FY 2022 request. After years of budget requests proposing deep cuts to BIA, we urge Congress to work with the Biden Administration's to enact substantial increases across the agency.

Working in partnership with the BIA, the yearly budget formulation process now offers a much more comprehensive look at the priorities of Tribal Nations across the many lines and accounts found within the BIA budget. However, we remain focused on the addition of a component or calculation of BIA's unfunded obligations in order to measure performance. Due to space constraints, we offer the Eastern Region's top priority in eight different strategic funding categories, all of which have received increases, many substantial, under the President's FY 2022 proposal. We urge Congress to maintain or exceed these increases:

—Strengthening Tribal Communities: Social Services (TPA)—+$12 million or a 23% increase
—Trust-Natural Resources Management: Natural Resources (TPA)—+$10 million or a 125% increase
—Trust-Land & Water Rights Management: Trust Services (TPA)—+$274,000 or a 3% increase
—Public Safety & Justice: Tribal Courts (TPA)—+$4.2 million or an 11% increase
—Economic Development: Economic Development (TPA)—+$7 million or a 213% increase
—Education: Scholarships & Adult Education (TPA)—+$10 million or a 29% increase
—Construction: Public Safety & Justice Facilities Replacement/New Construction—+$5 million or a 20% increase
—Resource Management Construction: Federal Power Compliance [FERC]—+$9,000 or a 1% increase

Indian Health Service (IHS).—USET SPF is similarly pleased to see the proposed funding amount of $8.5 billion, a substantial increase of $2.2 billion over FY 2021 enacted. We are further encouraged that, for the first time, the President will include an advance appropriations request for IHS in FY 2023. We support advance appropriations as an important mechanism to provide certainty in funding to Tribal

Nations and urge the Subcommittee to support this mechanism for all federal Indian programs. Finally, USET SPF strongly supports the Biden Administration's commitment to consulting with Tribal Nations on the possibility of mandatory funding for IHS. We hope that this Subcommittee will support these efforts for IHS—all federal Indian agencies and programs—as this, in combination with full funding,[1] is the only way to truly uphold fiduciary obligations to Tribal Nations.

In addition to providing a robust funding stream for current operations that reflects medical inflation, Nashville Area Tribal Nations identified our top 6 priority line items for increases in FY 2022, all of which receive increases under the President's proposal. We urge Congress to maintain or exceed these increases: Hospitals and Clinics (+ $465 million or 21% increase), Purchased/Referred Care (PRC) (+$216 million or 22% increase), Alcohol and Substance Abuse Program (+$16 million or 6% increase), Mental Health Services (+$9.5 million or 8% increase), Dental Health (+$73 million or 34% increase), and Electronic Health (+$250 million or 726% increase). Nashville Area priorities and hot issues also include funding for Maintenance & Improvement, Sanitation Facilities Construction, Health Education, Urban Indian Health Program Support, continued support for newly federally recognized Tribal Nations, culturally appropriate substance abuse treatment aftercare and housing programs, Hepatitis C prevention and treatment, constitutionality challenges, increases in SDPI funding, and parity in group payor authorities when sponsoring patients on insurance plans.

Other Selected Lines and Programs.—Though not an exhaustive list, USET SPF strongly supports the continued funding and increases for the following lines and programs: Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country (CDC), Rural Community Facilities (ACF), Tribal Opioid Response Grants (SAMHSA), Community Development Financial Institutions Fund grants, the Indian Community Development Block Grant, USDA Rural Business Development grants, EPA state and Tribal assistance grants, BIA Tribal Climate Science Centers, Tribal Historic Preservation funding, the 5% Tribal set aside from the Crime Victims Fund, and Native American Housing Block Grants. We also strongly support the Biden Administration's proposed $450 million investment to facilitate climate mitigation, resilience, adaptation, and environmental justice projects in Indian Country.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE WATEREUSE ASSOCIATION (WRA)

Thank you for the opportunity to present our FY 2022 funding requests for programs administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The WateReuse Association (WRA) is a not-for-profit trade association for water utilities, businesses, industrial and commercial enterprises, non-profit organizations, and research entities that engage in and on water reuse. WRA and its state and regional sections represent more than 200 water utilities serving over 60 million customers, and over 300 businesses and organizations across the country. WRA's mission is to engage its members in a movement for safe and sustainable water supplies, to promote acceptance and support of recycled water, and to advocate for policies and funding that increase water reuse.

As climate change accelerates, and its associated adverse impacts on water resources increase, it is vitally important that the nation invest in water recycling to build resilience, manage energy demands, support public and environmental health, and ensure America's economic prosperity. Investments in water recycling ensure reliable and resilient community water supplies, support sustainable economic development, and help protect our rivers, lakes, streams, aquifers and wetlands.

In Virginia's tidewater region, Hampton Roads Sanitation District is pursuing a multi—benefit water reuse program called the Sustainable Water Initiative for Tomorrow (SWIFT). HRSD's SWIFT project treats wastewater effluent to drinking water standards and reuses it to recharge the regional aquifer. The investment of $1.1 billion in capital outlays provides critical public health, environmental and economic benefits by replenishing the overdrawn Potomac Aquifer, recharging 100 million gallons per day (MGD) of fresh water at full implementation, providing a reliable safe water supply to support the region's population and the nation's critical military assets, and generating nutrient credits that HRSD can trade—providing an estimated savings of $1.5 billion for 11 counties across the region. EPA investment programs have provided critical capital to help move this large project forward.

In Florida's Tampa Bay Region, Hillsborough County's Saltwater Intrusion and Aquifer Recharge Program (SHARP) is creating a hydraulic barrier to saltwater intrusion between the Bay and the region's drinking water aquifer. At a cost of $20

[1] Current estimates put full funding for IHS at approximately $48 billion.

million, SHARP is yielding significant climate—resiliency benefits by protecting the region's freshwater aquifer from sea level rise and saltwater intrusion, reducing pumping costs and energy use by raising groundwater levels and increasing pressure in the potable freshwater aquifer, generating water supply credits that offset the project's cost, and supporting seagrass and fishery recovery efforts by reducing nutrient and other effluent loadings.

In Texas, El Paso Water is using water recycling and saline groundwater desalination to produce a drought—resilient, cost-effective, and reliable water supply to support a vibrant local economy. Compared to the next best alternative (importing groundwater), El Paso's water reuse program is reducing energy use by 3.6 million MWH over the planning period, shrinking the agency's carbon footprint by nearly 700,000 MT of carbon emissions over a 50-year period, and addressing affordability challenges related to imported water by saving more than $1.2 billion, or 74 percent.

In Southern California's Chino Basin, local leaders developed the Optimum Basin Management Program (OBMP) to address the region's water challenges. At its core, the OBMP is a water reuse program with other key components facilitated by water recycling. The OBMP generates energy savings in excess of 5.8 Billion kWh over 30 years by relying on local resources rather than energy intensive water imports, saves ratepayers an estimated $2.4 billion in water supply costs (a 153 percent return on investment), and restores instream flows and water quality in the Santa Ana River, returning a surface water supply to downstream Orange County and replenishing and improving water quality in the Chino Groundwater Basin.

These are just a few examples of innovative, successful water recycling projects from around the country. As you begin the FY 2022 appropriations cycle, we urge you to make the following investments to support water recycling as a resource management tool:

Programs Authorized in America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) of 2018

Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Account: State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG)

We request the following amounts for FY 2022 for three programs authorized in AWIA:

—$5 million for SEC. 2005—Drinking Water Infrastructure Resilience and Sustainability Program
—$5 million for SEC. 2007—Innovative Water Technology Grant Program
—$60 million for SEC. 4106—Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Municipal Grants

These three programs were created in the America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018. In FY 2020, Congress provided first-time funding for all three programs: $3 million for Sec. 2005, $1 million for Sec. 2007, and $28 million for Sec. 4106. Congress increased funding for each the following year. We thank you for these important investments, and urge you to build upon them in FY 2022.

These programs will provide tools and resources to support innovation in addressing unique local challenges in water supply and water quality, including practices involving the use of recycled wastewater effluent, captured stormwater, and other alternative water sources in all states.

Clean Water State Revolving Fund

Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Account: State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG)

The successful Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) program is the primary source of federal financing assistance for clean water infrastructure. The CWSRF is an important tool used across all 50 states and in communities of all sizes to help communities make investments more affordably. Our nation's water infrastructure faces significant infrastructure investment challenges with utilities challenged to maintain and upgrade aging infrastructure, comply with federal obligations, protect public health and serve as environmental stewards in their community—all while maintaining affordable rates for critical services. A significant increase in funding for the CWSRF would help communities meet these growing needs. We therefore request $3.4 billion in FY 2022.

Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Program

Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Account: Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Fund

The Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Program accelerates investment in our nation's water infrastructure by providing long-term, low-cost supplemental loans for regionally and nationally significant projects. EPA estimates that

a $50 million Water Infrastructure Finance & Innovation Act (WIFIA) appropriation can be leveraged into $5 billion in low-interest federal loans and $10 billion in new water infrastructure projects. A small increase in appropriated dollars for this program can go a very long way toward advancing water reuse and recycling across the country. Already, WIFIA has made major investments in innovative water recycling projects, and we expect to see this trend continue into the future. We therefore request a $5 million increase to $70 million in FY 2022 for the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Program.

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund

Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Account: State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG)

Following the 1996 Amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act, Congress demonstrated its commitment to safe drinking water and economic growth by investing more than $19 billion into 13,800 drinking water improvement projects nationwide. These investments have been matched nearly 2:1 with non-federal dollars. Despite the large investment, the need for drinking water infrastructure improvements far exceeds available dollars. An increase in FY 2022 would support the development and modernization of critical infrastructure to meet America's future drinking water needs. We therefore request $2.32 billion in FY 2022 for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund.

National Priorities Water Research Grant Program

Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Account: Science & Technology

The water sector in the United States is vital for supporting healthy families and thriving communities. Today, the water sector is facing unprecedented challenges, including extreme drought, catastrophic flooding, failing infrastructure, emerging contaminants, and dramatic changes in population. Water research will play a critical role in developing cost-effective solutions to these challenges to ensure thriving, resilient communities, create jobs, and support healthy families. In recent years, Congress has appropriated hundreds of millions of dollars for EPA research, but less than 15 percent of EPA's Science and Technology Account funding is dedicated to water related research. Less than 1 percent of these funds supports applied research for water utilities. We therefore request an increase in funding to $20 million for the National Priorities Water Research grant program in order to better reflect the urgent research needs of the water sector.

[This statement was submitted by Greg Fogel.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WESTAF AND THE WESTERN ARTS ADVOCACY NETWORK

Dear Senator Merkley, Senator Murkowski, and Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee Members:

Thank you for providing the opportunity to submit outside witness testimony as you consider investments in vital federal agencies, including the National Endowment for the Arts (Arts Endowment). The Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF), a regional partner of the Arts Endowment, and the Western Arts Advocacy Network (WAAN) write to affirm the integral role the Endowment plays in communities throughout the region. Through innovative programming, advocacy, research, technology, and grantmaking, WESTAF encourages the creative advancement and preservation of the arts in the West, serving the states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawai'i, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. WAAN brings together leaders from state arts advocacy organizations and other key advocates from across the West to network, share best practices, and inform WESTAF's support of arts advocacy.

We know that arts and creativity strengthen our nation. Arts and creativity make us stronger—as individuals, families, communities, states and as a country. They are a backbone of innovation, prosperity, and thriving people and places. Public funding for arts and creativity is a high return investment that benefits every American in every city, town and rural community nationwide.

We urge you to support the proposed increase of the Arts Endowment's budget to $201 million. Because of the leadership of Congress, this increase will mean expanded support of arts and culture across the West driven by decisions made at the community level. We also urge Congress to continue bipartisan support and substantially increase National Endowment for the Arts funding in the FY 2022 Interior Appropriations Bill in order to broaden access to the cultural, educational, and

economic benefits of the arts and to advance creativity and innovation in communities across the United States. We further request you to support the recovery of the arts sector by allowing the Arts Endowment to provide more and larger grants, suspend matching requirements, and allow for additional general operating support funding to be provided to arts and cultural organizations that continue to struggle to adapt to the impact of the pandemic.

We deeply understand the importance of the Arts Endowment's leadership in the West and would like to point out the following:

1. The Arts Endowment is a significant funder and a positive force for arts development in the West, a fast growing and exceptionally diverse region that is home to nearly a quarter of the U.S. population.

2. Arts Endowment funds reach every congressional district in the West and throughout the United States (435 congressional districts). Arts Endowment support is a critical component in ensuring that arts funding reaches every community in the U.S.

3. In the West, the Arts Endowment has awarded more than $25 million in grants annually to arts efforts in recent years. In 2021, the Arts Endowment awarded $10.7 million to support state arts agencies in the West, and across the region the Endowment's federal-state partnership is absolutely essential.

4. Every dollar of federal funding invested in the National Endowment for the Arts leverages $9 of additional funding nationally. Investment into state arts agencies in our region alone provides an over 7:1 return on investment (see table below).

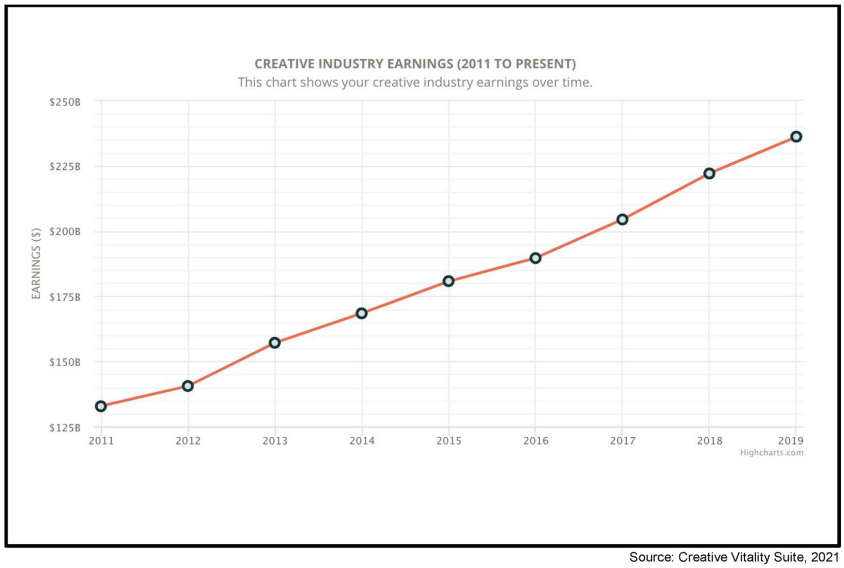
National Endowment for the Arts Contribution to State Arts Agency Revenue in the West

State	Total Agency Revenue ($)	Arts Endowment funds ($)	% of Total Funding From Arts Endowment
Alaska	2,723,331	736,000	27%
Arizona	1,966,250	889,600	45.2%
California	42,209,600	1,231,600	2.9%
Colorado	2,157,937	772,100	35.8%
Hawai'i	7,257,667	727,600	10%
Idaho	1,713,912	834,100	48.7%
Montana	1,888,554	853,000	45.2%
Nevada	1,892,082	752,100	39.7%
New Mexico	2,229,600	747,000	33.5%
Oregon	5,648,040	775,500	13.7%
Utah	7,854,300	774,900	9.9%
Washington	5,927,493	893,000	15%
Wyoming	1,700,217	752,500	44.3%
WESTAF region	85,168,983	10,739,000	12.6%

Source: National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, 2021

Based on 2019 data, the arts and culture sector represents 4.3 percent of the nation's gross domestic product at $919.7 billion, and the sector trades at a surplus of more than $33 billion annually (Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2019). The nonprofit arts industry alone supports 5.2 million jobs in the arts and related industries. In the West, jobs in creative occupations, creative industries earnings, and cultural nonprofit revenues were all on an upward growth trajectory prior to the pandemic according to WESTAF's Creative Vitality Suite data.

Creative industries earnings growth in the West, 2011-2019



Source: Creative Vitality Suite, 2021

Helping the creative economy to get back on track will reap rewards for the region and the nation as a whole. The National Endowment for the Arts acts as the flag bearer for this vital industry in our nation that in the West alone grew by 78% between 2011 and 2019 (Creative Vitality Suite, 2021).

Arts and creativity are an American economic engine. They provide people with the foundation for creativity, equipping an innovative workforce, generating new ideas in every field, and keeping our nation globally competitive. Arts and creativity strengthen economic health by creating jobs in multiple industries, driving tourism, and providing opportunities for young people. New research shows that the arts can accelerate state and local economic turnarounds. A first-of-its-kind empirical analysis conducted by Douglas Noonan at Indiana University studied the role of the arts in economic recovery after the Great Recession, and the data reveals that the creative sector grew more quickly than the general economy in those years. Unlike conventional industrial supply chains, the arts often grow independently from other sectors, which helps to diversify state economies. States with varied arts ecosystems (including the performing, visual, media, design and publishing subsectors) posted bigger economic gains after the Great Recession than their less—diversified neighbors. Creativity stimulates economic development while bolstering civic engagement, making the arts a powerful catalyst for building economic strength, as shown in companion research produced by WESTAF.

Recent examples of the Arts Endowment's direct support in the West ranges from ongoing support of Alaska's Sitka Fine Arts Camp for middle and high school students that features Alaska Native arts to a series of community—centered mural projects in rural Missoula, Montana. The Arts Endowment invests in projects that represent all communities in the West, but the agency's support has been particularly important to engaging rural communities, indigenous communities, young people, and the full range of communities that make up the West in terms of race and ethnicity. The Endowment's long standing focus on the "underserved," prompted in part by Congressional leadership, inspires the work of state arts agencies across the West and the work of WESTAF.

Public funding for arts and creativity is a high—return investment in every town and rural community nationwide, not only in the biggest cities. It improves the lives of all Americans, equips an innovative workforce, and keeps us competitive globally. It is a great example of government done right that fuels public—private partnerships, leverages considerable additional public and private investment far surpassing the required federal match of 1:1, and puts tax dollars and decision—making authority into state and local hands. In FY21, the budget of the NEA was $167.5 million, only .0004 percent of the federal budget (49 cents per person). A more ro-

bust agency budget would not only help to support the recovery of one of the most devastated industries emerging from the pandemic but also move us toward ensuring that the arts contribute to the present and future strength, pride, cohesion and economic success of every community in the United States.

Sincerely,

Tamara Alvarado,Chair
Christian Gaines, Executive Director
David Holland, Director, Impact & Public Policy

Western Arts Advocacy Network

Julie Baker Co-Chair, Executive Director
California Arts Advocates Californians for the Arts

Manny Cawaling Co-Chair, Executive Director
Inspire Washington

Norm Campbell, President
Alaska Arts & Culture Foundation

Joseph Benesh,Executive Director
Artizona Citizens for the Arts

Christin Crampton Day, Executive Director
Colorado Business Committee for the Arts

Benjamin Brown, Chair
Alaska State Council on the Arts

Paul Stahl, Chair
Montana Cultural Advocacy

Tia Flores, Chair
Cultural Alliance Nevada

Jim Patterson, Chair
Creative New Mexico

Sue Hildick, Executive Director
Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon

Crystal Young-Otterstrom, Executive Director
Utah Cultural Alliance

Wendy Bredehoft, Chair
Wyoming Arts Alliance

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE WESTERN GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee, the Western Governors' Association (WGA) appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony on the appropriations and activities of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), National Park Service (NPS), U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). WGA is an independent organization representing the Governors of the 22 westernmost states and territories. The Association is an instrument of the Governors for bipartisan policy development, information—sharing and collective action on issues of critical importance to the western United States.

The agencies within the Subcommittee's jurisdiction wield significant influence over vast areas of the American West. Ninety-four percent of all federal lands are located in the western states, and the federal government owns over 46 percent of the land within active WGA states. The work of this Subcommittee is of vital importance to Western Governors, as it affects public lands management and federal agency interaction with other levels of government and the public.

There is a natural tension between state and federal governments that is embedded in the fabric of the U.S. Constitution. These sovereign governments must have a close and productive working relationship to promote efficiency and maximize returns on taxpayer investments. Improving the partnership between states and the federal government is central to the mission of WGA and is reflected in WGA Policy Resolution 2021–01, Strengthening the State-Federal Relationship.

In last year's House committee report accompanying the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 appropriations bill (H. Rpt. 116–448),

the federal agencies funded by the Interior bill were directed to provide appropriate feedback on tribal input received by agencies through meaningful consultation in their decision—making processes. Similar direction to federal agencies for government-to-government consultation with states, which is required pursuant to Executive Order 13132, Federalism, would improve the co-sovereign relationship between states and the federal government.

WGA continues to create opportunities for a more productive state—federal relationship. For example, Governors are proud of the 2018 Shared Stewardship Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between WGA and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The MOU has allowed Western Governors and USDA to collaboratively engage on several cross—boundary, cross-jurisdictional concerns, including post—wildfire interagency coordination, cheatgrass infestations, and vegetation management in utility corridors. This has also led to positive engagement between individual states and the agency: USDA has now executed Shared Stewardship agreements with 25 states, 15 of which are within the WGA footprint. These agreements provide states a useful tool to discuss land management priorities with USDA and coordinate on priority management projects across a broad range of needs, from wildfire mitigation to habitat improvement to watershed protection. Western Governors consider the WGA–USDA Shared Stewardship MOU an effective framework to establish shared state—federal priorities for forest and rangeland management, and encourage the development of similar MOUs with other Executive Branch agencies for other areas of cooperative endeavor.

Responsible land management can only occur when federal, state and local stakeholders collaborate to improve the health and resilience of our lands. Likewise, proactive fish and wildlife conservation is most effective when leveraging the cooperative efforts of state and federal officials across multiple disciplines. To this end, Western Governors support all reasonable proactive management efforts to conserve species, including engaging stakeholders to implement early, voluntary conservation measures. WGA also believes the Services should explore expanded use of detail positions and shared staff between state and federal agencies to increase interagency coordination.

States possess primary authority to manage most fish and wildlife within their borders, and they receive economic benefits associated with healthy species and ecosystems. At the same time, species listings can dramatically affect the efforts of western states to promote economic development, accommodate population growth, and maintain and expand infrastructure. Western Governors believe that states should be full partners in listing, critical habitat designations, recovery planning, recovery efforts, and delisting decisions. State agencies often have the best available science, expertise and other scientific and institutional resources such as mapping capabilities, biological inventories, biological management goals, state wildlife action plans and other important data. All listing, recovery and delisting decisions made by the federal government should recognize, consult, and employ these vast state resources and utilize objective, peer—reviewed scientific literature and scientific observations.

Fish and wildlife migration corridors and habitat are necessary to maintain healthy populations of species in the West. Western Governors request additional funding for federal agencies to advance state—supported programs and projects promoting voluntary migration corridor and habitat conservation. Governors note that any federal efforts to identify, regulate or conserve wildlife migration corridors through administrative or legislative action must involve coordination and consultation with states and should advance collaborative, locally driven initiatives to conserve key wildlife corridors and habitat.

WGA applauds the full funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program administered by DOI for FY21 and recommends the enactment of a permanent and stable funding mechanism for the program. PILT funding does not represent a gift to local jurisdictions; rather it provides important compensation for the disproportionate measure of non-taxable federal lands in the West. Similarly, payments under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (SRS) compensate communities whose timber industries have been negatively affected by actions and acquisitions of the federal government. Western Governors request that you continue to appropriate full funding annually for both PILT and SRS in the future.

Western Governors continue to be concerned about the number of wild horses and burros on BLM lands. This number is presently estimated to be more than triple the current Appropriate Management Level (AML). Overpopulation can degrade rangeland, negatively affecting wildlife and domestic livestock, as well as the habitat of threatened and endangered species. WGA supports a process to establish, monitor and adjust AMLs for wild horses and burros that is transparent to stake-

holders, supported by scientific information (including state data), and amenable to adaptation with new information and environmental and social change. Western Governors recognize BLM's 2019 Path Forward for Management of BLM's Wild Horses and Burros and 2020 Analysis of Achieving a Sustainable Wild Horse and Burro Program as examples of sensible alternatives to current wild horse and burro management practices. WGA encourages the Subcommittee to support the BLM's use of the recommendations contained in these proposals and to implement the provisions most likely to lead to attainment and maintenance of AMLs.

WGA remains concerned about the spread of invasive mussels in the West and has highlighted this issue through the Western Governors' Biosecurity and Invasive Species Initiative. Of particular concern are invasive quagga and zebra mussels, which continue to be a major threat to western water resources. To combat this threat, Western Governors request that the BLM, FWS and NPS be provided with the resources necessary to implement mandatory inspection of all high—risk watercraft and decontamination of watercraft infested with quagga and zebra mussels leaving waterbodies under their jurisdiction. Outside the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee but relevant to this matter, Western Governors support legislation that would clarify federal authority to conduct inspection and decontamination procedures and manage invasive species on lands and waters under their jurisdiction.

Western Governors applaud NPS for its efforts to preserve iconic landscapes, habitats and cultural resources. WGA is concerned, however, about the significant maintenance backlog affecting National Parks. WGA appreciates the funding authorized by the Great American Outdoors Act for priority deferred maintenance projects administered by federal land management agencies and supports ongoing NPS operations to address critical infrastructure needs.

Data for water management and drought response planning is critical to western states. Western Governors request adequate funding levels for the Groundwater and Streamflow Information Program administered by the U.S. Geological Survey. The data generated by the program is integral to water supply management decisions of states, utilities, reservoir operators and farmers. It is also essential for risk management, disaster mitigation, and drought and flood forecasting throughout the West.

Infrastructure management is another crucial element of drought response, and federal investments in our nation's aging water and wastewater facilities are essential to our nation's continued economic prosperity and environmental protection. EPA'S Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs) provide necessary support for communities to maintain and enhance their water infrastructure. Western Governors' Policy Resolution 2018–12, Water Quality in the West, encourages adequate funding for SRFs. Western Governors similarly support the funding of federal programs that promote non-federal water infrastructure investment, such as the Water Infrastructure Finance Innovation Act program. This important program provides flexible long-term, low-cost supplemental credit assistance for projects of national and regional significance.

States have exclusive authority over the allocation and administration of rights to groundwater located within their borders and are primarily responsible for protecting, managing, and otherwise controlling the resource. The regulatory reach of the federal government was not intended to, and should not, be applied to the management and control of groundwater resources. WGA encourages Congress to include express and unambiguous language protecting states' authority over groundwater resources in any water—related legislation, as well as clear direction to administrative agencies to respect such authority. WGA appreciates the language included by the Subcommittee in prior Appropriations Acts addressing existing statutory authorities for groundwater protection. Federal agencies should work within existing state authorities to address their groundwater—related needs and concerns. WGA urges you to ensure that federal efforts involving groundwater recognize and respect state primacy and comply with all statutory authorities.

States also possess delegated authority from EPA to manage air quality within their borders. Congress and EPA should recognize state authority under the Clean Air Act (CAA) and accord states sufficient flexibility to create air quality and emissions programs tailored to individual state needs, industries and economies. State CAA programs require financial support from Congress, yet funding has declined since the CAA's enactment. In addition, given the unique character of the West and the region's attainment challenges, funding should be appropriated for EPA to assist western states in research on background, interstate and transported ozone. This is especially critical as more frequent and intense wildfires are steadily reducing the West's gains in air quality improvement. Smoke from wildfires causes exceedances under National Ambient Air Quality Standards for particulate matter and ozone, negatively affecting public health, safety and transportation. Prescribed fire can re-

duce these effects but is currently underused in many areas due to concerns about how it may affect compliance with CAA State Implementation Plans.

Western Governors and federal land management agencies deal with a complex web of interrelated natural resource issues. It is an enormous challenge to judiciously balance competing needs in this environment, and Western Governors appreciate the difficulty of the decisions this Subcommittee must make. The foregoing recommendations are offered in a spirit of cooperation and respect, and WGA is prepared to assist you in discharging these critical and challenging responsibilities.

[This statement was submitted by James D. Ogsbury, Executive Director.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE WESTERN STATES WATER COUNCIL

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of the Western States Water Council (WSWC) we welcome the opportunity to provide written testimony on federal agency activities and appropriations under the subcommittee's jurisdiction. The WSWC is a government entity an instrumentality of each and every participating state advising western governors of water policies and programs. Members are appointed and serve at the pleasure of their respective governors.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Indian Water Rights Settlements

The Council reiterates its support for encouraging negotiated settlements of disputed Indian water rights claims as the best solution to the critical problem of limited resources to fulfill tribal and non-tribal water needs that affects almost all of the Western States. We urge the Subcommittee to support Indian water rights settlements with a strong fiscal commitment for meaningful federal contributions that recognizes the trust obligations of the United States government. Indian water rights settlements are not and should not be defined as Congressional earmarks. Indian water rights settlements, once authorized by the Congress and approved by the President, should be funded without a corresponding offset, including cuts to some other tribal or essential Interior Department programs.

General State Stream Adjudications

The States are primarily responsible for the allocation, administration, management and protection of the water resources and rights to the use of water within their borders. The western states use general stream adjudications to determine and document the quantity and priority dates of water rights within basins, including rights to waters claimed by the United States under either state or federal law. General stream adjudications give certainty to water rights, provide the basis for water right administration, reduce conflict over water allocation and water usage, and incidentally facilitate important market transactions for western water rights. As a matter of policy, federal agencies should pay a fair share of the administrative costs associated with adjudicating their often—numerous claims in state court adjudications. Further, federal agencies should be given policy direction to ensure that federal claims filed in state court adjudications have a sound basis in fact and law. States continue to encounter questionable claims that can be very costly to evaluate, thus diverting limited state resources from completing general stream adjudications.

WaterSMART

Maintaining and delivering sufficient water supplies of suitable quality is key to the West's economic prosperity, environmental needs, and our quality of life, both now and in the future. As recognized in the Science and Engineering to Comprehensively Understand and Responsibly Enhance (SECURE) Water Act, " . . . States bear the primary responsibility and authority for managing the water resources of the United States." Western water law and policy are based on the reality of scarcity and the need to use water wisely. Western states have made great strides in increasing efficiency and reducing water use, but continued investments and sacrifices are needed to maintain our quality of life and to protect our environment. The SECURE Water Act also recognizes that "the Federal Government should support the States, as well as regional, local and tribal governments . . . " and authorizes a number of important programs to provide this much—needed support. The Council supports technical and financial assistance to states, local watershed groups and water districts as an appropriate federal role, consistent with authorized federal programs. Section 9504 of the SECURE Water Act authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to provide grants or enter into cooperative agreements to assist states and other non-federal entities in carrying out a range of water use efficiency improve-

ments to address crucial water supply issues, stretch limited water supplies, and improve water management.

U.S. Geological Survey

Real-time water resources data are critical for timely actions in response to droughts, flooding, and other extreme weather events. The lack of federal capital investments in water data programs has led to the discontinuance, disrepair, or obsolescence of vital equipment needed to maintain existing water data gathering activities. The lack of timely and accurate streamflow information threatens to put human life, health, welfare, property, and environmental and natural resources at a considerably greater risk of loss. The data is integral to water supply management decisions of states, utilities, reservoir operators and farmers. It is also essential for risk management, disaster mitigation, and drought and flood forecasting throughout the West.

Many WaterSMART programs have largely been underfunded or remain dependent on year-to-year appropriations. Section 9507 of the SECURE Water Act authorizes enhancements to the U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) National Streamflow Information Program (NSIP) in order to provide an improved national backbone focused on national needs and interests. The Groundwater and Streamflow Information Program (GWSIP) and USGS' cooperative matching funds within the Water Availability and Use Science Program (WAUSP), together provide vital water data that States and other public and private entities and individuals rely on in making day-to-day planning and management decisions. Section 9508(c) authorizes the USGS to "provide grants to State water resource agencies to assist in developing water use and availability datasets" and has led to initiation of the Water-Use Data and Research (WUDR) program, in support of the Water Use Data for the Nation publication and the National Water Census. USGS' GWSIP, WAUSP, and WUDR together will provide vital water data that States and other public and private entities may rely on to make day-to-day planning and management decisions.

The Council expresses our strong support for implementation of the SECURE Water Act, and encourages the Subcommittee to ensure that the Act's authorized activities receive support and appropriations that are adequate to fulfill their stated purposes as a dedicated line item.

Water Resources Research Institutes

The USGS Water Resources Research Act program promotes, facilitates, and conducts research that helps resolve state and regional water problems, promotes technology transfer, facilitates dissemination and application of research, trains scientists through participation in research, and awards competitive grants. Water resources research, the dissemination and application of research results or research to operations (R2O) and technology transfer are increasingly important to meeting our present and future water needs. The Water Resources Research Act of 1964 authorizes a program that includes the establishment of state water resources research institutes (WRRIs) or centers in each state to address our water resources challenges. Today's institutes and centers provide a research infrastructure that uses the capabilities of universities to greatly assist and provide important support to western state water agencies in long-term planning, policy development, and management of the increasingly complex water challenges. These challenges are exacerbated by the uncertainty surrounding population growth, climate, and economic and environmental water demands.

The Council and its member states continue to work with the institutes/centers and the academic community to ensure research investments are relevant to our most pressing water problems and allow each state to use methods most appropriate for its own situation. The institutes/centers' outreach and information transfer services and activities are very valuable to the water communities in the various western states. This is a very worthwhile federal—state partnership that promotes collaboration, cooperation and the conservation of limited physical, financial and personnel resources. We urge the Subcommittee to maintain appropriate financial support for the state WRRIs.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE WESTERN STATES WATER COUNCIL

Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of the Western States Water Council (WSWC) we welcome the opportunity to provide written testimony on federal agency activities and appropriations under the Subcommittee's jurisdiction. The WSWC is a government entity advising west-

ern governors of water policies and programs. Members are appointed and serve at the pleasure of their respective governors.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Federal-State Relations

Federal agencies' coordination and collaboration with States is a key element of the Clean Water Act's (CWA) regulatory federalism. States are partners and not stakeholders. When it comes to protecting the Nation's water quality, we strongly urge continuing appropriations to support interagency coordination and consultation at the federal, state, and tribal levels.

States are primarily responsible for managing water resources and water quality within their borders, and most States employ delegated authority under the CWA. This state—federal relationship is especially important in light of the announced review of the CWA Section 401 Implementation Rule and the definition of "Waters of the United States" (WOTUS) under the Navigable Waters Protection Rule (NWPR). While the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) outreach regarding NWPR development was unprecedented, similar involvement by States regarding implementation of State 401 Certification authority was lacking. The Council maintains that state engagement and meaningful state consultation regarding the review and implementation of these rules, and any potential changes to these rules, is critical.

The Council has been involved in a support role with EPA and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in efforts to improve mapping of the Nation's waters and wetlands, and we urge the Subcommittee to provide the resources necessary to develop the data needed for decisionmaking. Some of the friction regarding WOTUS is due to the lack of common baseline data and definitions for the Nation's waters. We strongly support mapping efforts. We recognize the importance of science and the interconnected nature of surface water, groundwater, and wetlands, while also recognizing the Congress and Supreme Court have limited the scope of federal CWA jurisdiction. States have authority to protect all waters within the State. EPA support for state programs, delegated or otherwise, should not be affected by questions related to federal jurisdiction.

States maintain primacy over groundwater management and protection. As continued drought forces many States to rely more heavily on groundwater resources, the nexus between groundwater and surface water is becoming increasingly apparent and important. The Council asserts that any federal strategy to protect groundwater quality must recognize and respect state primacy and be built as a genuine federal/state partnership. States recognize the importance of effective groundwater management and are in the best position to protect groundwater quality, as well as allow for the orderly and rational allocation and administration of the resource through state laws and regulations that are specific to their individual circumstances. Working cooperatively with their federal partners, states have shown that they have the ability and authority to address federal needs regarding groundwater within existing legal frameworks.

Infrastructure

Water infrastructure improvements are a continuing chronic need across the country, and especially in rural and tribal areas across the West. Federal funding is critical for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs), the Water Infrastructure Financing and Innovation Act (WIFIA), and State and Tribal Assistance Grants for ensuring communities have access to clean, safe and reliable drinking water and wastewater services. The Council supports adequate funding for these programs to carry out their intended purposes.

EPA's SRF programs provide states with capitalization grants that are leveraged with state contributions to offer financial assistance to cities, towns, communities, and others for the planning, design, construction and rehabilitation of built and green water and wastewater—related infrastructure to improve source and drinking water quality. These programs are one of the principal tools that states use to pursue the goals of the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act. The Nation's wastewater and drinking water infrastructure is aging and in need of repair and replacement. To the extent federal law has established certain nationwide levels of treatment for drinking water and wastewater, the federal government has a corresponding obligation to provide states with the necessary financial and technical assistance needed to comply with such requirements, including the appropriation of adequate funding for SRF capitalization grants.

New competing water and wastewater infrastructure funding programs should not come at the expense of the SRFs, which are a proven model for addressing water

and wastewater infrastructure needs. We urge the Subcommittee to ensure that stable and continuing federal appropriations are made for SRF capitalization grants, WIFIA loans and State and Tribal Assistance Grants at levels that are adequate to help States address their water infrastructure needs and protect public health and the environment for the benefit of the people.

Congress has approved a several requirements on the states' management and use of SRF funds, including but not limited to mandating the use of a percentage of appropriated funds for principal forgiveness, negative interest loans, grants, or a combination thereof. Funding is also set aside for green infrastructure, water or energy efficiency, or other environmentally innovative activities. These and other requirements, often well—intended, are generally aimed at advancing policy objectives that are unrelated or contrary to the SRFs' primary purpose of providing funding for basic water infrastructure. They also reduce the flexibility of the States to manage SRFs in a cost—effective manner and represent unfunded federal mandates that impose significant regulatory burdens, make state SRF programs less attractive to local entities, and reduce the capacity of a State to leverage their SRF programs and address infrastructure needs. SRF programs should allow States greater flexibility and require fewer restrictions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) would like to thank Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, and the members of the Subcommittee for providing this opportunity to submit testimony in support of funding in the FY22 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for the Multinational Species Conservation Fund (MSCF), Office of International Affairs (IA), Office of Law Enforcement (OLE), and Cooperative Landscape Conservation (CLC) Program accounts at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the International Forestry program (FS–IP) at the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and the Climate Adaptation Science Centers at the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS).

WCS was founded with the help of Theodore Roosevelt in 1895 with the mission of saving wildlife and wild places worldwide. Today, WCS manages the largest network of urban wildlife parks in the United States, led by our flagship, the Bronx Zoo. Globally, our goal is to conserve the world's most important wild places, focusing on 14 priority regions that are home to more than 50% of the world's biodiversity. We have offices and field programs in more than 60 countries and work with our partners to manage more than 200 million acres of protected areas around the world, employing more than 4,000 staff including about 200 Ph.D. scientists and 100 veterinarians.

The United States needs to reengage in advancing environmental and conservation solutions as the world faces existential crises all caused by humankind: the loss of biodiversity, climate change, and the threat of pandemic disease. These crises are interrelated, with many of the same causes and solutions. We know that pandemics of zoonotic origin (passed between animals and people) such as COVID–19 are directly tied to wildlife trade and the breaching of the human—wildlife interface through deforestation and forest degradation. We also know that deforestation and forest degradation are major causes of carbon emissions, and that more than a third of the answer to climate mitigation can come from nature—based solutions. Protected and conserved areas are at the heart: they protect biodiversity, mitigate climate change, and prevent future pandemics of zoonotic origin. Further, they support the livelihoods and well-being of millions of people and are critical to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Additional funding in the FY22 Interior appropriations bill for international conservation programs will be critical to address these crises and reassert U.S. leadership in the world.

FWS—Multinational Species Conservation Fund—$30 Million.—Global priority species, such as tigers, rhinos, African and Asian elephants, great apes, turtles, and tortoises, face constant danger from poaching (particularly for illegal trade purposes), habitat loss and degradation, and other serious threats. MSCF programs have helped to sustain and recover wildlife populations by combating poaching and trafficking, reducing human—wildlife conflict, and protecting essential habitat—all while promoting U.S. economic and security interests across the globe. These programs efficiently use taxpayer dollars, granting them an outsized impact because they consistently leverage two to four times as much in matching funds from organizations like WCS, foreign governments, local NGOs, and private foundations.

Funding from the MSCF provides front—line protection against zoonotic disease by supporting projects that prevent or reverse the conditions that lead to pathogen

spillover events. These events increase when humans come into closer contact with wildlife through the destruction and degradation of wildlife habitats, particularly forests, or at live wildlife markets where animals are crowded for sale and slaughter. In both situations, wildlife is likely to be severely stressed, which further increases the potential for pathogen spillover to occur and for human disease outbreaks. Biodiversity loss, in itself, can also contribute to zoonotic disease spillover by removing buffer species that protect against diseases jumping into human populations.

WCS has had great success on projects using funds from the MSCF. One ongoing Great Ape award to WCS is supporting a 5-year project to secure the Cross River gorilla population in Nigeria and Cameroon. WCS has established an effective network of core protected areas and corridors linking habitat between the two countries and is working with local communities to protect the intact, old growth forest that is their home and critical to the survival of the fewer than 300 remaining gorillas.

FWS—International Affairs—$30 Million.—The FWS IA program supports efforts to conserve our planet's rich wildlife diversity by protecting habitat and species, combating illegal wildlife trade, and building capacity for landscape—level wildlife conservation. The program provides oversight of domestic laws and international treaties that promote the conservation of plant and animal species by ensuring that international trade and other activities do not threaten their survival in the wild. Within IA, the FWS Regional Programs for Africa, Eurasia, and the Western Hemisphere seek to address grassroots wildlife conservation problems from a broad, landscape perspective, building regional expertise and capacity while strengthening local institutions. The IA program works with the MSCF, supporting the conservation of species that are not specifically addressed by the Fund and funding conservation of entire habitats, even in cases where they cross political boundaries.

As with the MSCF, WCS asks that the subcommittee increase funding for the program to $30 million, similar to the amount requested in President Biden's budget proposal, so that it can continue to support efforts to conserve landscapes and vulnerable species and better address the crises facing the planet. In addition to this, increased funding is also needed to mitigate the impacts that the pandemic is having on revenues that normally fund conservation, particularly those from ecotourism. Some of the most highly successful wildlife conservation programs, including those that the U.S. has supported for decades, work with developing countries and local communities to combine sustainable management and conservation of wildlife with new economic opportunities and incomes derived from wildlife—based tourism. In some African countries, parks and protected areas are a major driver of tourism and a substantial contributor to their national GDP and sustainable development. In many of these countries' community—managed "conservancies" wildlife is the foundation of tourism models that have generated millions of dollars in benefits for local communities and supported successful, locally run conservation. With these revenues having evaporated due to the pandemic, support is needed to ensure conservation activities can continue in these areas and prevent a steep rise in poaching that might otherwise result.

The final FY20 and FY21 appropriations bills included report language directing the Department of the Interior to develop policies and procedures for the execution and oversight of international conservation programs to ensure that grant recipients have policies in place that safeguard the rights of Indigenous Peoples and the human rights of individuals and communities in and around protected areas supported by grant monies. WCS supports the development of these guidelines and urges the Committee to include funding to support their implementation and enforcement.

FWS—Office of Law Enforcement—$115 Million.—The U.S. remains one of the world's largest markets for wildlife and wildlife products, both legal and illegal. A small group of dedicated officers at OLE are tasked with protecting fish, wildlife, and plant resources by investigating wildlife crimes—including commercial exploitation, habitat destruction, and industrial hazards—and monitoring international trade to intercept illegal products like wildlife and timber and facilitate legal commerce. As the United States developed and implemented a comprehensive strategy to combat the growing crisis of wildlife trafficking over the last several years, most of the new responsibilities placed on FWS are enforced by OLE, and WCS supports increasing funding for the agency to $115 million. A primary need for additional funding is to strengthen OLE's presence at the U.S. border to protect against the importation of wildlife that may serve as a host of pathogens that could cause dangerous diseases of zoonotic origin.

Recent increases in the OLE budget have enabled the agency to deploy 12 FWS attachés in targeted U.S. embassies overseas in countries, including Tanzania, Gabon, Peru, China, and Thailand, where wildlife trafficking has proven to be a se-

rious problem. Law enforcement attachés are experienced criminal investigators who specialize in wildlife and natural resource investigations and have provided extensive support to local authorities engaged in wildlife trafficking investigations. Several investigations of transnational organized crime networks involved in the trafficking of elephant ivory, rhino horn, reptiles, and other wildlife and wildlife parts between Africa and Asia have been initiated as a direct result of attaché intervention, and attachés have assisted extensively in fostering intelligence sharing and investigative support between affected countries. In addition to their law enforcement functions, attachés have also been involved in building the capacity for wildlife law enforcement in the countries and regions in which they are placed, and WCS has worked successfully in partnership with many of these attachés through our program to combat wildlife trafficking. Additional funding to provide support for each of these attachés is important to expand and maximize their effectiveness.

FWS—Cooperative Landscape Conservation—$17 Million.—Many of the domestic conservation programs in this bill provide funding to states to implement their conservation goals. But wildlife does not recognize political boundaries, and scarce conservation dollars can best be spent when effective planning and coordination takes place across entire ecosystems—particularly as the nation plans for and reacts to the effects of climate change. The CLC Program funds a network of 22 Landscape Conservation Cooperatives in the U.S. and Canada, which use a collaborative approach between Federal, State, Tribal and local partners to identify landscape scale conservation solutions and work collaboratively to meet unfilled conservation needs, develop decision support tools, share data and knowledge, and facilitate and foster conservation partnerships. The final FY19 appropriations bill cut funding for this program to $12.5 million, which has been maintained since. WCS encourages the Committee to meet the President's request of $17 million for this program to boost support for landscape planning and design that will improve coordination and resilience to climate change for U.S. communities.

USFS—International Forestry—$20 Million.—The U.S. economy has lost approximately $1 billion per year and over 200,000 jobs due to illegal logging, which is responsible for 15–30% of all timber by volume. FS–IP works to level the playing field by reducing illegal logging and improving the sustainability and legality of timber management overseas, translating to less underpriced timber undercutting U.S. producers. Through partnerships with USAID and the Department of State, FS–IP helps to improve the management of resources in countries of strategic importance to U.S. economic and national security. This work maintains ecological biodiversity in important natural strongholds and helps some of the world's last intact forests continue to play a key role in sequestering carbon, reducing the effects of climate change.

With technical and financial support from FS–IP, WCS has been working to conserve a biologically rich temperate forest zone called the Primorye in the Russian Far East for over a decade, focusing on the Amur tiger and Far Eastern leopard and their habitat, species with approximately 400 and 35–40 individuals remaining the wild, respectively. Human encroachment, illegal logging, and widespread use of agricultural burning fracture and threaten the habitat of these endangered animals and increase human wildlife conflicts. Since the Amur tiger and Far Eastern leopard are dependent on large tracts of intact, functional forest ecosystems, WCS has been focusing on these two species as a means to address larger biodiversity conservation and scientific—technological capacity building goals throughout the region.

USGS—Climate Adaptation Science Centers—$84.4 Million.—The USGS Climate Adaptation Science Centers (CASCs) collaborate with cultural and natural resource managers and other stakeholders of public lands to develop research, data, and scientific resources to respond to the effects of climate variability and change on fish, wildlife, ecosystems, and the communities they support. The National CASC manages nine Regional CASCs, which serve every state in the nation and connect decision makers to science by educating and conducting actionable research to answer common concerns about how climate extremes and trends affect human populations, wildlife, forests, grasslands, rivers, coastlines, and other natural resources.

Sea-level rise, changing water temperatures, and extreme weather events are causing government, businesses, and Indigenous peoples to face new damages and incur new costs to prepare for new conditions. As the challenges faced by these entities worsen, CASCs are deploying their research, education, and outreach capacities to provide science and data to make strong decisions. But given accelerating demands, additional resources are required to provide the assistance to anticipate and adapt to these changing circumstances. Looking to the future, there are opportunities for CASCs to: expand strategic partnerships with other government offices and agencies, private—sector partners, and community groups to increase understanding and implementation of new practices informed by sound science; expand CASCs role

in generating knowledge and the future workforce to build the capacity of DOI managers and their partners to access and apply climate science; increase development of data and research that addresses the increasing needs of natural and cultural resource managers; and better inform the DOI strategic priorities and mission areas. WCS urges the Subcommittee to support the President's request of $84.4 million.

WCS appreciates the opportunity to share its perspective and to make a case for increases in federal investments in conservation in the FY22 Interior, the Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. Conservation of public lands is an American tradition and, as far back as 1909, Theodore Roosevelt recognized that the management of our natural resources requires coordination between all nations. Continued investment in conservation will reaffirm our global position as a conservation leader, while improving national and global security and building capacity and good governance in developing countries.

[This statement was submitted by Colin Sheldon, Assistant Director for Federal Affairs.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on the Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) budget. World Wildlife Fund (WWF) is one of the world's leading conservation organizations, operating in nearly 100 countries to ensure a future in which both people and nature can thrive by helping to conserve our planet's biodiversity and the natural resources upon which we all rely. With the support of over one million members in the United States and over five million globally, WWF's unique approach integrates global reach and local impact with a scientific foundation, promoting innovative solutions to meet the needs of people and nature.

WWF thanks the subcommittee for its past support of important conservation programs at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and urges continued support for these programs in FY22. Increased U.S. investments are needed to respond to a set of pressing and intertwined challenges—the crisis of global biodiversity and nature loss, the climate crisis, and the global health and economic crisis due to the COVID–19 pandemic. All of these crises have roots in the loss, degradation, and over—exploitation of nature. According to WWF's 2020 Living Planet Report,[1] populations of mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, and amphibians declined by 68 percent on average over the past 50 years due to human activities. Conservation investments are among the clearest and most cost—effective solutions to reversing this trend and addressing the intertwined challenges of nature loss, climate change, and preventing future pandemics, given that most emerging infectious diseases originate in and spillover from animals to people, and most of these originate in wildlife. Among the root causes of such spillover events are trade in wildlife species that are high—risk for transmitting zoonotic pathogens and destruction and conversion of tropical forests and other wildlife habitats due to agriculture and other land—use change. Several programs at the Department of the Interior directly address these challenges.

For these reasons, WWF asks the subcommittee to support funding USFWS and USFS conservation accounts at the following levels in FY22:

—$30 million for the Multinational Species Conservations Funds;
—$30 million for US Fish and Wildlife Service International Affairs;
—$115 million for US Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Law Enforcement, including $15 million to implement the 2008 Lacey Act Amendments and prevent illegal timber trade;
—$20 million for US Forest Service International Programs;

We urge the subcommittee to consider the significant impact that these modest investments have in protecting species and habitats while also supporting developing communities and fostering stability and sustainable growth, combating transnational organized crime, ensuring U.S. competitiveness in global markets, and demonstrating U.S. leadership to tackle global challenges. As several recent reports detail, including from the Council for Strategic Risks,[2] nature is in crisis, and the

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[1] WWF (2020) Living Planet Report 2020—Bending the curve of biodiversity loss. Almond, R.E.A., Grooten M. and Petersen, T. (Eds). WWF, Gland, Switzerland. Available at: https://livingplanet.panda.org/en-us/.

[2] R. Schoonover, C. Cavallo, and I. Caltabiano. "The Security Threat That Binds Us: The Unraveling of Ecological and Natural Security and What the United States Can Do About It." Edited by F. Femia and A. Rezzonico. The Converging Risks Lab, an institute of The Council on Strategic Risks. Washington, DC. February 2021. Available at: https://councilonstrategicrisks.org/the-security-threat-that-binds-us/

increasing rates of biodiversity loss globally threaten severe consequences for societies and economies. If nature is to continue to provide the resources that sustain our societies and drive our economies, we must work together to reverse these trends and ensure that economic growth and conservation move forward hand-in-hand on a global scale. Secure food supplies, clean air and water, fertile soils, and intact natural environments are the foundation of our health and prosperity and powerful antidotes against forces of disruption and discontent that can take root in impoverished regions. The conservation of forests and other carbon—rich and biodiverse ecosystems and the wildlife populations they support is also key to slowing and reversing global climate change and to preventing the spillover of new zoonotic pathogens that can cause future pandemics. For these reasons, we believe U.S. investments to promote global conservation should be supported and increased as essential elements of our foreign policy, development, and national security agenda.

MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION FUNDS

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Multinational Species Conservation Funds are highly successful grant programs that support the conservation of rhinos, tigers, great apes, African and Asian elephants, marine and freshwater turtles, and tortoises and their habitats. Wildlife trafficking and poaching, habitat loss, and human—wildlife conflict threaten these species throughout their ranges. Working with partner governments and non-governmental organizations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, these grant programs provide dedicated support for habitat conservation, scientific research and monitoring, wildlife management, public education, preventing poaching, and supporting wildlife—based tourism opportunities in developing countries. MSCF grants have supported WWF efforts to survey, monitor and recover tiger populations in Nepal, prevent poaching of marine turtle nests in Costa Rica, and reduce conflict between Asian elephants and local communities in Indonesia. The programs also support wildlife health monitoring to detect and prevent transmission of wildlife—borne diseases, including Ebola among great ape populations in Central Africa. Since 1989, MSCF programs have awarded over 4,300 grants totaling $290 million, leveraging over $442 million in matching funds. Conservation needs continue to surpass available funding for these programs, which were reauthorized by Congress in 2019. Those needs have also increased in light of the COVID–19 pandemic, which has largely stopped the flow of tourism revenues that support many protected areas and community conservancies in developing countries and the jobs and income that these generate. Without additional support, these existing wildlife conservation activities are at risk, leaving wildlife more vulnerable to poaching and potentially reversing successes that the U.S. has invested in over years or decades. In addition, 2022 is the Year of the Tiger on the Chinese calendar and marks an important milestone: during the last Year of the Tiger in 2010, a Global Tiger Initiative (GTI) was launched and a Tiger Summit was held with range states and donor countries, including the United States. This led to adoption of a Global Tiger Recovery Plan (GTRP) and represented a turning point in tiger conservation and the greatest example of political will mustered for the protection of a single species. In the decade since, a centuries—long trend of wild tiger decline has finally been reversed in at least some parts of its range. U.S. government funding has been critical to this success, and the 2022 Year of the Tiger is an opportunity to reaffirm U.S. commitment to recover tigers in the wild, including through increased funding. For the reasons above, WWF requests that the MSCF be fully funded at its authorized level of $30 million in FY22, an increase of $12 million over both the FY21 enacted level and the President's Budget Request. This should include directing $10 million to fully fund the Rhino-Tiger Conservation Fund at its authorized level, a $4.42 million increase over its FY21 enacted level of $5.58 million.

USFWS INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

USFWS International Affairs (IA) supports global wildlife conservation by supporting efforts to protect species and habitat, prevent wildlife trafficking and human—wildlife conflict, and building conservation capacity in developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, including at a regional scale. IA programs support efforts to train wildlife conservation professionals in these regions and works with governmental and nongovernmental entities to provide technical and financial assistance to improve wildlife management and conservation of endangered species, prevent poaching and wildlife trafficking, reduce demand for illegal wildlife products, and support the detection and monitoring of zoonotic diseases to prevent their transmission, spillover, and spread, including to human populations. USFWS–IA also supports efforts to protect critically endangered species that are not specifically covered by the Multinational Species Conservation Funds. USFWS–IA is responsible

for implementing the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) for the United States, including related permitting, and well as other laws to address wildlife trade and trafficking, such as the END Wildlife Trafficking Act. Increased funding is needed to support global efforts to prevent the spillover of zoonotic diseases to humans due to high—risk wildlife trade and other human—wildlife interactions and to provide resources needed to implement new congressional directives to enhance safeguards and oversight around these programs, given the often challenging places and social conditions in which they operate. WWF requests $30 million for USFWS International Affairs in FY22, an increase of $7 million over the FY21 enacted level and $700,000 over the President's FY22 Budget Request.

USFWS OFFICE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

USFWS Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) is central to combatting the illegal trade in natural resources. The office investigates wildlife crimes, enforces wildlife trade and trafficking laws, and plays a central role in implementing the 2008 Lacey Act amendments and prohibiting trade in illegal timber products. OLE inspectors work in nearly 40 ports of entry in the US and internationally. Wildlife trafficking is a transnational organized crime that generates up to $23 billion annually in illegal profits. It has fueled a poaching crisis in parts of Africa and Asia that is driving elephants, rhinos, and tigers and other species towards extinction. It also helps to financing criminal syndicates and armed groups, including some with ties to terrorist activities, while increasing corruption and undermining the rule of law in the developing world. Trafficking and unregulated trade in species that can transmit dangerous zoonotic pathogens—wildlife-borne pathogens capable of spilling over to the human population—also heightens the risk of future pandemics. OLE has played a critical role in working with law enforcement in developing countries and via broader regional efforts to heighten investigative and enforcement capacity and to help coordinate investigations and operations across multiple countries and regions that have disrupted international wildlife trafficking networks and resulted in large—scale seizures of illegal wildlife shipments and the arrest, prosecution, and sentencing of major wildlife traffickers, including in the U.S. USFWS has been able to provide significant support to these activities through the stationing of law enforcement attaches in a handful of strategic countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Additional funding is needed to increase OLE's number of personnel, including stationing international attaches in additional countries with dedicated support staff, to enhance investigative capacity and intelligence capabilities, such as the ability to make use of big data analytics and to address the growth in online wildlife trafficking. Additional resources will also allow OLE to fulfill its mandate to enforce the Lacey Act amendments of 2008, which expanded the law to cover plants and plant products. The harvesting and sale of illegal wood products from other countries has a major impact on the U.S. forestry sector through lost revenues and wages due to competition from these illegal products, including those imported and sold in the U.S. These illegal activities are estimated to cost the U.S. forestry sector by as much as $1 billion annually.[3] Illegal timber trade is also a major driver of deforestation globally, which exacerbates both climate change and the spillover of zoonotic diseases from wildlife to people. Increased funding will be needed to ensure that OLE can meet existing mandates and expand its capacity to work with partner countries to prevent trade in illegal wildlife products and in wildlife species that have a high—risk of contributing to zoonotic spillover and the rise of future pandemics. WWF requests $115 million for the USFWS Office of Law Enforcement in FY22, an increase of $28.1 million over the FY21 enacted level and $20 million more than the President's FY22 Budget Request. We also request that $15 million of this amount be specifically directed towards implementing the 2008 Lacey Act amendments and preventing illegal timber trade.

US FOREST SERVICE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

Through its International Programs, the US Forest Service works to help partner countries improve the management of all forest types, including through the provision of technical assistance on timber tracking technologies, harvesting techniques that reduce ecological impact, and forest certification regimes. By promoting legal and sustainable global trade in timber and other forest products, they help ensure a level playing field for sustainable wood products and producers. The programs also help to address critical challenges such as combating invasive species and conserving habitat for migratory species, such as monarch butterflies, and have sup-

[3] https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42119.pdf

ported conservation of tigers and other iconic species by reducing pressure on their forest habitats. By helping to stop deforestation, these programs also contribute to efforts to slow climate change and prevent the spillover of zoonotic diseases from wildlife to people. WWF requests $20 million for US Forest Service International Programs in FY2022, an increase of $4 million over the FY2021 enacted level.

[This statement was submitted by Will Gartshore, Director.]