



December 5, 2014

Senator Harry Reid
522 Hart Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Senator Mitch McConnell
317 Russell Building
Washington, DC 20510

Heritage Action for America
214 Massachusetts Avenue NE,
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20002

RE: NDAA/Hermosa Watershed Legislation

Dear Senators:

We are contacting your office regarding concerns that have been raised regarding the inclusion of public lands provisions in the National Defense Authorization Act ("NDAA") and to voice our support for the Hermosa Watershed Management Act. The Organizations deeply appreciate your offices vigilance regarding the inclusion of public lands bills in any consolidated legislative actions, as we are deeply aware of the impacts that this type of legislation can have on public access to public lands.

The Organizations would like to express our position on a specific provision of the NDAA, more specifically the Hermosa Watershed Management Act (§3062 of S.1847). These provisions are crucially important to our Organizations and protect public access to public lands in several areas, as this act mandates that multiple use recreation be continued on a Wilderness Study area that was to be closed this year for reasons that remain unclear to us and removes the cloud of possible Wilderness designation or management from a large important riding area outside the WSA. We are aware that statements regarding broad public support are made in these situations, but the Organizations believe the Hermosa Watershed Legislation actually has this type of support, which has been obtained after significant efforts from many users.

Prior to addressing the specifics of the Hermosa Watershed Legislation, we believe a brief summary of our Organizations history and mission is critically important. COHVCO is a grassroots advocacy organization representing the 150,000 registered OHV recreationists seeking to represent, assist, educate, and empower all OHV recreationists in the protection and promotion of off-highway motorized recreation throughout Colorado. COHVCO is an environmental organization that advocates and promotes the responsible use and conservation of our public lands and natural resources to preserve their aesthetic and recreational qualities for future generations.

TPA is a 100 percent volunteer organization whose intention is to be a viable partner, working with the United States Forest Service (USFS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to preserve the sport of trail riding. The TPA acts as an advocate of the sport and takes the necessary action to insure that the USFS and BLM allocate to trail riding a fair and equitable percentage of access to public lands.

ORBA is a national not-for-profit trade association of motorized off-road related businesses formed to promote and preserve off-road recreation in an environmentally responsible manner and appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on this issue.

CSA was founded in 1970 to unite winter motorized recreationists across the state to enjoy their passion. CSA currently has 25,000 registered snowmobiles in Colorado. CSA has also become the voice of organized snowmobiling seeking to advance, promote and preserve the sport of snowmobiling through work with Federal and state land management agencies and local, state and federal legislators telling the truth about our sport.

The Organizations have been vigorously involved in the development of the Hermosa Watershed Legislation and vigorously support the Legislation as the Hermosa Watershed Legislation releases the agency designation of Wilderness Study Area on the Molas Pass area and specifically returns the area to multiple use requirements. This is a critically important area to the snowmobile community who have a long and exceptionally well documented history of high levels of usage since the 1960's. Snowmobile usage of this area is a critical economic driver to the Silverton, Colorado community. This is an area that the Bureau of Land Management has committed to close to the historical motorized without this Legislation.

In addition to the release of the Wilderness Study area designation on the Molas Pass area, the Hermosa Watershed Legislation removes the cloud of possible Wilderness designation from an important multiple use riding area of approximately 70,000 acres. This area has been the basis for citizen Wilderness proposals, recommended as Wilderness in alternatives of forest plans and found to be unsuitable for motorized usage despite our vigorous objections. The legislation specifies that high quality motorized usage is to be protected and preserved as a characteristic of the area. This area represents an important multiple use area to our members, and we have welcomed this clarity in management moving forward. Each of these provisions enjoys a high

level of consensus from a wide range of local user groups and the specific management standards are the result of years of collaborative efforts.

The Organizations are respectfully asking for your support on the NDAA. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue with your office. Please contact Scott Jones at 518 281-5810 or via email at scott.jones46@yahoo.com for such a discussion.

Respectfully Submitted,



Scott Jones, Esq.

COHVCO/TPA Authorized Representative
CSA Vice President



D.E. Riggle
Director of Operations
Trails Preservation Alliance



Randall Miller- President
Colorado Snowmobile Association



Brian O'Connors
COHVCO Chairman

CC: Sen. Cruz; Sen. Coburn