

Cynthia Lummis
113 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

September 12, 2011

Dear Representative Lummis,

I write in opposition to H.R. 1581/S. 1087 the Wilderness and Roadless Area Release Act of 2011, a bill that would harm hunting and angling opportunities by removing protections for millions of acres of our nation's greatest fish and game habitats.

Backcountry Roadless areas provide essential fish and game habitat and unparalleled hunting and fishing. I personally hunt and fish in inventoried Roadless areas and think that local citizens should have the opportunity to provide input before any of these areas are released.

Studies have shown that backcountry lands offer the longest hunting seasons, the most trophy bulls and bucks, and the highest hunter success rates. These areas contain strongholds for trout, salmon and steelhead, and provide clean, cold water to downstream fisheries. Even those hunters and anglers who never step foot in these areas benefit from the big game security habitat and clean water that these lands provide.

Hunting and angling annually generates \$76.7 billion in economic activity and as you know is of great significance to Wyoming. Maintaining the quality habitat found in roadless areas is essential to sustaining this economic engine. The Roadless Area Conservation Rule helps to keep valuable game and fish habitats just the way they are, so that they may continue to serve as cherished places to hunt and fish. The Roadless Area Conservation Rule *does not* restrict the use of motorized or mechanized equipment, such as motor vehicles, mountain bikes, and chain saws, and therefore delivers both opportunity for healthy fish and game populations and readily available access.

The Forest Service is currently unable to maintain this vast network of roads, and currently faces an immense maintenance backlog. This backlog grows steadily with each heavy rain, spring thaw, runoff and slide, all of which, collectively, continuously deposit tons of fine sediments and surface pollution into nearby trout and salmon streams. We cannot consider new road building when we cannot afford to maintain the roads we already have.

Simply put, backcountry roadless areas are good for hunting and fishing. The Roadless Area Conservation Rule enables hunters and anglers full access to public lands while

protecting the vital habitats they sustain. H.R. 1581/S. 1087 would unnecessarily remove Roadless Area Conservation Rule, and with it the balanced protections afforded to over 3 million acres in Wyoming alone. I urge you to oppose H.R. 1581/S. 1087, and keep our Inventoried Roadless Areas the great places to hunt and fish that they are today.

Sincerely,

cc.

Mike Enzi
379A Senate Russell Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

John Barrasso
307 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510