

**American Rivers \* Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies \* Audubon \* Defenders of Wildlife \* Earthjustice \* Endangered Species Coalition \* Izaak Walton League of America \* National Parks Conservation Association \* National Tribal Environmental Council \* National Wildlife Federation \* Outdoor Alliance \* Outdoor Industry Association \* Restore America's Estuaries \* Sierra Club \* The Nature Conservancy \* The Wilderness Society \* The Wildlife Society \* Trout Unlimited \* Trust for Public Land \* Wildlife Conservation Society \* Wildlife Management Institute**

July 21, 2010

Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid:

On behalf of the millions of members and volunteers our organizations represent, we urge you to include strong provisions and necessary funding to safeguard the nation's natural resources from climate impacts as you prepare comprehensive climate legislation this month. The Senate's response to our energy and climate crises must address both the causes and effects of global warming. Investing in natural resource adaptation creates jobs across the nation while protecting wildlife, wildlands and dependent communities.

Climate change poses immediate and profound threats to America's environment, economy and public health. The natural systems that underpin our wellbeing and provide us with drinking water, flood protection, food, jobs, medicine, timber, recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, and numerous other services are at great risk. The urgency of these risks has been brought to the attention of the Congress repeatedly in reports from both of the last two administrations. (see, e.g., "Preliminary Review of Adaptation Options for Climate-Sensitive Ecosystems and Resources," U.S. Climate Change Science Program SAP 4.4, June 2008; "The Ecological Impacts of Climate Change," The National Academies, 2009; "Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States," U.S. Global Change Research Program, August 2009.) The Senate's response to these threats must include significant dedicated funding to guard against current and ongoing climate impacts. Investing funds from polluters in this way is a win-win for America's communities and businesses:

*For every \$1 million invested in adaptation projects we can create and protect more than 20 jobs and generate more than \$2 million in total economic impact.*

*Healthy natural resources underpin the active outdoor recreation industry which supports 1 in 20 jobs and contributes roughly \$730 billion each year to America's economy.*

*Our forests sequester approximately 12% of our carbon emissions annually and help provide drinking water to more than 180 million people.*

*Our wetlands keep our coastal communities safe, preventing \$23.2 billion in damages from storms each year*

Last fall the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee reported out a climate and energy bill, S. 1733, which contained a strong natural resources adaptation provision that our groups fully support. This language reflected recommendations made to EPW by Senators Max Baucus and Sheldon Whitehouse, who have long championed the vital issue of protecting our natural resources from the impacts of climate change. This provision was again included in the American Power Act discussion draft presented by Senators John Kerry and Joe Lieberman. Senator Jeff Bingaman introduced S. 1933, the Natural Resources Climate Adaptation Act of 2009, with Senators Baucus and Whitehouse to highlight the critical importance of meeting the global warming challenge with a plan to safeguard our wildlife and natural resources.

We urge you to continue the critical work of these key Senate leaders by funding the natural resources adaptation provision in the climate and energy bill that you send to the Senate floor. Given the magnitude of expected and unavoidable impacts, as reflected in a recent letter highlighting the importance of adaptation signed by more than 150 scientists, we are convinced that any climate bill must substantially address those impacts with a strong strategy and a greater investment in our natural resources.

Thank you for your continued leadership to bring climate and energy legislation to the floor this work period and for working to ensure that our natural resources and communities are protected both today and for future generations.

Sincerely,

The Undersigned Organizations

American Rivers  
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