**The Honorable Raúl Grijalva**

**Chairman**

**House Committee on Natural Resources**

**1324 Longworth House Office Building**

**Washington, DC 20515**

**The Honorable Rob Bishop**

**Ranking Member**

**House Committee on Natural Resources**

**1324 Longworth House Office Building**

**Washington, DC 20515**

July XX, 2019

Re: Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Committee’s Outdoor Recreation Work

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, are committed to advancing Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) principles in outdoor recreation. We are organizations and individuals that are leading efforts at local, state, and federal levels to increase access to outdoor recreation for those who have historically been marginalized, underrepresented, or excluded from many outdoor spaces.

We are writing to encourage the Committee to include Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion provisions in all pieces of legislation impacting outdoor recreation that come before theHouse CommitteeonNatural Resources. Further, we request the Committee hold a hearing on JEDI in outdoor recreation. When we refer to JEDI issues, we recommend the Committee be guided by the definitions provided in Appendix I at the end of this letter.

Second, we offer our organizations and individuals as resources available to Committee staff and members on JEDI recreation issues. We can provide decades of experience and expertise on JEDI issues and outdoor access, serve as witnesses at Committee hearings, and provide research, data, and other information on JEDI issues. While there are hundreds of organizations, and thousands of individuals who support JEDI work, an initial contact list of recreation focused organizations and individuals is included in Appendix II at the end of this letter.

Third, we recommend support and consideration by the Committee of the following bipartisan legislation and proposals that include JEDI provisions.

1. Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Grant Program Act, H.R. 1334, (Rep. Nanette Barragán D-CA-44 and Rep. Michael Turner R-OH-10)
   1. Summary: Utilizes funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to fund the creation of public open space in underserved communities with the goal of having outdoor space within 10 minutes of all communities.
2. Transit to Trails Act (Rep. Jimmy Gomez D-CA-34)
   1. Summary: Provides federal grants to match state funding of transit routes between urban and rural cities and public lands to ensure underserved communities are provided with the health, educational, and recreational benefits of parks and green spaces.
3. Recreation Not Red-tape Act, H.R. 3458, (Rep. Rob Bishop R-UT-1 and Rep. Debbie Dingell D-MI-12)
   1. Summary: Among other provisions to facilitate access to the outdoors, the bill will make it easier for Congress to identify new National Recreation Areas. National Recreation Areas will provide a tool to protect accessible, front country areas, including those in proximity to urban centers providing more outdoor recreation opportunities for urban low-income communities and other communities that have traditionally lacked access to many green spaces.
4. Simplifying Outdoor Access for Recreation, “SOAR” Act, H.R. 3879, (Rep. Deb Halland D-NM-1 and Rep. John Curtis R-UT-3)
   1. Summary: The SOAR Act will increase opportunities for guided recreation on public lands by improving the outfitter-guide permitting systems of the federal land management agencies. By expanding guided recreation, we provide more opportunities for first time visitors to experience public lands in a positive way and help them develop lifelong connections to the outdoors.

We thank the Committee for its interest in addressing Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion issues in outdoor recreation. As you consider issues impacting diversity and access in the outdoors, we urge you to listen to those communities most impacted by these policies and advance legislation that is supported by these communities of interest and allies of this vital work.

Sincerely,

Ambreen Tariq, Founder of Brown People Camping

American Hiking Society

American Trails

Brown Folks Fishing

Continental Divide Trail Coalition

Danica Carey, Seirus Innovative Accessories

Elyse Rylander, Founder OUT There Adventures, Co-Founder LGBTQ Outdoor Summit

Great Old Broads for Wilderness

Jackie Ostfeld, Director, Outdoors for All Campaign, Sierra Club

Jamie Ervin, Sierra Forest Legacy

Latino Outdoors

Maureen Forney, Chapter Leader, Middle California Broadband, Great Old Broads for Wilderness

The Next 100 Coalition

Nina S. Roberts, Ph.D., San Francisco State University, Dept of Recreation, Parks, & Tourism

Olivia Diaz

The Outdoor Policy Outfit

The Wilderness Society

Wildplaces

Appendix I

Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Suggested Definitions[[1]](#footnote-0)

1. Justice: Justice involves dismantling systems of oppression and privilege that create systemic disadvantages and barriers to people’s ability to access resources and opportunities (e.g., the “isms”) or based on which people experience systemic mistreatment. Whereas equity is about reapportioning or redistributing resources so people can access opportunities, justice is about dismantling barriers to those opportunities.
2. Equity: An approach based in fairness to ensuring everyone has access to the same opportunities and resources. In practice, it ensures everyone is given equal opportunity to thrive; this means that resources may be divided and shared unequally to make sure that each person can access an opportunity. Equity is therefore not the same thing as equality. Equity takes into account that people have different access to resources because of system of oppression and privilege. Equity seeks to balance that disparity.
3. Diversity: The differences among us based on which we experience systemic advantages or encounter systemic barriers in access to opportunities and resources. Race and ethnicity is not the only way in which we are diverse as a group. There are countless visible and invisible facets of diversity. Furthermore, a person cannot be “diverse” (as in “diverse candidate”). Diversity is the outcome of inclusion and equity efforts.
4. Inclusion: Celebrating, centering, and amplifying the perspectives, voices, values, and needs of people who experience systemic barriers, mistreatment, or disadvantages based on their identities in order to ensure they feel a sense of belonging. Inclusion is not merely tolerating or accommodating differences; it’s about actively valuing and honoring it. Inclusion is also not about surmounting, overcoming, or transcending differences to focus on “our common humanity.” Diversity is what we are, and inclusion is what we do.

Appendix II

JEDI Focused and Ally Organizations/Individuals

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Organization/Affiliation** | **Title** | **Email** | **Phone** | **JEDI Specialty** |
| Amanda Wheelock | [Continental Divide Trail Coalition](http://continentaldividetrail.org/) | Policy & Communications Manager | [awheelock@continentaldividetrail.org](mailto:awheelock@continentaldividetrail.org) | 720-924-1616 |  |
| Ambreen Tariq | [Brown People Camping](http://www.brownpeoplecamping.com/) | Founder | [brownpeoplecamping@gmail.com](mailto:brownpeoplecamping@gmail.com) |  |  |
| Ana Bertero | Great Old Broads For Wilderness | Member | [anacbertero@gmail.com](mailto:anacbertero@gmail.com) | 510-541-9042 |  |
| Angel Peña | [Next 100 Coalition](http://next100coalition.org/) | Co-Chair | [angel@conservationlands.org](mailto:angel@conservationlands.org) | 915-217-3688 |  |
| Carol Kuelper | Great Old Broads for Wilderness |  | [ckuelper@comcast.net](mailto:ckuelper@comcast.net) |  |  |
| Danica Carey | Seirus Innovative Accessories |  | [danicac@seirus.com](mailto:danicac@seirus.com) |  |  |
| Elyse Rylander | [OUT There Adventures](http://www.outthereadventures.org/) | Founder, Executive Director Emeritus | [elyse@outthereadventures.org](mailto:elyse@outthereadventures.org) | 608-772-2883 | LGBTQ, Youth, Conservation, Outdoor Recreation Economy Jobs |
| Jackie Ostfeld | [Sierra Club](https://www.sierraclub.org/get-outside) | Director, Outdoors for All Campaign | [jackie.ostfeld@sierraclub.org](mailto:jackie.ostfeld@sierraclub.org) | 202-548-6584 |  |
| Jamie Ervin | Sierra Forest Legacy | Fire Restoration Advocate | [jamie@sierraforestlegacy.org](mailto:jamie@sierraforestlegacy.org) | 828-403-0418 | Equity in fire management |
| Luis Villa | Latino Outdoors |  | [luisvilla@latinooutdoors.org](mailto:luisvilla@latinooutdoors.org) |  |  |
| Maureen Forney | [Great Old Broads for Wilderness](http://www.greatoldbroads.org/) | Chapter Leader, Middle California Broadband | [middlecaliforniabroadband@gmail.com](mailto:middlecaliforniabroadband@gmail.com) | 510-999-1023 |  |
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| mitsu iwasaki | Outdoor Policy Outfit (TOPO) | partner | [mitsu@outdoorpolicy.org](mailto:mitsu@outdoorpolicy.org) | 425-922-2940 |  |
| Nina Roberts | [San Francisco State University, Dept of Recreation, Parks, & Tourism](http://online.sfsu.edu/nroberts/) | Professor | [nroberts@sfsu.edu](mailto:nroberts@sfsu.edu) | 415-338-7576 |  |
| Olivia Diaz |  |  | [libbyasu03@gmail.com](mailto:libbyasu03@gmail.com) |  |  |
| Shelley Silbert | [Great Old Broads for Wilderness](http://www.greatoldbroads.org/) | Executive Director | [shelley@greatoldbroads.org](mailto:shelley@greatoldbroads.org) | 970-385-9577 |  |
| Tara Brown | [The Wilderness Society](https://www.wilderness.org/) | Government Relations Representative | [tara\_brown@tws.org](mailto:tara_brown@tws.org) | 202-429-2647 |  |
| Teresa Martinez | [Continental Divide Trail Coalition](http://www.continentaldividetrail.org/) | Executive Director | [tmartinez@continentaldividetrail.org](mailto:tmartinez@continentaldividetrail.org) | 540-449-4506 |  |
| Tracy Nguyen-Chung | Brown Folks Fishing | Founder | [tracy@afterbruce.com](mailto:tracy@afterbruce.com) | 503-701-2115 |  |
| Tyler Ray | [American Hiking Society](http://www.americanhiking.org/) | Director of Policy and Advocacy | [tray@americanhiking.org](mailto:tray@americanhiking.org) | 301-565-6704 x705 |  |

**The Honorable Lisa Murkowski**

**Chairman**

**Committee on Energy & Natural Resources**

**304 Dirksen Senate Building**

**Washington, DC 20510**

**The Honorable Joe Manchin**

**Ranking Member**

**Committee on Energy & Natural Resources**

**304 Dirksen Senate Building**

**Washington, DC 20510**

July XX, 2019

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Third, we recommend support and consideration by the Committee of the following bipartisan legislation and proposals that include JEDI provisions.

1. Outdoors for All Act, S. 1458, (Sen. Kamala Harris D-CA)
   1. Summary: Utilizes funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to fund the creation of public open space in underserved communities with the goal of having outdoor space within 10 minutes of all communities.
2. Transit to Trails Act (Rep. Jimmy Gomez D-CA-34)
   1. Summary: Provides federal grants to match state funding of transit routes between urban and rural cities and public lands to ensure underserved communities are provided with the health, educational, and recreational benefits of parks and green spaces.
3. Recreation Not Red-tape Act, S.1967, (Sen. Ron Wyden D-OR and Sen. Joni Ernst R-IA)
   1. Summary: Among other provisions to facilitate access to the outdoors, the bill will make it easier for Congress to identify new National Recreation Areas. National Recreation Areas will provide a tool to protect accessible, front country areas, including those in proximity to urban centers providing more outdoor recreation opportunities for urban low-income communities and other communities that have traditionally lacked access to many green spaces.
4. Simplifying Outdoor Access for Recreation, “SOAR” Act, S.1665, (Sen. Heinrich D-NM and Sen. Capito R-WV)
   1. Summary: The SOAR Act will increase opportunities for guided recreation on public lands by improving the outfitter-guide permitting systems of the federal land management agencies. By expanding guided recreation, we provide more opportunities for first time visitors to experience public lands in a positive way and help them develop lifelong connections to the outdoors.

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1. Avarna, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Vocabulary, <https://theavarnagroup.com/resources/equity-inclusion-diversity-vocabulary/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. Avarna, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Vocabulary, <https://theavarnagroup.com/resources/equity-inclusion-diversity-vocabulary/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)