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**Chris Wood**  
*President & CEO*

June 29, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
H-232, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
House Republican Leader  
H-204, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy:

Trout Unlimited's 370,000 members and supporters, and 250 staff who work with many partners on the ground nationwide, have longstanding requests to Congress and the Administration for an infrastructure bill that would restore habitat, invest in the upgrade of aging infrastructure, increase watershed resilience in response to climate change, and create jobs to put America back to work. H.R. 2, The Moving Forward Act, is a bill that answers many of the requests of our members and supporters. While it could be improved in some ways we highlight below, it is a significant achievement, and we strongly support it.

The bill will improve our natural resources, from our headwater streams, to the rivers below, all the way to our bays and oceans. It will sustain jobs and communities, from the cities to our most rural towns.

Clean water, and healthy waterways, are critical elements of the Nation's infrastructure system. They are rightly recognized as such by HR 2. Today, amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, we can see that more clearly than ever before. As individuals, we need clean water to wash our hands and to drink. As communities, we need healthy waterways to sustain our farms, fisheries, our recreation, and our economies. Also, improving water infrastructure should be bipartisan work, and we are pleased to see that HR 2 contains several bills which have bipartisan, bicameral support. There is much to praise in HR 2. We highlight some of our priority provisions below.

### **HR 2 enhances water quality and fish habitat**

- Increases funding for the Clean Water Act State Revolving Fund, an engine of water quality improvements across the nation, and devotes a significant amount of funds to green infrastructure to treat polluted water.
- Increases funding for the Clean Water Act Section 319 nonpoint source management program, a critical investment in maintaining and improving water quality, supporting federal, state, and tribal management projects.

- Increases funding for major regional, partnership-driven programs with a track record of success, including the Chesapeake Bay Program, and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.
- Reauthorizes the Sport Fish Restoration Act of 2020, a longstanding pillar of state and federal partnership that supports habitat restoration and sport fisheries.

### **HR 2 addresses western drought**

- Creates strong new initiatives, and increases funding for existing programs, to address western drought. The Western Water Security Act would reauthorize vital programs that address the ongoing western drought, including the Cooperative Watershed Management program. The FUTURE Drought Resiliency Act, sets out a balanced, 21st century approach to invest in western water infrastructure, water supply security, and watershed resiliency.

### **HR 2 improves public land infrastructure**

- Includes the Public Lands Renewable Energy Development Act (PLREDA), a bipartisan, innovative approach to managing the development of renewable energy projects on our federal lands while investing in local communities, state agencies and fish and wildlife habitat restoration on federal lands. To improve this section of HR 2, a key provision that included the U.S. Forest Service in the revenue sharing aspect of the program (part of the PLREDA version that passed the House Natural Resources Committee in November 2019 but was dropped from HR 2) should be included in the final version of HR 2.
- Restores the Forest Service Legacy Roads and Trails Remediation Program, to address the immense backlog of Forest Service road problems, improve the Forest Service's roads and trail network, while also prioritizing fish habitat and stream connectivity.

### **HR 2 cleans up pollution from abandoned coal mines**

- Reauthorizes the Abandoned Mine Land Fund, set to expire in 2021, which provides millions of dollars for the cleanup of our land and water resources and communities that continue to suffer as a result of abandoned coal mine pollution.
- Authorizes the use of \$1 billion over five years from the Abandoned Mine Land fund for distribution to States and tribes to accelerate the cleanup of abandoned coal mine sites. TU urges inclusion of compromise language agreed to recently by the state AML agencies and environmental groups, to ensure this funding can be used effectively on projects.
- Authorizes Community Reclamation Partnerships, which will increase the ability for third-party groups, such as Trout Unlimited and our watershed restoration NGO partners, counties and states, to use our own funds to clean up streams and watershed affected by abandoned coal mine sites.

**HR 2 restores coastal habitat and builds coastal resilience.**

- Establishes a substantial coastal resiliency fund to support restoration projects that not only restore critical habitat, but also serve to protect communities from a changing climate.

**HR 2 improves our transportation network by reducing its climate change impacts and increasing fish migratory pathways.**

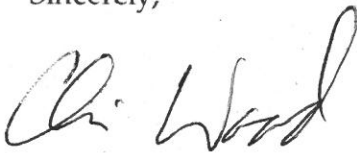
- Numerous provisions in the surface transportation section of the bill promote aquatic habitat connectivity and reduce the climate change impacts of our vehicles and transportation system, a large source of greenhouse gases which exacerbates climate change. HR 2 will finance a wide spectrum of activities, including fixing obsolete road culverts to allow migratory fish to pass under our roads, as well as a pre-disaster mitigation program that will assist with the construction of resilience improvements, including natural infrastructure on existing, eligible roadways

**HR 2 modernizes FEMA's approach to pre-disaster hazard mitigation.**

- Establishes a Resilience Revolving Loan Fund to provide grants under FEMA for hazard mitigation projects which are intended to reduce future risks and costs of natural hazards from floods and wildfires.

We know that Congress faces many very pressing needs to address the COVID-19 crisis. We laud the work that has been invested in HR 2 to find common sense solutions to common problems for the common good. More jobs, cleaner water, restored habitat and natural infrastructure will all help to recover our economy. We look forward to working with you to ensure that these long-sought priorities are enacted.

Sincerely,



CC:

The Honorable Raul Grijalva; Chairman, House Natural Resources Committee

The Honorable Rob Bishop; Ranking Member, House Natural Resources Committee

The Honorable Peter DeFazio; Chairman, House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee

The Honorable Sam Graves; Ranking Member, House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee