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July 15, 2015

Senator Ron Wyden  
221 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C., 20510

Honorable Senator Wyden:

The undersigned members of the Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association (NSIA) are writing to thank you for your leadership and hard work in Congress to protect what is special and magnificent about Oregon—our Great!Outdoors. We were excited to learn recently of your introduction of the Oregon Wildlands Act, as public lands that are accessible and productive for fish and wildlife, sustain jobs in our industry. Protecting an additional 250 miles of Oregon's signature rivers, such as the Rogue River, Molalla, and Chetco is important to our businesses.

We also would like to thank you for your leadership on the O&C lands issue. As you know from previous correspondence, we support S.132, The Oregon and California Lands Act of 2015, as a balanced solution to that difficult issue.

Our industry's economic health is directly linked to thriving, healthy rivers, especially those originating in wilderness areas. Whether they are visitors or long-time residents of our great state, people need to access these special places, recreate and nourish their relationships and souls, all while sustaining rural economies. A recent study done by Southwick Associates revealed that 65% of the more than 11,000 Oregon jobs in the Sportfishing industry are derived from this healthy public land base. Having access to protected wild places and rivers forms the bedrock of our collective human spirit—and of our outdoor recreation economy. Your hard work in Congress to protect these special places is invaluable to our businesses and to the future of Oregon.

This year, many of Oregon's lower elevation rivers are at temperatures that are lethal to salmon and steelhead populations, both smolt and adults. In areas where salmonids do not have adequate-sized and appropriately-cooled headwaters, most will likely die before spawning. The situation punctuates why we respectfully ask you to consider ways to protect even more of Oregon's natural places; such as the Owyhee Canyonlands, North Umpqua, McKenzie River headwaters and Kalmiopsis wilderness additions. This current crises must frame our discussions of the vital nature of river protections.

Many from our industry attended the 7 Wonders of Oregon Tour you and your staff recently completed with Travel Oregon. Those of us who fish and hunt know that 7 Wonders is but a paltry number compared to all the glory that is the Oregon outdoors. We know that you fully understand that by protecting these special places, you are protecting and enhancing our businesses, you are bringing more visitors to Oregon, and you are protecting a way of life that has become a second paycheck to our citizens.

Thank you for your leadership. We look forward to working with you in striking the right balance for our economy and our way of life.

Sincerely,

Liz Hamilton, Executive Director, NSIA

Dedicated to the preservation, restoration and enhancement of sport fisheries  
and the businesses dependent upon them. Call toll free: 1-866-315-NSIA

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