

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
2164 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
2164 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Grace F. Napolitano
Chair
Subcommittee on Water Resources and
Environment
U.S. House of Representatives
1610 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Rouzer
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Water Resources and
Environment
U.S. House of Representatives
2439 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

February 22, 2021

Chairman DeFazio, Ranking Member Graves, Chairwoman Napolitano, and Ranking Member Rouzer:

The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership is a national conservation organization with a mission to ensure all Americans have access to quality places to hunt and fish. We partner with 60 hunting, fishing, conservation, and outdoor recreation organizations to unite and amplify the voices of America's more than 40 million sportsmen and women whose activities help sustain the \$887-billion outdoor recreation economy. We appreciate the opportunity to submit this letter in support of The Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2021.

We appreciate the Committees' leadership on the issue of clean water infrastructure and your work to introduce bipartisan legislation that would provide a substantial increase in funding for the EPA's Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) Program, authorizing \$40 billion over five years to capitalize Clean Water SRFs. Since its inception in 1987, the Clean Water SRF Program has been utilized by states and territories as a bedrock program for funding water quality protection, including wastewater control, water treatment, and activities such as land conservation and habitat restoration projects. To date, over \$110 billion in financing, with a nearly 3:1 return on investment, has been delivered to local communities through this vital program. Further, the Clean Water SRF has been utilized by many eligible grant recipients for projects to conserve natural lands in order to reduce contamination at the source, protecting water quality and lessening the need for wastewater treatment through traditional methods. More recently, significant advancements have been made in the use of the Clean Water SRF for natural infrastructure projects or blended grey-green solutions to reduce pollution and protect water quality. This suite of natural approaches, in tandem with traditional infrastructure solutions, have provided multiple benefits for fish and wildlife habitat, reforestation, wildfire prevention, ground water protection, and a multitude of economic and social benefits that healthy watersheds and public access to green space can provide.

The TRCP also supports the additional \$10 billion in funding authorized for direct infrastructure investment, and specifically the \$1 billion in funding to local communities for clean water pilot programs with a focus on climate resiliency and stormwater best practices. As the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee continues its work on this legislation, we request the Committee consider the inclusion of a 15 percent set aside for the Green Project Reserve Program within Clean Water SRF program to encourage states to invest in energy- and water-efficiency upgrades, and natural and nature-based approaches for addressing local water quality challenges. Nature-based infrastructure solutions not only help communities meet their infrastructure needs, but also provide substantial co-benefits such as outdoor recreation opportunities, improved fish and wildlife habitat, and carbon sequestration.

Thank you again for the Committee's deliberative approach to the important issue of our nation's water resources. The TRCP supports The Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2021 and the legislation's commitment to investing in water resources to create jobs, energize local economies, and improve the resilience of our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Whit Fosburgh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Whit Fosburgh
President & CEO
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership