



February 11, 2009

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the more than 1.3 million members and supporters of the Sierra Club, I am writing to urge you to support the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act (NREPA). Introduced by Representatives Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) and Raul Grijalva (D-AZ), the bill will provide long-lasting protection for the iconic landscape and the irreplaceable wildlife that reside there.

The US Northern Rockies is perhaps the only place in the lower 48 that retains its entire native species since the arrival of Europeans. The bill uses a combination of time-tested tools and visionary new proposals to protect and restore more than 24 million acres of public land in Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, eastern Oregon, and eastern Washington.

Pristine areas will be protected through designations such as Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers. The bill will break new ground by establishing biological corridors to connect core habitat and isolated blocks of existing wildlands. These biological bridges would permit the migration and genetic interchange of plants and animals, preventing in-breeding and ensuring species vigor. The bill also establishes a pilot system of nine National Wildland Recovery Areas to restore vital ecosystem components damaged by roads, clear cuts, overgrazing, and mining activities. Existing water rights and Native American treaty rights are protected under this legislation.

NREPA will create over 2,300 good, green jobs promoting watershed protection, flood protection, and the restoration of damaged habitat. These jobs will support the region's long-term economic security, which relies on fish and wildlife, clean water, recreation and the scenic values that NREPA would protect. Nationwide, the bill could save taxpayers \$245 million over ten years by prohibiting subsidized roadbuilding and money-losing timber sales in key National Forest areas.

Please join us in supporting the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act and helping to provide a vision of restoration and preservation for all of America's wild legacy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carl Pope". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Carl" and the last name "Pope" clearly distinguishable.

Carl Pope
Executive Director