May 9, 2006

Dear Senator:

As representatives of conservation organizations that work for the protection and recovery of endangered species and their habitat, and on behalf of the members we represent, we would like to express our strong opposition to the appointment of Idaho governor Dirk Kempthorne as Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior. In his official positions, decisions, and votes as governor and U.S. senator, Governor Kempthorne has repeatedly favored industry and commercial interests to the great detriment of wildlife and endangered species conservation.

As a U.S. senator from Idaho, Governor Kempthorne had an environmental voting record of 1%, including voting to eliminate the federal Endangered Species Act listing budget; voting to eliminate federal funding for recovery of the endangered wolf; voting to allow developers to override federal environmental laws and local zoning; voting to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas exploration; and voting repeatedly to sell off federal public lands, including lands managed by the Department of Interior.

As governor of Idaho, Governor Kempthorne has opposed the protection and recovery of endangered species in Idaho. He misused the governor’s Office of Species Conservation to override the management decisions of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game on conservation issues, and to undermine and indefinitely stall endangered species conservation efforts, squandering federal funding for conservation and recovery in the state, and allowing industry groups to control conservation efforts and filter scientific findings. He has worked to suppress scientific information that shows that hydroelectric dams have negatively impacted salmon populations in Northwest rivers. In 2001, he joined forces with the Boise-Cascade timber company to sue the U.S. Forest Service to block implementation of the Roadless Area Conservation Rule that would protect rare roadless areas in national forests from road-building and development.

The nomination of Governor Kempthorne as Secretary of Interior indicates this Administration’s strong intention to continue the disastrous policies implemented under Secretary of Interior Norton. Governor Kempthorne is an extremely poor choice to head the department that oversees the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Please take these concerns into consideration as you consider the nomination of Governor Kempthorne to this important position that oversees the protection and recovery of America’s endangered plants and animals.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Garrity, Executive Director
Alliance for the Wild Rockies

Randi Spivak, Director
American Lands Alliance
Audubon New Mexico

Dave Henderson
Andrew Currie, CEO
Conservation Havens LLC

Joe Scott,
Conservation Northwest

Bill Snape, Chairman of the Board
Endangered Species Coalition

Mark Salvo, Director
Sagebrush Sea Campaign

Rob Edward, Director
Sinapu

Kevin Bixby, Executive Director
Southwest Environmental Center

Vanessa Scurci
The Wilderness Study Group, University of Colorado

Dan Kent, Executive Director
Red Rock Forests

Bryan Bird, President
National Forest Protection Alliance

Buffalo Bruce, WNRC Board Chair
Western Nebraska Resources Council

Virgil Welch, Legislative Director
Planning and Conservation League

Ryan Talbott
Allegheny Defense Project

D.J. Schubert, Wildlife Biologist
Animal Welfare Institute

Melissa Waage, Legislative Director
Center for Biological Diversity

Councilman Edward Wemytewa
Zuni Tribal Council

Dave Foreman, Executive Director
The Rewilding Institute

Dune Lankard, Director
Eyak Preservation Council
Cordova, AK

Donald E. Culwell, Professor of Biology
South Fork Nature Preserve
Conway, AR

Dave T. Reagan, Treasurer
Ouachita Watch League
Hot Springs, AR

Carianne Funicelli, Conservation Chair
Arizona Native Plant Society,
Conservation Committee

Tim Flood
Friends of Arizona Rivers
Phoenix, AZ

Kelly Burke, Executive Director
Grand Canyon Wildlands Council
Flagstaff, AZ

Bob Witzeman, Conservation Chair
Maricopa Audubon Society
Phoenix, AZ

Lisa Cozzetti
Ramblers Hiking Club
Phoenix, AZ

Jim Powers
Prescott National Forest Friends
Prescott, AZ

Tricia Gerrodette, President
Huachuca Audubon Society
Sierra Vista, AZ
Jeff Miller, Executive Director
Alameda Creek Alliance
Canyon, CA

Camilla Fox, Director of Wildlife Programs
Animal Protection Institute
Sacramento, CA

Kimberly Baker
Klamath Forest Alliance
Orleans, CA

Philip M. Klasky
Bay Area Nuclear Waste Coalition
San Francisco, CA

Janet Cobb, President
California Oak Foundation

Gordon Becker
Center for Ecosystem Management and Restoration
Oakland, CA

Steve Tabor, President
Desert Survivors
Oakland, CA

Vince Taylor, Trustee
Dharma Cloud Foundation
Mendocino, CA

Mha Atma S Khalsa, Director
Earth Action Network
Los Angeles, CA

Scott Greacen, Public Lands Coordinator
EPIC: Environmental Protection Information Center
Eureka, CA

Jean Brocklebank,
Friends of Arana Gulch
Santa Cruz, CA

Jennifer Pearson,
Friends of Strawberry Creek Watershed
Berkeley, CA

Evelyn M. Cormier, President
Ohlone Audubon Society
Alameda, CA

Amelia Wilson, President
Regional Parks Association
Berkeley, CA

Peter Wilson, Chairman
Save Open Space
Orinda, CA

Veda Stram
The Animals Voice
Chico, CA

Todd Steiner, Director
Turtle Island Restoration Network
Forest Knolls, CA

Catherine Rich, Executive Officer
Urban Wildlands Group
Los Angeles, CA

Kent Stromsmoe,
Forestry Monitoring Project
Martinez, CA

Paul Hughes, Executive Director
FORESTS FOREVER
San Francisco, CA 94105

Nicole Spencer, Program Coordinator
Alliance for Sustainable Jobs & the Environment
Eureka, CA

Brant D. Olson, Director, Old Growth Campaign
Rainforest Action Network
San Francisco, CA
Jacob Smith, Executive Director
Center for Native Ecosystems
Denver, CO

Morgan Crowley, Director
CU Wildlife Initiative
Boulder, CO

Veronica Egan
Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Durango, CO

Dan Clark
Cry of the Water
Coral Springs, FL

Marjorie Ziegler, Executive Director
Conservation Council for Hawai‘i
Honolulu, HI

Kaz Thea, Regional Coordinator
NREPA Network
Hailey, ID

Gary Macfarlane
Friends of the Clearwater
Moscow, ID

Lucille Bertuccio, President
Center for Sustainable Living
Bloomington, IN

Greg Buck, Director
Campaign for Sustainable Economics
Indianapolis, IN

Chelsea Reiff Gwyther, Executive Director
Connecticicut River Watershed Council
Greenfield, MA

Gwen L. Stauffer, Executive Director
New England Wild Flower Society
Framingham, MA

Michael Kellet, Executive Director
RESTORE: The North Woods
Concord, MA

Robert A. Jonas,
Empty Bell Sanctuary
Northampton, MA

Ajax Eastman, Chairman
United Church of Christ
Maryland Wildlands Committee
Baltimore, MD

Jeremy P. Emmi, Executive Director
Michigan Nature Association
Williamston, MI

Doug Cornett, Executive Director
Northwoods Wilderness Recovery
Marquette, MI

Edward J. Heisel, Executive Director
Missouri Coalition for the Environment
St. Louis, MO

Jim Scheff
Missouri Forest Alliance
St. Louis, MO

Arlene Montgomery
Friends of the Wild Swan
Swan Lake, MT

Tim D. Peterson
Wildlands CPR
Missoula, MT

Jon Vinroot
Montgomery County Environmental Health Dept.
Troy, NC

Tracy Davids, Executive Director
Southern Appalachian Biodiversity Project
Asheville, NC

Edgar C. Bristow, M.D., President
Friends of Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge
Oceanville, NJ

Nicole Rosmarino, Conservation Director
Forest Guardians
Santa Fe, NM

Rev. Larry Bernard, O.F.M., Directory
Franciscan Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe Office of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation
Laguna, NM

Allyson Siwik, Executive Director
Gila Resources Information Project
Silver City, NM

Thomas H. Wootten, President
T & E, Inc.
Gila, NM

David R. Parsons, Carnivore Conservation Biologist
The Rewilding Institute
Albuquerque, NM

Melanie Gasparich, Executive Director
Upper Gila Watershed Alliance
Gila, NM

Nylene W Schoellhorn
Wild Horses in the Wild
Silver Springs, NV

Dan Shepherd, Director
Botanic Gardens Conservation International (US)
Brooklyn, NY

Mike Hudak, PhD, Director
Public Lands Without Livestock
Binghampton, NY

Buckeye Forest Council
Columbus, OH

Ryan Hunter, Program Director
Gifford Pinchot Task Force
Portland, OR

Bill Marlett, Executive Director
Oregon Natural Desert Association
Bend, OR

Barbara Ullian
Siskiyou Project
Cave Junction, OR

Tony Graham, Executive Director
Headwaters
Ashland, OR

Josh Laughlin, Executive Director
Cascadia Wildlands Project
Eugene, OR

Joseph Vaile
Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center
Ashland OR

Stan Kotala, President
Juniata Valley Audubon
Altoona, PA

Richard Myers, President
Neshaminy Watershed Association
Rushland, PA

Alan C Gregory, conservation chair
Greater Wyoming Valley Audubon Society
Conyngham PA

Anna Browder
Environmental Council of Rhode Island
Providence, RI
Anna Browder
Friends of Blackstone Park & Boulevard
Providence, RI

Dr. Shirley McGreal, Chairwoman
International Primate Protection League
Summerville, SC

Rev. Charles Lord
Caney Fork Headwaters Association
Pleasant Hill, TN

Donald B. Clark, United Church of Christ
Network for Environmental & Economic Responsibility
Pleasant Hill, TN

Steve Brooks, Director
Virginia Forest Watch
Nickelsville, VA

R. F. Mueller Ph. D
Virginians for Wilderness
Staunton, VA

Jim Northup, Executive Director

Forest Watch
Richmond, VT

Sunny Walter, President
Puget Sound Urban Wildlife Photography Club
Issaquah, WA

Janine Blaeloch, Director
Western Lands Project
Seattle, WA

David J. Zaber, Ph.D.
Habitat Education Center
Madison, WI

Erik Molvar, Executive Director
Biodiversity Conservation Alliance
Laramie, WY