June 24, 2013

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Chair
House Democratic Policy and Steering Committee
235 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Democratic Leader Pelosi,

The undersigned 188 organizations are writing to show the broad-based support for Rep. Raúl Grijalva as the next Ranking Member of the House Committee on Natural Resources.

With jurisdiction over roughly one-fifth of U.S. lands and almost all of its ocean territory, the Natural Resources Committee plays a singularly important role in overseeing the health of our national forests, wildlife refuges and national parks. The actions of the committee determine whether our public lands will continue to provide clean drinking water to millions of Americans; whether endangered species will retain strong protections. The committee has jurisdiction over energy production, including critical decisions such as whether to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and other environmentally sensitive areas. Just as important, the committee is responsible for ensuring that the U.S. meets its federal trust obligations to Native Americans, including the 565 federally recognized tribes and Alaska Native Corporations.

For the past two and a half years, the House Republicans have led an all-out attack on the nation’s bedrock environmental protection statutes, including the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The Natural Resources Committee has been one of the focal points of the Republican Party’s assault on the environment. The House has pursued a single-minded agenda to recklessly expand oil drilling while weakening
environmental safeguards; to eliminate the public’s right to comment on federal projects; and to increase logging and mining while minimizing environmental review. They have introduced legislation that would give away or sell our nation’s public lands solely to allow the irresponsible extraction of resources owned by every American.

We believe it is important that the next ranking member represent the core environmental and human rights values of the Democratic Party on the Committee, someone with the passion and commitment to stand up to the radically anti-environmental House Republican agenda.

Rep. Raúl Grijalva, who has served as the chairman and the leading Democrat on the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands since 2007, has the vision, courage and collaborative ability to provide strong leadership on natural resource issues while repelling these constant Republican assaults.

Rep. Grijalva was pursuing active oversight of offshore drilling long before the disastrous BP Gulf oil spill. He has spent his career successfully fighting Republican attempts to weaken the Endangered Species Act and every other environmental law that is strongly supported by most Americans. Rep. Grijalva led the successful push to protect the Grand Canyon from future uranium mining claims, held hearings and promoted new public lands designations, spoken out against and voted against the Keystone XL Pipeline.

Rep. Grijalva has shown exemplary leadership over his congressional career fighting for our environmental heritage, whether it involved issues in his district or across our vast nation and its territories. He has not allowed special interests to dictate his positions on protecting public lands in his district or state. Rep. Grijalva has introduced several public lands conservation bills, all of which are complementary to, not in conflict with, our existing environmental laws, including the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act and National Environmental Policy Act.

A long-time supporter of conservation, Rep. Grijalva has been recognized
by members of the House as a champion of core Democratic Party issues critically important to Latino, Native American, Western and progressive communities. When fighting for these cornerstone Democratic Party causes, Rep. Grijalva is known for his fair and open leadership that has earned respect within the committee on both sides of the aisle.

The Natural Resources Committee needs unwavering leadership that represents the diversity and strength of the Democratic party – someone who has repeatedly demonstrated his ability to work with all stakeholders while standing up to industry special interests. We believe Rep. Grijalva will bring to the position of Ranking Member the positive and collaborative approach needed to find solutions to these critical environmental issues. He has the conviction and experience to ensure our nation’s irreplaceable natural resources – from endangered species to public lands – are managed sustainably for the benefit of all Americans for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Alameda Creek Alliance

Albany Against Coal Trains

Alliance for Ethical Business

Alliance for the Wild Rockies

Amargosa Conservancy

Animals Are Sentient Beings, Inc.

Animal Protection of New Mexico

Antelope Valley Conservancy
Arizona Mining Reform Coalition
Arizona Wilderness Coalition
Association for the Tree of Life
BARK
Battle Creek Alliance
Beyond Toxics
Big Wildlife
Bill Fleenor, former County Commissioner
Biofuelwatch
Blue Ocean Institute
Boulder –White Clouds Council
Buckeye Forest Council
Buffalo Field Campaign
Cahaba Riverkeeper
California Native Plant Society
California River Watch
Cascadia Wildlands
Center for Biological Diversity
Cheesemans’ Ecology Safaris

Choptank Riverkeeper

Citizens Against Ruining the Environment (C.A.R.E.)

Ciudadanos Del Karso

Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection

Coast Range Association

Coastal Environmental Rights Foundation

Coastal Plains Institute and Land Conservancy

Colorado Riverkeeper

Concerned Citizens for Clean Air

Concerned Friends of Ferry County

Conservation Congress

Conservation Northwest

CORALation

Cottonwood Environmental Law Center

Coyote Canyon Caballas d' Anza

CREDO Action

Desert Protective Council
Desert Protection Society
Desert Tortoise Council
Dogwood Alliance
Don’t Waste Arizona

Prof. John W. Terborgh, National Academy of Sciences Member
Duke University, Nicholas School of the Environment and Earth Sciences

Earth Day Network
Eastern Coyote Research
Ecology Party of Florida

Endangered Habitats League

Environmental Action Committee of West Marin

Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC)

Eugene-Springfield Solidarity Network/Jobs with Justice

Fairmont, Minnesota Peace Group

Fall-line Alliance for a Clean Environment (FACE)

Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs

Forest Web of Cottage Grove

Forestland Dwellers

Four Harbors Audubon Society
Friends of Bell Smith Springs

Friends of Bumping Lake

Friends of Whitehaven Park

Friends of the Clearwater

Friends of the Cloquet Valley State Forest

Friends of the Eel River

Friends of the Santa Clara River

Friends of the Wild Swan

Glen Canyon Institute

Good Wolf

Grand Canyon Trust

Grand Canyon Wildlands Council

Great Old Broads for Wilderness

Green Delaware

Green Faith

Green For All

Gulf Restoration Network

Hilton Head Audubon Society

High Country Citizens’ Alliance

Howling For Wolves

inNative

Jerry Rust, former County Commissioner

Jim Weaver, former Congressman

Juniata Valley Audubon

Justice for Wolves

Kentucky Heartwood

Kickapoo Peace Circle

Kootenai Environmental Alliance

LandWatch Lane County

Lane County Audubon Society

La Purisima Audubon Society

Latina Lista

Living Rivers

Long Branch Environmental Education Center
Loon Lake Loon Association
Los Padres ForestWatch
Louisiana Audubon Council
Madrone Audubon Society
Maricopa Audubon Society
Malcolm R. MacPherson, Ph.D.
Marin Audubon Society
Massachusetts Forest Watch
Maui Tomorrow Foundation, Inc.
Midshore Riverkeeper Conservancy
Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter
Morongo Basin Conservation Association
National Wolfwatcher Coalition
Nature in the City
North County Watch
Northeast Oregon Ecosystem
One More Generation
Oregonians for Black Mesa
Our Forests
Paula Lane Action Network
Prairie Dog Pals
Predator Defense
Progressive Democrats of Marin
Project for Energy Accountability
Protect All Living Species (P.A.L.S.)
Public Interest Coalition
Raptors Are the Solution
Red Rock Audubon Society
RESTORE: The North Woods
Rev. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, Ph. D.
Episcopal priest
Revista Atabey, Puerto Rico
Rob Handy, former County Commissioner
Rock Creek Alliance
Russian Riverkeeper
SafeEnergyAnalyst.org
San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society
San Francisco Baykeeper
Sangre de Cristo Audubon Society
Save America’s Forests
Save Our Rural Oregon
Save Our Sky Blue Waters
Save The Frogs!
Save the Pine Bush
Sky Island Alliance
Snorkel Bob Foundation
Social Justice Alliance
South Florida Audubon Society
South Florida Wildlands Association
Southwest Environmental Center
Standing Together to Outlaw Pesticides
Stewards of the Earth
Sustainable Arizona
Sustainable Earth Advocates, Inc.
Swan View Coalition
TMR Rescue, Inc.
Tennessee Chapter Sierra Club
Tennessee Ornithological Society
Terra Foundation
The Clinch Coalition
The Endocrine Disruption Exchange (TEDX)
Rabbi Michael Lerner
Editor, Tikkun Magazine
Chair, The Network of Spiritual Progressives
Rabbi, Beyt Tikkun Synagogue, San Francisco and Berkeley, CA
The Otter Project
The Ravensong Group
Threatened & Endangered Little Applegate Valley
TrailSafe Nevada
Transition Habitat Conservancy
Trumpeter Swan Society
Tucson Audubon Society
Turtle Island Restoration Network
Umpqua Watersheds, Inc.
Utah Environmental Congress
Ventana Wilderness Alliance
Vibrant Public Lands
Washington Wild
West Virginia Highlands Conservancy
Western Lands Project
Western North Carolina Alliance
Western Watersheds Project
Western Wildlife Conservancy
White Mountain Conservation League
WildEarth Guardians
Wild Burro Protection League
Wild Equity Institute
Wild Horse Education
Wild Horse Freedom Federation
Wild Idaho Rising Tide
Wild Virginia
Wilderness Watch
Wilderness Workshop

Wildlife Alliance of Maine

Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation

William C. Velasquez Institute

Wisconsin Resources Protection Council

Wolf Conservation Center