



WESTERN GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION

Brian Schweitzer
Governor of Montana
Chairman

C.L. "Butch" Otter
Governor of Idaho
Vice Chairman

Pam O. Inmann
Executive Director

Headquarters:
1600 Broadway
Suite 1700
Denver, CO 80202

303-623-9378
Fax 303-534-7309

Washington, D.C. Office:
400 N. Capitol Street, N.W.
Suite 388
Washington, D.C. 20001

202-624-5402
Fax 202-624-7707

www.westgov.org

September 22, 2009

The Honorable Daniel Inouye, Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran, Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein, Chair
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lamar Alexander, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators:

As Congress completes its consideration of the fiscal year 2010 Interior and Environment appropriations bill, the Western Governors' Association encourages you to continue your past support for the programs that are important to citizens in the Western states.

We are supportive of the proposed funding increases the Obama Administration and Congress have put forward in their budgets for the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Forest Service. Within the Department of the Interior, we are pleased that there is over \$100 million in extra funding for the operation of the National Parks, additional funding for wildlife adaptation efforts, over \$50 million to promote renewable energy projects on federal lands, and important increases in the Bureau of Indian Affairs' budget for law enforcement and education needs. We also are encouraged by proposed increases of \$5.3 million for the National Streamflow Information Program (NSIP) and \$1.4 million for the Cooperative Water Program, although the \$6.81 million more for streamgaging may not be enough to reverse the serious continuing loss of gages nationwide.

As it pertains to forestry, we are pleased with a proposal that would create a contingent funding reserve for the costs associated with wildfire. Continued and increased funding assistance to Western states

September 22, 2009

Page 2

and rural communities at risk from wildfire is greatly needed. Programs that support the goals of the 10 Year Comprehensive Strategy, such as the DOI Community Assistance hazardous fuels reduction grants and the Rural Fire Assistance program, are crucial to improving the preparedness of local and state resources in the areas of prevention, suppression and recovery from wildfire destruction. Financial assistance to these organizations is needed now, more than ever, during these tough economic times.

Additionally, increased funding is needed to assist communities in developing infrastructure and economic stability in order to utilize biomass from local forests to create local energy. Continued funding of programs that grant funds to state and local governments is needed to develop community wood-energy plans and finance new facilities, such as wood-burning systems for municipal heating and electricity. Rural communities can play a key role in reducing dependence on petroleum-based fuels, increasing energy independence, developing more local renewable energy supplies, and creating new employment opportunities.

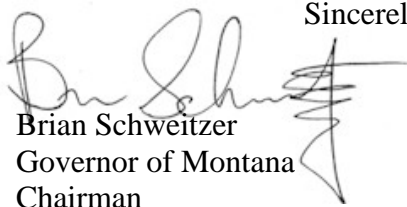
Within the Environmental Protection Agency, we are supportive of the more than \$3.6 billion in funding being considered for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds. We appreciate the Senate's inclusion of \$227 million for state and local air grants, which is an increase of \$2.5 million over FY 09 levels. In addition, there is a need to identify EPA funding of regional technical support capabilities by the Western Regional Air Partnership (WRAP) and similar organizations in the appropriations bill. Regional analysis support capabilities are efficient, effective and necessary to assist states in assessing and managing air quality affected by wildland fire, drought, climate change, international transport and energy development.

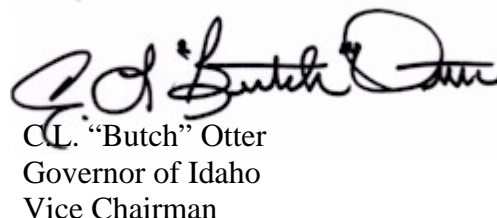
The Western Governors also believe that planning for climate change adaptation should be undertaken in a coordinated fashion at all levels of government with state expertise being fully utilized. We encourage the appropriation of funds to federal programs that study climate adaptation and address scientific questions. As such, we appreciate Congressional efforts to fund the National Global Warming and Wildlife Science Center at the U.S. Geological Survey for wildlife adaptation to climate change as well as the \$42 million allotted to the Fish and Wildlife Service to begin scientific monitoring and assessments to respond to climate change.

We are, however, greatly concerned by certain revenue raisers that are also being discussed. We repeat our strong opposition to Net Receipts Sharing on mineral revenue payments to the states. We are opposed to any bill language that would reclaim two percent of state royalties in order to cover administrative costs. Our hope is that Congress will reject this, especially since the Administration did not even include it in its budget request.

In closing, we hope Congress will continue to invest in these Interior and Environment priorities that provide so much benefit to the West.

Sincerely,


Brian Schweitzer
Governor of Montana
Chairman


CL. "Butch" Otter
Governor of Idaho
Vice Chairman



WESTERN GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION

Brian Schweitzer
Governor of Montana
Chairman

C.L. "Butch" Otter
Governor of Idaho
Vice Chairman

Pam O. Inmann
Executive Director

Headquarters:
1600 Broadway
Suite 1700
Denver, CO 80202

303-623-9378
Fax 303-534-7309

Washington, D.C. Office:
400 N. Capitol Street, N.W.
Suite 388
Washington, D.C. 20001

202-624-5402
Fax 202-624-7707

www.westgov.org

September 22, 2009

The Honorable David Obey, Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis, Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Norman Dicks, Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Simpson, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives:

As Congress completes its consideration of the fiscal year 2010 Interior and Environment appropriations bill, the Western Governors' Association encourages you to continue your past support for the programs that are important to citizens in the Western states.

We are supportive of the proposed funding increases the Obama Administration and Congress have put forward in their budgets for the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Forest Service. Within the Department of the Interior, we are pleased that there is over \$100 million in extra funding for the operation of the National Parks, additional funding for wildlife adaptation efforts, over \$50 million to promote renewable energy projects on federal lands, and important increases in the Bureau of Indian Affairs' budget for law enforcement and education needs. We also are encouraged by proposed increases of \$5.3 million for the National Streamflow Information Program (NSIP) and \$1.4 million for the Cooperative Water Program, although the \$6.81 million more for streamgaging may not be enough to reverse the serious continuing loss of gages nationwide.

As it pertains to forestry, we are pleased with a proposal that would create a contingent funding reserve for the costs associated with wildfire. Continued and increased funding assistance to Western states

September 22, 2009

Page 2

and rural communities at risk from wildfire is greatly needed. Programs that support the goals of the 10 Year Comprehensive Strategy, such as the DOI Community Assistance hazardous fuels reduction grants and the Rural Fire Assistance program, are crucial to improving the preparedness of local and state resources in the areas of prevention, suppression and recovery from wildfire destruction. Financial assistance to these organizations is needed now, more than ever, during these tough economic times.

Additionally, increased funding is needed to assist communities in developing infrastructure and economic stability in order to utilize biomass from local forests to create local energy. Continued funding of programs that grant funds to state and local governments is needed to develop community wood-energy plans and finance new facilities, such as wood-burning systems for municipal heating and electricity. Rural communities can play a key role in reducing dependence on petroleum-based fuels, increasing energy independence, developing more local renewable energy supplies, and creating new employment opportunities.

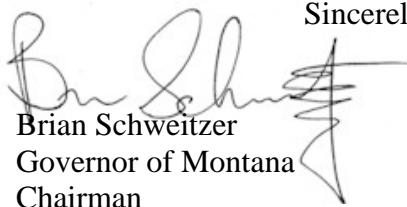
Within the Environmental Protection Agency, we are supportive of the more than \$3.6 billion in funding being considered for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds. We appreciate the Senate's inclusion of \$227 million for state and local air grants, which is an increase of \$2.5 million over FY 09 levels. In addition, there is a need to identify EPA funding of regional technical support capabilities by the Western Regional Air Partnership (WRAP) and similar organizations in the appropriations bill. Regional analysis support capabilities are efficient, effective and necessary to assist states in assessing and managing air quality affected by wildland fire, drought, climate change, international transport and energy development.

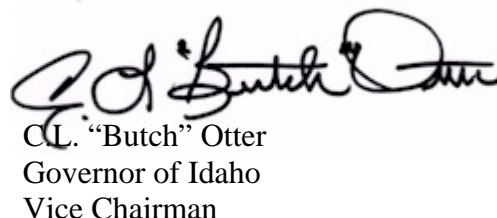
The Western Governors also believe that planning for climate change adaptation should be undertaken in a coordinated fashion at all levels of government with state expertise being fully utilized. We encourage the appropriation of funds to federal programs that study climate adaptation and address scientific questions. As such, we appreciate Congressional efforts to fund the National Global Warming and Wildlife Science Center at the U.S. Geological Survey for wildlife adaptation to climate change as well as the \$42 million allotted to the Fish and Wildlife Service to begin scientific monitoring and assessments to respond to climate change.

We are, however, greatly concerned by certain revenue raisers that are also being discussed. We repeat our strong opposition to Net Receipts Sharing on mineral revenue payments to the states. We are opposed to any bill language that would reclaim two percent of state royalties in order to cover administrative costs. Our hope is that Congress will reject this, especially since the Administration did not even include it in its budget request.

In closing, we hope Congress will continue to invest in these Interior and Environment priorities that provide so much benefit to the West.

Sincerely,


Brian Schweitzer
Governor of Montana
Chairman


CL. "Butch" Otter
Governor of Idaho
Vice Chairman