



IDAHO CONSERVATION LEAGUE

The Honorable James Risch
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

December 12, 2016

Subject: Scotchman Peaks Wilderness Act

Dear Senator Risch:

Since 1973, the Idaho Conservation League has been Idaho's voice for clean water, clean air and wilderness—values that are the foundation for Idaho's extraordinary quality of life. The Idaho Conservation League works to protect these values through public education, outreach, advocacy and policy development. As Idaho's largest state-based conservation organization, we represent over 25,000 supporters, many of whom have a deep personal interest in protecting human health and the environment.

I am writing on behalf of the Idaho Conservation League and its members to thank you for the introduction of the Scotchman Peaks Wilderness Act (S.3531). If enacted, this important piece of legislation would protect a special part of North Idaho as wilderness for the benefit of present and future generations of Idaho.

The proposed Scotchman Peaks Wilderness encompasses some of the area's most scenic vistas. From the top of the area's namesake peak, local residents and visitors enjoy outstanding views of Lake Pend Oreille, the Clark Fork River, and the surrounding mountains. With the exception of a few urban trails, the Scotchman Peak Trail is probably the most popular trail in Bonner County.

The area also provides habitat to an array of fish, wildlife, plant, and tree species. Although the area is well known for its iconic mountain goat herd, there are also deer, elk, moose, bear, wolverine, and trout inhabiting the Scotchman Peaks. Ancient cedar forests can be found within the area that predate European settlement.

As you are aware, there are no designated wilderness areas in the nine northern counties of Idaho. Although there are surely several great candidates, perhaps the

Scotchman Peaks enjoy a larger breadth and depth of support than any of the others. ICL is proud to join the ranks of local residents, businesses, organizations, and elected officials who support wilderness designation of the Scotchman Peaks.

Again, I would personally like to thank you for the leadership that you have demonstrated by introduction of the Scotchman Peaks Wilderness Act. If enacted, this legislation will leave an enduring resource of wilderness for generations of Idahoans to come.

Like the Idaho Roadless Rule, your help securing passage of the Boulder-White Clouds bill, and now with Scotchman Peaks, commonsense conservation has a place in Idaho, thanks to your leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RJ' or 'Rick Johnson', written in a cursive style.

Rick Johnson
Executive Director