



March 8, 2007

The Honorable Mike Crapo
239 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Crapo,

On behalf of the Wild Salmon Center, I want to express our support for the Endangered Species Recovery Act of 2007 (ESRA), which would reinvigorate efforts to recover imperiled species by providing financial incentives to deserving landowners. The Wild Salmon Center is a science-based, international conservation organization, whose mission is to identify, understand and protect the best wild salmon ecosystems of the North Pacific.

I am confident that ESRA would strengthen efforts to recover endangered species – and prevent new ones from becoming listed – by recognizing and rewarding private landowners for nurturing the land and water these species inhabit. Reducing the tax burden on landowners who protect or restore essential habitat for federally listed fish or wildlife species would make a valuable investment in conservation today while reducing the likelihood of additional listings, divisive litigation and expensive recovery planning in the future.

Your legislation would support the Wild Salmon Center's goals by creating a powerful economic incentive for salmon conservation available to private landowners. As you know, 26 Evolutionary Significant Units of Pacific salmon are listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. Landowners are vitally important land stewards because their management practices directly affect the condition of freshwater habitat critical to salmon survival. Some of the most important salmon habitat is on or adjacent to private lands, such as lowland spawning habitat for coho. Other salmon and steelhead species also need lowland habitat rearing and safe passage to the ocean.

At the core of the Wild Salmon Center's mission is the belief that protecting the most productive and diverse salmon ecosystems – salmon strongholds – is the best strategy to preventing further listing of salmon and providing an insurance policy for long term survival of salmonids. The Wild Salmon Center has formed an initiative called the North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership. The goal of the partnership is to demonstrate that healthy human communities and healthy wild salmon populations can coexist. We have broad participation from government decision makers, respected scientists, and private interests working together to identify salmon strongholds—resilient, irreplaceable river basins harboring healthy wild salmon runs that are the most likely to survive

INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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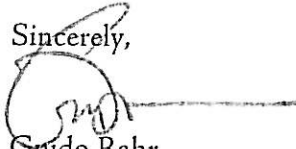
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environmental changes over the next 100 years. In these same basins, the partnership will look for opportunities to increase the benefits of maintaining wild salmon to the local communities, including providing employment through restoration, secondary processing, and ecotourism.

The Wild Salmon Center will work within this partnership to support voluntary and cooperative approaches to protecting the critical strongholds for salmon. Your bill will give private landowners the resources they need to carry out voluntary habitat improvements on their land, or to help them transition to land management practices that support salmon conservation.

We applaud you and your colleagues for introducing a visionary piece of legislation in the Endangered Species Recovery Act of 2007, and welcome an opportunity meet with you or your staff to discuss the various ways we can support ESRA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "GR", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Guido Rahr
President and CEO

c: Senator Charles Grassley
Senator Max Baucus
Senator Ron Wyden
Senator Gordon Smith
Bob Lohn, Regional Administrator, NOAA Fisheries