



April 8, 2008

Dear Senators Bingaman and Domenici,

We, the undersigned organizations represent millions of hunters and anglers, fish and wildlife professionals and businesses, and others who recreate on and enjoy our public lands. For many years, Congress has considered reform of the General Mining Law of 1872.

On November 1, 2007, the House of Representatives passed HR 2262, the Hardrock Mining Reform and Restoration Act, by a strong bipartisan vote of 244 to 166. Now is the time for the Senate to take up a hardrock mining bill that will provide sensible reform and protect fish and wildlife resources on America's public lands.

We urge you to take action on modernizing the 136-year-old mining law this Congress, and we offer our assistance and support.

Public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Forest Service harbor some of the most important fish and wildlife habitat and provide some of the finest hunting and angling opportunities in the country. For example, public lands contain well more than 50 percent of the nation's blue-ribbon trout streams and are strongholds for imperiled trout and salmon in the western United States. More than 80 percent of the most critical habitat for elk is found on lands managed by the Forest Service and the BLM, alone. Pronghorn antelope, sage grouse, mule deer, salmon and steelhead, and countless other fish and wildlife species are similarly dependent on public lands.

Mining is a legitimate use of public lands, but there are few laws more in need of an overhaul than the 1872 Mining Law. The 1872 Mining Law, signed into existence 136 years ago by President Ulysses Grant, is the most outdated natural resource law in the nation. Under the 1872 law, mining takes precedence over all other public land uses, including hunting and fishing. The Secretary of the Interior must sell public land to mining companies, often foreign-owned, for as little as \$2.50 per acre. Furthermore, mining companies pay no royalties for hard rock minerals, gold, copper and zinc that belong to all citizens. It is estimated that since the 1872 Mining Law was enacted, the U.S. government has given away more than \$245 billion of minerals through royalty-free mining and patenting.

As you consider legislative reform of the 1872 Mining Law, America's sportsmen urge you to consider the following recommendations:

- Recover a fair royalty from all minerals, present and future, taken from public lands and establish a fund for fish and wildlife habitat improvement projects associated with past mining.
- End mining's priority status on public lands.
- Ensure that resource professionals have full discretion in the planning and permitting processes to protect public lands where high fish, water and wildlife values exist.
- Allow "Good Samaritans" reclamation incentives and common-sense liability relief.
- Prohibit the patenting or sale of public lands under this law; keep public land in public hands.
- Provide for harmonious integration of state and federal wildlife habitat and population objectives in permit operating plans.

Thank you for considering our recommendations, and we look forward to working with you to ensure that mining on public lands is modernized to the benefit of fish, wildlife and water resources.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

American Sportfishing Association
Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies
B.A.S.S.
Bowhunting Preservation Alliance
Catch-A-Dream Foundation
Dallas Safari Club
G. Loomis
International Hunter Education Association
Izaak Walton League of America
National Wildlife Federation
North American Grouse Partnership
Plano Molding
Pure Fishing
Quality Deer Management Association
The Wildlife Society
Trout Unlimited

Archery Trade Association
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Berkley Conservation Institute
Campfire Club of America
Conservation Force
Federation of Fly Fishers
International Game Fish Association
International Sportsmen's Exposition
Mustad & Son (USA), Inc.
North American Bear Foundation
Orion – The Hunters Institute
Pope and Young Club
Quail Unlimited
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Top Brass
Wildlife Management Institute

STATE ORGANIZATIONS

Arizona

Arizona Conservation Partnership
Arizona Council - Trout Unlimited
Arizona Wildlife Federation
Arizona Wildlife Foundation

Arkansas

Arkansas B.A.S.S. Federation
Arkansas Trappers Association
Arkansas Wildlife Federation
Briarpatch Conservation Club
ECHO
Grand Prairie Chapter of the Arkansas Wildlife Federation
Jackson County Wildlife Federation
Remington Arms Wildlife
River Valley Wildlife Federation
Save Our Streams
Save the Ouachita
Spring River Sportsmen Club
St. Francis Lake Association
Wattensaw Bowhunters Association
Westark Wildlife
White River Conservancy
Yell County Wildlife Federation

California

California Council – Trout Unlimited
Izaak Walton League of America – California Division
South Coast Chapter – Trout Unlimited

Colorado

Cherry Creek Anglers – Trout Unlimited Chapter #474
Collegiate Peak Anglers Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Colorado Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Colorado Bowhunters Association
Colorado Council – Trout Unlimited
Colorado Wildlife Federation
Colorado Wildlife Society

Denver Bassmasters
Denver Chapter of Trout Unlimited (Wild Trout)
Ferdinand Hayden Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Five Rivers Chapter – Trout Unlimited
San Luis Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Sisters on the Fly

Florida

Florida Wildlife Federation
The Florida Bass Federation, Inc. TBF/FLW

Georgia

Georgia Council – Trout Unlimited
Georgia Wildlife Federation
Gold Rush Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Kanooka Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Oconee River Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Upper Chattahoochee Chapter – Trout Unlimited

Idaho

Hemingway Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Idaho Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Idaho Council – Trout Unlimited
Idaho Sportsmen’s Caucus Advisory Council
Idaho Wildlife Federation
Magic Valley Fly Fishers
Snake River Cutthroats
South East Idaho Fly Fishers

Illinois

Illinois Council – Trout Unlimited

Iowa

Iowa Wildlife Federation

Kansas

Kansas Wildlife Federation

Louisiana

Bayou State Bowhunters Association
Iberia Rod & Gun Club
Jefferson Rod & Gun Club
Louisiana B.A.S.S. Federation
Louisiana Wildlife Federation

Maine

Maine Council – Trout Unlimited

Massachusetts

Environmental League of Massachusetts

Minnesota

Minnesota Conservation Federation
Minnesota Deer Hunters Association

Mississippi

Mississippi Wildlife Federation

Missouri

Conservation Federation of Missouri

Montana

Anaconda Sportsmen's Club
Big Blackfoot Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Billings Rod & Gun Club
Bitter Root Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Dawson County Rod & Gun Club
Fishing Outfitters Association of Montana (FOAM)
Flathead Valley Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Flathead Wildlife, Inc.
Gallatin Wildlife Association
George Grant Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Great Falls Archery Club
Helena Hunters and Anglers
Hellgate Hunters and Anglers
Joe Brooks Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Kootenai Valley Trout Club
Libby Rod and Gun Club
Madison-Gallatin Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Magic City Flyfishers
Montana Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Montana Chapter of the American Fisheries Society
Montana Council – Trout Unlimited
Montana River Action Network
Montana Wildlife Federation
Public Lands & Water Access Association
Ravalli County Fish & Wildlife Association
Rosebud/Treasure Wildlife Association
Russell Country Sportsmen
Snowy Mountain Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Skyline Sportsmen's Association
Triple-M-Outfitters
West Slope Chapter – Trout Unlimited

Nebraska

Nebraska Wildlife Federation

Nevada

Nevada Council - Trout Unlimited
Nevada Wildlife Federation

New Jersey

B.A.S.S. Federation Nation of New Jersey
New Jersey Council – Trout Unlimited
New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs

New Hampshire

New Hampshire Council – Trout Unlimited

New Mexico

Albuquerque Wildlife Federation
Brittany Club
Dona Ana County Associated Sportsmen
Ducks Unlimited
Fisheries Society
Foundation for North American Wild Sheep – New Mexico Chapter
German Shorthair Club

Las Cruces Chapter Turkey Federation
Mesilla Valley Fly Fishers
Mule Deer Foundation
New Mexico Council - Trout Unlimited
New Mexico Shooting Sports Association
New Mexico Sportsmen, Inc.
New Mexico Trout
New Mexico Wilderness Alliance
New Mexico Wildlife Federation
Organ Mountain Bowmen
Picacho Gun Club
Quail Unlimited
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Southwest Consolidated Sportsmen
Truchas Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Wild Turkey Sportsmen Association
Wildlife Society – New Mexico Chapter

New York

Environmental Advocates of New York
New York Council – Trout Unlimited
New York State Conservation Council
Sportsmen’s Club of Northern Westchester, Inc.

North Carolina

Habitat and Wildlife Keepers
Headwaters, Ltd.
Lake Norman Wildlife Conservationists
North Carolina Council – Trout Unlimited
North Carolina Wildlife Federation

North Dakota

Barnes County Wildlife Club
Bottineau County Wildlife Club
Kindred Wildlife Club
Lewis and Clark Sportsmen’s Club
North Dakota Wildlife Federation
Red River Area Sportsmen’s Club
Stutsman County Wildlife Federation
Tewaukon Rod & Gun Club

Ohio

Columbiana County Federation of Conservation Clubs
Emerald – Necklace Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Ohio Council – Trout Unlimited
Ohio Sportsmen

Oklahoma

Indian Nations Council of Oklahoma – Trout Unlimited
Oklahoma Wildlife Federation

Oregon

The Association of Northwest Steelheaders
Central Oregon Fly Fishers
Clackamas Chapter – Trout Unlimited
McKenzie Flyfishers
McKenzie – Upper Willamette Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Native Fish Society
Northwest Guides and Anglers Association

Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association
Oregon Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Oregon Council – Trout Unlimited
Oregon Division – Izaak Walton League of America
Oregon Trout
Tualatin Valley Chapter – Trout Unlimited

Pennsylvania

Arrowhead Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Caldwell Creek Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Hokendauqua Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Iron Furnace Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Pennsylvania Council – Trout Unlimited
Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen’s Clubs
Stanley Cooper Sr. Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Wyoming County Federation of Sportsmen’s Clubs

Rhode Island

The Environmental Council of Rhode Island

South Carolina

Chattooga River Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Mountain Bridge Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Saluda River Chapter – Trout Unlimited
South Carolina Council – Trout Unlimited
South Carolina Wildlife Federation

South Dakota

Black Hills Sportsmen
High Plains Wildlife Association
South Dakota Wildlife Federation
Sportsmen’s Club of Brown County
Tony Dean Outdoors, Inc.

Tennessee

Tennessee Council – Trout Unlimited
Tennessee Wildlife Federation

Texas

Texas Conservation Alliance

Utah

Utah Waterfowl Association
Utah Wildlife Federation

Washington

Bellevue-Issaquah Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Elliot Bay Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Icicle Outfitters & Guides, Inc.
Inland NW Hunting and Fishing Conservation Coalition
Inland Northwest Wildlife Council
Northshore Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Rainshadow Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Seattle Chapter – Izaak Walton League of America
Washington Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Washington Council – Federation of Fly Fishers
Washington Council – Trout Unlimited

Washington Wildlife Federation

West Virginia

West Virginia Council – Trout Unlimited

Wisconsin

Aldo Leopold Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Almond Rod and Gun Club
American Wild Turkey Hunting Dog Association
Antigo Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Ashland County
Ashland/Bayfield County Sportsmen
Association Conservation Clubs – Trempealeau County
Augusta Area Sportmen’s Club
Badger Dachshund Club, Inc.
Badger Fishermen’s League
Bangor Rod & Gun Club
Beaver Dam Conservationists, Inc.
Berlin Conservation Club
Big 4+ Sportsman Club
Bloomer Rod & Gun Club
Boscobel Sportsmen’s Club
Brown County Conservation Alliance
Brule River Sportsmen’s Club
Butte Des Morts Conservation Club
Calumet County Conservation Alliance
Carter Creek Sportsmen’s Club
Cataract Sportsman Club
Central St. Croix Rod & Gun Club
Central Wisconsin Gun Collectors Association, Inc.
Central Wisconsin Shoot to Retrieve
Central Wisconsin Sportsmen’s Club
Challenge the Outdoors, Inc.
Chippewa Rod & Gun Club
Chippewa Valley Outdoor Resource Alliance
Columbia County Sporting Alliance (Pardeeville)
Columbia County Sporting Alliance (Portage)
Columbus Sportsman’s Association, Inc.
Coon Valley Conservation Club, Inc.
Crystal Lake Sportsmen’s Club, Inc.
Dane County Conservation League
Daniel Boone Conservation League, Inc.
De Pere Sportsman’s Club
Delton Sportmen Club
Doctari Longlines
Door County Fish Farm & Game Club
Door County Rod & Gun Club
Dousman Gun Club
Dunn County Fish & Game Association
Eau Claire Rod & Gun Club
Farmers & Sportsmen’s Club
Fin ‘N’ Feather Sportsmen’s Club
Flambeau Area Sportman Club
Florence County Forestry & Parks Department
Forest County Association of Lakes, Inc.
Forest County Walleye Association
Fort Atkinson Wisconservation Club
Friends of MacKenzie Center
Friends of the Brule River & Forest

Globe Conservation Club
Great Lakes Sport Fishermen Ozaukee Chapter
Green Bay Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Green Bay Duck Hunters Association
Green Bay Great Lakes Sport Fishermen
Grellton Conservation Club
Hayward Rod & Gun Club
Hope Rod and Gun Club, Inc.
Horicon Marsh Sportsmen’s Club (Mayville Gun Club)
Horicon Rod and Gun Club, Inc.
Hudson Rod and Gun Club
Jefferson Sportsmen’s Club
Kiel Fish and Game, Inc.
Koenig’s Conservation Club
Lake Poygan Sportsmen’s Club
Lakeshore Fishing Club
Lakeview Rod and Gun Club
Little Wolf River Houndsmen’s Club
Madison Area Dachshund Club
Manitowoc County Fish & Game Protective Association
Manitowoc County Coon Hunters
Millston-Knapp Sportsmen’s Club
Milwaukee Police Officers Conservation/Sportsman Club
Milwaukee Casting Club
Monches Fish & Game Club
Mosinee Sportsmen’s Alliance
Northeast Wisconsin Great Lakes Sport Fishermen
Nekossa Conservation League
North Bristol Sportsman’s
Oakland Conservation Club
Oconomowoc Sportsman’s Club, Inc.
Oconto County Sportsman’s Alliance
Ocooch Creeks Chapter – Trout Unlimited
Osseo Rod and Gun Club
Outagamie Conservation Club
Outdoor, Inc. Conservation Club
Padus Nicolet Gun Club
Pewaukee Lake Sportsmen Club
Prairie du Chien Rod and Gun Club
Racine County Conservation League, Inc.
Racine County Line Rifle Club, Inc.
Richfield Sportsmen’s Club
Rio Conservation Club
Southern Clark County Sportsman’s Club
Southern Milwaukee 1400 Fishing & Hunting Club
Sauk Trail Conservation Club
Shadows on the Wolf, Inc.
Shawano Gun Club, Inc.
Sheboygan Area Great Lakes Sport Fishermen
Sheboygan County Conservation Association
Sheboygan Rifle & Pistol Club, Inc.
Shoto Conservation Club
Slinger Sportsman Club
Smerke’s Sportsmen’s Club
Sparta Rod & Gun Club
Stan Pils Sportsman’s League, Inc.
Star Prairie Fish & Game Association
Sturgeon for Tomorrow N Chapter
Sugar River Coon Hunters Association

Suscha-Fale Sportsmen's Club
Town of Boulder Junction Shooting Range
Trempealeau Sportsman's Club
Triangle Sportsmen's Club
Tri-County Sportswomen's Club
Twin City Rod & Gun Club
Walleyes for Tomorrow, Inc.
Watershed Watchers
Watertown Conservation Club
Waukesha County Conservation Alliance
West Bend Barton Sportsman Club
Wild Ones Natural Landscapers, Ltd.
Wilderness Sportsmen's Club, Inc.
Wildlife Society – Wisconsin Chapter
Willow Acres, Inc.
Wilton Rod & Gun Club
Wings Over Wisconsin
Winnebago Conservation Club
Winnebago Conservation Alliance
Wisconsin Association of Beagle Clubs (#100)
Wisconsin Association of Sporting Dog Club
Wisconsin Association of Field Trial Clubs
Wisconsin Bow Hunters Association
Wisconsin Coon Hunters Association
Wisconsin Council of Sportfishing Organization
Wisconsin Council – Trout Unlimited
Wisconsin Deer Hunters Association
Wisconsin Deer Hunters, Inc.
Wisconsin Federation of Great Lake Sport Fishing Clubs
Wisconsin House Outdoorsmen Club
Wisconsin Hunter Education Instructor Association
Wisconsin Muzzle Loading Association, Inc.
Wisconsin Rifle and Pistol Association
Wisconsin Sharp-tailed Grouse Society
Wisconsin Taxidermist Association
Wisconsin Trappers Association, Inc.
Wisconsin Waterfowl Association, Inc.
Wisconsin Wildlife Federation
Yahara Fishing Club

Wyoming

Bowhunters of Wyoming
Wyoming Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Wyoming Council – Trout Unlimited
Wyoming Wildlife Federation