



January 29, 2009

**RE: Support for the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009
by the Arizona Wildlife Federation**

Dear Representative _____ :

As Arizona's oldest conservation organization and as the state affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation, the Arizona Wildlife Federation (AWF) wishes to make you aware that our membership of sportsmen/women and outdoor enthusiasts wholly support the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009. These conservation-minded citizens consider this bill a step forward in the vitally important protection and conservation of public lands that greatly contribute to maintaining the diversity of wildlife and wildlife habitat that have historically existed in Arizona and other wild places throughout the Nation.

Just a couple of weeks ago, the U.S. Senate passed perhaps the most significant piece of conservation legislation in recent memory when it voted overwhelmingly to approve the Omnibus Public Lands Act of 2009. The AWF requests your enthusiastic support of this bill when it comes before you on the House floor based on our belief that you, like our members, wish to make this excellent and positive choice in support of wildlife, habitat, and wild lands for the future generations of Arizona and the Nation. If passed, the measure would safeguard some of the nation's best fish and wildlife habitat and places to hunt and fish. We urge you to support the bill when it comes to the House floor in the days ahead.

We are mindful, as you must be, that the bill represents years of effort and enjoys a broad base of support including local elected officials, businesses and religious leaders. There are several provisions within the bill that are of particular concern to our members that relate to Arizona lands.

- Last year, Arizona National Scenic Trail legislation was introduced by Senator John McCain and Senator Jon Kyl (S. 1304) and Congresswoman Gabrielle Gifford (H.R. 2297). National scenic trail designation is the highest recognition for a U.S. trail and we welcome this being enacted.
- For some time the AWF has supported the effort to designate Fossil Creek in the National Wild & Scenic Rivers System. Designation would protect the free-flowing condition and "outstanding remarkable values" of Fossil Creek.
- The Walnut Canyon Study Act, directs the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct a study of land in Coconino National Forest adjacent to Walnut Canyon National Monument to evaluate the significance of the resources and public values of the study area and how they relate to the management

objectives of the Forest Service and the National Park Service (NPS).

- The AWF and Trout Unlimited support permanently protecting the National Landscape Conservation System, a network of highly valuable public lands of acute interest to anglers and hunters.

This legislation is responsible consensus legislation and failure to pass it would prevent implementation of local efforts in more than 30 states including Arizona. Together we must move forward in protecting and restoring lands in all these states that are the very foundation of the rich traditions of hunting, fishing, camping, wildlife viewing, and other outdoor activities our citizens have enjoyed since the beginning of this Nation, and which fill a critical need for inspiration and satisfaction in their lives on an everyday basis. This bill is a rare opportunity for you, and all of us, to preserve those traditions.

Thank you for your consideration, and I hope we can count on you to give this bill your support and that you will also encourage other legislators to lend it their support as well.

Sincerely,

Ryna Rock, President

Brad Powell, Vice President of Conservation
Arizona Wildlife Federation