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The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary, U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Re: FY 2017 *Pathways to the Pacific* LWCF Collaborative Landscape Proposal

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of American Whitewater, I am writing in strong support of the *Pathways to the Pacific* LWCF interagency collaborative landscape proposal (CLP). The *Pathways* proposal aims to enhance public recreational access and restore wildlife habitat in the Columbia River Basin and its tributaries.

American Whitewater is a national 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that works to protect and restore our nation's headwaters, and enhance the public's ability to enjoy them safely. With over 5,800 individual members and 100 locally based affiliate clubs, we represent the conservation interests of whitewater enthusiasts across the country. Many of our members live in or travel to Oregon and Washington to enjoy recreating in the region, including on Oregon's Crooked and Sandy Rivers.

Pathways – which includes more than 26,000 acres – is an opportunity to leverage the skills and resources of more than a dozen units of the four federal land management agencies in Oregon and Washington as well as numerous public agencies and conservation organizations to achieve landscape-scale results. These partners have already contributed substantially to the protection of this region. Over the last 15 years, 62 percent of the \$562 million invested in lower Columbia habitat projects has come from non-federal sources. If funded, *Pathways* will enable even greater public-private collaboration to secure 40 miles of hiking and water trail connections and promote the recovery of 13 species listed under the Endangered Species Act.

In particular, American Whitewater has worked in partnership with The Trust for Public Land for a number of years to ensure that Land and Water Conservation Funds be allocated for the Bureau of Land Management to acquire the Hollywood Road property along Central Oregon's Crooked River. While the river is regionally known for its whitewater, fishery and scenic values, access to the Wild and Scenic segment of the Crooked is challenging because all of the locations where the river is easily accessible are located on private property. To our knowledge, this segment of the Wild and Scenic Crooked River is the only BLM-managed Wild and Scenic River in the National Landscape Conservation System without public access, and for this reason we consider it a top priority nationally.

American Whitewater is proud to support the *Pathways* proposal, and I respectfully request that it receive your highest possible consideration for funding as part of the FY 2017 LWCF budget request to Congress.

Sincerely,

Megan Hooker
Associate Stewardship Director