

The Honorable Joe Manchin
Chairman, Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Barrasso
Ranking Member, Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Support for Charles F. Sams III, nominee for National Park Service Director

Dear Chairman Manchin and Ranking Member Barrasso,

The undersigned groups strongly support President Biden's nomination of Charles F. Sams III to serve as the 19th director of the National Park Service (NPS). We hope you will consider his impressive qualifications without delay and favorably report this important nomination to the full Senate for timely action.

Mr. Sams is a visionary conservation leader with a deep demonstrated commitment to natural and cultural resources and the communities that depend on them. His long career has been dedicated to the protection of, and equitable access to, irreplaceable resource lands; to sound management of treasured landscapes; and to careful balancing of complex equities to meet essential responsibilities to diverse interests. His unique, invaluable perspective and deep experience regarding land and water management, law enforcement, facilities and infrastructure, youth programs, fish and wildlife resources, and cultural sites make him an ideal candidate for this most critical leadership position.

Given the range of threats and challenges NPS and our national parks face – including record-breaking visitation and overcrowding, degradation of park resources, effects of climate change, park police issues, ongoing gender discrimination and sexual harassment, and more – we need a NPS director who is ready and able to provide steady leadership and develop and implement solutions to address persistent problems. These issues have only amplified in the more than four years since the Service has had a Senate-confirmed director, taking a toll on the Park Service's 20,000 dedicated employees and the 423 irreplaceable national sites they manage, from national parks and monuments to national battlefields, military parks, historical parks, historic sites, lakeshores, seashores, recreation areas, rivers, and trails.

We urgently need a director capable of navigating these challenges. Mr. Sams's possesses the demonstrated executive and organizational management skills for that role, proven in his current and former leadership at the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, the Columbia Slough Watershed Council, the Community Energy Project, the Indian Country Conservancy, the Trust for Public Land's Tribal Lands Program, and beyond.

Beyond his sterling credentials, Mr. Sams will be the first Native American to lead the agency in its 105-year history. The unique perspective he would bring as an enrolled member, Cayuse and

Walla Walla, of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation offers an invaluable opportunity to enrich the organizational strength, culture, programs, perspective, and reach of the National Park Service. With his commitment to diverse partnerships and to inspiring the next generation of conservation and land management leaders, Mr. Sams will help ensure that everyone sees themselves reflected in our public lands.

Charles Sams is very highly qualified to provide the leadership we all need at the National Park Service. We look forward to his expeditious confirmation and to the tremendous contributions he will make to our national parks, to the agency's programs and staff, and to the American people.

Sincerely,