

**American Rivers • Defenders of Wildlife • Earthjustice • National Audubon Society
National Parks Conservation Association • National Tribal Environmental Council
National Wildlife Federation • The Nature Conservancy • Outdoor Alliance
Outdoor Industry Association • Restore America's Estuaries • Sierra Club
Trust for Public Land • The Wilderness Society • Wildlife Conservation Society**

We're pleased the American Power Act recognizes the need to create American jobs on American lands while protecting communities and natural resources from climate change impacts. However, it delays this urgent work until 2019. In order to safeguard our communities by protecting our wildlands, water and wildlife from immediate threats, the American Power Act's Title VI – Community Protection from Climate Change Impacts must provide significant dedicated funding in the near term, rather than leaving communities vulnerable for another decade.

The challenges posed by both unemployment and climate change create a powerful opportunity to revitalize our economy by restoring our natural resources. Protection and restoration of our forests, rivers, coasts, lakes, and grasslands can help them adapt to climate change impacts already unfolding across the American landscape. Studies have shown that natural resource programs can protect and create more jobs and economic value than other industries. **For example, a \$1 million investment in restoring our forests can create and protect more than 20 jobs and generate more than \$2 million in economic activity.**¹ Safeguarding our natural resources in a warming world will protect and create jobs across the country today while investing in our country's future.

The science is clear: climate change is already affecting our communities and the natural resources and wildlife on which we rely for our quality of life. While reducing heat-trapping gasses now is absolutely critical to avoid catastrophic impacts in the future, damaging changes will continue to occur for decades as a result of the global warming pollution already in our skies. In order to prevent this damage we must act now. **At risk are valuable natural services on which we rely: our forests, for example, help provide drinking water to more than 180 million people every day²; and our estuaries provide critical habitat for more than 75% of America's multi-billion-dollar commercial fish catch.**^{3 4} Near term funding to safeguard our natural resources will help ensure our children enjoy natural benefits worth billions of dollars, including coastal storm protection, clean water and air, and healthy outdoor spaces to enjoy.

There is simply no time to waste in addressing climate and economic impacts on our communities and their natural resources. Waiting nearly a decade to begin this important work will put our communities, economy, and natural resources at great risk. In order to protect against climate impacts and help jumpstart our economy, the American Power Act must include significant near-term dedicated funding for natural resource adaptation.

We look forward to working with Congress and the President to ensure a bill that adequately addresses both the causes *and* effects of heat-trapping pollution is passed this year.

¹ Ecosystem Nielson-Pincus, Max and Cassandra Moseley. 2010. "The Employment and Economic Impacts of Forest and Watershed Restoration in Oregon." Workforce Program. University of Oregon. Available from: <http://ewp.uoregon.edu/downloads/BP23.pdf>

² U.S. Forest Service. "Water, Quick Facts." Accessed 21 May 2010, Available from: <http://www.fs.fed.us/water/>

³ US Environmental Protection Agency, National Estuary Program. "Basic Information about Estuaries." Accessed 21 May 2010 from <http://www.epa.gov/owow/estuaries/about.html>

⁴ NOAA Fisheries, Office of Science and Technology, Fisheries Statistics. "Annual Commercial Landing Statistics." Accessed 21 May 2010 from: http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st1/commercial/landings/annual_landings.html