

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 2, 2004

The Honorable Charles Taylor, Chairman  
The Honorable Norman Dicks, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations  
House Appropriations Committee  
B-308 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515-6023

Dear Chairman Taylor and Ranking Member Dicks:

We are writing to express our strong support for increased funding of the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS). This system, administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), represents some of the most spectacular and culturally significant areas in the United States. The sound management of NLCS units is vitally important to the American people and to state, tribal and local communities throughout the West.

Created through congressional enactments and presidential directives, the NLCS is made up of approximately 26 million acres. With over 800 units, the NLCS includes numerous National Monuments and National Conservation Areas. These lands constitute a significant portion of the "crown jewels" of America's public lands.

The NLCS offers havens of solitude, expanses of pristine lands, archeological and paleontological treasure troves, critical wildlife habitats and unmatched recreation opportunities to tens of thousands of people annually. Sound management of these resources is instrumental to their continued viability.

The NLCS has been under-funded since its inception in 2000 and is in critical need of the financial resources necessary to meet planning requirements and manage the exponential increases in the number of visitors that NLCS units experience each year. For this reason, we are requesting an increase in the NLCS budget for resource protection, land acquisition, archaeological inventories, and law enforcement.

In addition, we strongly support the President's FY 2005 Land and Water Conservation Fund Project Priorities for NLCS units and encourage you to appropriate funds for these projects accordingly.

Again, thank you for your support of the NLCS. We look forward to working with you throughout the FY05 appropriations process.

Sincerely,



Scott McInnis  
Member of Congress



Rick Renzi  
Member of Congress