

Daines' Work to Expand Access to Public Lands Applauded by Sportsmen, Business Groups

This week, Representative Steve Daines announced the introduction of the *Making Public Lands Public Access Act*, which directs Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) monies to be utilized to increase Montanans' opportunities to enjoy hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation through greater access to public lands.

Daines' bill has received strong support from Montana's sportsmen, conservation and business groups—here's what they're saying:

Pheasants Forever: "Montana Pheasants Forever would like to thank Congressman Daines for introducing the Making Public Lands Public Act (H.R. 3962). As private land becomes increasingly difficult to access it is imperative that we expand access to public lands. In doing so, we will continue to foster Montana's unique hunting and fishing heritage."

Ducks Unlimited: "Many hunters and anglers across the nation – and especially in Montana – make public lands their destination for outdoor recreation. It's extremely important that sportsmen and women are able to hunt, fish and enjoy other recreation on federal public lands and we are excited Congressman Daines has taken action."

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation: "RMEF is very appreciative of the Congressman introducing this legislation. Access to our public lands is vital to hunters and members of RMEF. Recent studies have indicated that millions of acres of public lands in the west are blocked or lack adequate access."

Mule Deer Foundation: "As an avid hunter and outdoorsman, Representative Daines knows how important access is to sportsmen. Montana is like many western states where there are large tracts of public lands that are now blocked by private lands and too many hunters are finding closed gates cutting off access to areas where they used to hunt."

Boone and Crockett: "Sportsmen and women want the Forest Service and BLM to provide better access to our national forests and BLM lands for hunting and fishing. Congressman Daines is tackling this problem head on with this bill."

Business for Montana's Outdoors: "Congressman Daines understands the strong connection between protection of public lands and jobs in our state. We are pleased to see him embrace common sense programs such as the LWCF, that protect our outdoor heritage, and look forward to working with him toward reauthorization of this important program."

Safari Club: "American hunters and anglers continually cite that access to our public land resources needs to be improved. Congressman Daines' introduction of the Making Public

Lands Public legislation takes a decisive step to open millions of acres for recreation. We are grateful to Congressman Daines who continues the fight to protect our freedom to hunt.”

National Shooting Sports Foundation: “Nearly half of all hunters conduct a portion of their hunting activity on public lands and lack of access is cited as the primary reason that hunters, anglers and target shooters stop participating in these traditional activities. Opening access to the public lands that U.S. citizens own is not only vital to preserving America’s sporting heritage, but it will also serve to benefit the economy.”

Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation: “This legislation is an important step in opening access to Federal land that is currently inaccessible or significantly restricted to sportsmen’s activities. Access to quality habitat is a key to the future of our sportsman’s way of life, and this bill will directly improve access to more public lands so all Americans can enjoy the great outdoor traditions of hunting and fishing.”

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