

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 24, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chair
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Udall
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Udall:

We write to respectfully request \$3.026 million for the National Park Service's Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers program within the Operation of the Park System account in the Interior Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018.

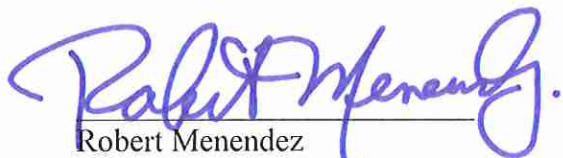
The program currently protects nationally significant rivers that flow through privately-owned or state-owned lands within the United States by preserving them in a natural, free-flowing condition. It engages private interests and all levels of government in studying, planning, and managing the rivers for the benefit of future generations, and includes the Eightmile River (CT), Farmington River (CT), Great Egg Harbor (NJ), Lamprey River (NH), Lower Delaware River (NJ/PA), Maurice River (NJ), Musconetcong River (NJ), Sudbury, Assabet and Concord Rivers (MA), Taunton River (MA), Wekiva River (FL), Westfield River (MA), White Clay Creek (DE/PA), and Missisquoi and Trout Rivers (VT). Providing full funding for the Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers program will ensure that the approved conservation plans of these rivers continue to be effectively and efficiently implemented.

The Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers program has succeeded and thrived due to its collaborative, locally-driven planning and management approach, which we believe is a highly effective and efficient alternative to direct federal management and administration of these rivers. This approach, in conjunction with adequate federal funding, has allowed for the leveraging of substantial state, local, and private funding. In addition, this approach has encouraged and resulted in the invaluable contribution of thousands of volunteer hours and donations of professional and other much-needed services.

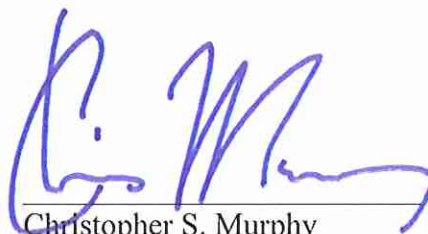
Over the past several years, this program has been underfunded, and appropriations levels have not kept pace with the addition of new rivers. The designation of the Missisquoi and Trout Rivers (VT) and authorization of the study rivers Wood-Pawcatuck (RI/CT), Nashua (MA/NH), and York (ME) for potential inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System demonstrate the continued need for strong funding for the Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers program. Prior proposals from the Department of the Interior recognized that need through a requested increase in funding to create parity in the federal investment in each of these rivers.

In order to continue suitable management of Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers, as well as adequate sustainment of these strong local-state-federal partnerships, we respectfully ask that full funding of \$3.026 million be included for the National Park Service's Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers program in the FY 2018 bill. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

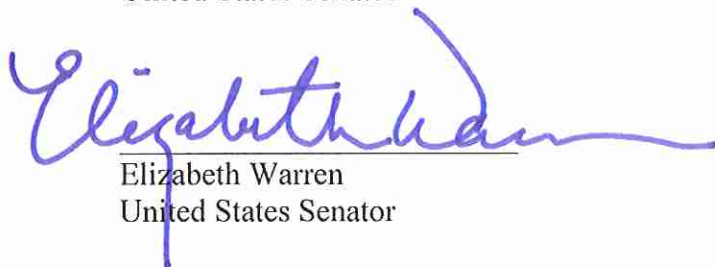
Sincerely,



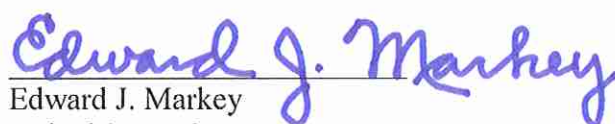
Robert Menendez
United States Senator




Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



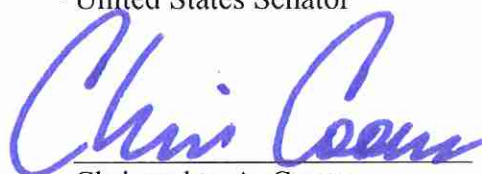
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



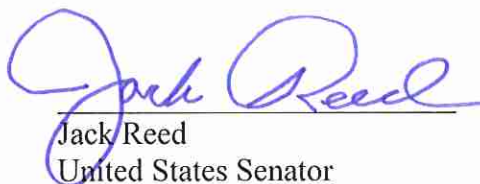
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator