

Harry Birdwell
President, WSLCA

Kathy J Opp
Executive Director, WSLCA
kathyjopp@gmail.com



www.wslca.org

Official Correspondence
c/o Bridget Hill, Secretary
122 West 25th Street
Third Floor West
Cheyenne, WY 82002

March 16, 2018

Congressman Chris Stewart
323 Cannon House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Congressman Jared Polis
1727 Longworth House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Dear Congressmen,

On behalf of the Western States Land Commissioners Association, I am writing in support of the Advancing Conservation and Education Act (ACE Act), H.R. 4257, that you both have been diligent in introducing and supporting for the benefit of state trust lands and public education across the west. We greatly appreciate the Committee's consideration of the ACE Act and look forward to its approval by the Committee.

State trust lands generate over \$3.8 billion annually for the benefit of school children. However, millions of acres of state school trust lands and minerals are trapped within wilderness areas, national parks, national monuments and other areas that have been set aside for conservation purposes. This creates a serious management conflict.

Some state trust lands are unable to be used for the purposes for which they were intended because of limited access and the incompatibility of development with the surrounding conservation lands. Further, the development of these state trust inholdings could adversely affect the integrity of the surrounding conservation lands.

The ACE Act provides a streamlined process by which State and Federal land managers can exchange state trust lands within Federal conservation areas for other public lands that are better suited for revenue generation for public schools. The result of these exchanges is more money for schools and better managed and protected conservation areas. It is classic 'win-win' legislation.

The Western States Land Commissioners Association stands ready to assist your efforts and we greatly appreciate all you are doing on behalf of school children by improving the management of our school trust assets.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Birdwell', is positioned above the typed name.

Harry Birdwell, President
harry.birdwell@clo.ok.gov
405.521.4000