

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

June 25, 2009



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**Help Protect Our Wild National Forests**

*COSPONSOR THE NATIONAL FOREST ROADLESS AREA CONSERVATION ACT*

Dear Colleague:

Recently, President Obama and his administration took initial steps to address the national protection of inventoried roadless areas in our national forests. The Department of Agriculture issued an interim directive requiring secretarial-level review of any projects that might be inconsistent with the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. Now we invite you to join us in support of this critically important conservation measure by becoming an original cosponsor of the **National Forest Roadless Area Conservation Act of 2009**. This legislation would codify this rule in to law and will ensure protection for wild areas of our National Forests and the vast wildlife, recreation and economic benefits they provide.

Roadless areas provide clean drinking water for more than 60 million Americans; wildlife habitat for over 1,600 threatened, endangered or sensitive plant and animal species; endless recreational opportunities for millions of Americans, and other important ecological values. Additionally, protecting these roadless areas is fiscally responsible as it allows the Forest Service to address the estimated \$10 billion backlog in needed road maintenance instead of using taxpayer dollars to subsidize new roads. Under this balanced legislation, these pristine areas would be protected from most logging and road construction while allowing new roads in order to fight fires, maintain forest health and ensure public safety.

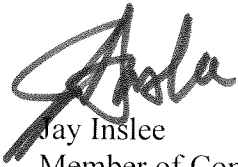
The Roadless Area Conservation Rule was issued in January of 2001, after the most extensive public involvement process in federal rulemaking history. Unfortunately, though, during the last eight years it has not been defended against legal challenges and today, the status of the Roadless Rule is uncertain. Conflicting court decisions have been issued for and against the rule by courts in California and Wyoming, and appeals are pending in the Ninth and Tenth Federal Circuits.

Under the terms of the latest court decisions, the majority of the 58.5 million acres of inventoried roadless areas are at risk from industrial development that would be prohibited by the rule.

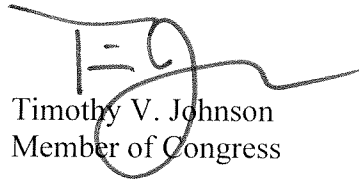
The fate of this country's last remaining wild forests is an issue of great importance for all Americans and has great ramifications for the nation's economy, scenery, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, and quality of life. We urge you to join us and cosponsor the **National Forest Roadless Area Conservation Act of 2009** so we can permanently protect these last remaining wild places for generations to come.

To become an original cosponsor of this bill, or for more information, please contact Maura Little in Congressman Inslee's office at 5-6311 or [Maura.Little@mail.house.gov](mailto:Maura.Little@mail.house.gov). Deadline to become an original cosponsor is Friday, July 10, 2009.

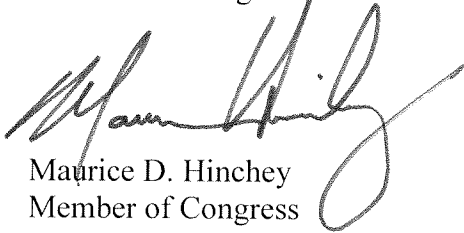
Sincerely,



Jay Inslee  
Member of Congress



Timothy V. Johnson  
Member of Congress



Maurice D. Hinchey  
Member of Congress



Mark Steven Kirk  
Member of Congress



Nick J. Rahall  
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress