

**ALASKA WILDERNESS LEAGUE ♦ AMERICAN RIVERS ♦ DEFENDERS OF  
WILDLIFE ♦ EARTHJUSTICE ♦ ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE ♦ MARINE  
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♦ NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST ♦ NATIONAL PARKS  
CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION ♦ NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE  
ASSOCIATION ♦ OCEANA ♦ OCEAN CONSERVANCY ♦ THE WILDERNESS  
SOCIETY ♦ WORLD WILDLIFE FUND**

June 5, 2007

Dear Natural Resources Committee Member:

We write to express our strong support for Chairman Rahall's "Energy Policy Reform and Revitalization Act of 2007" (H.R. 2337).

This comprehensive bill would take important steps toward restoring sound stewardship to the management of our public lands, ensuring responsible and accountable energy development, developing alternative energy sources, planning for and addressing climate change and acidification impacts on our oceans and coasts, and sustaining wildlife against the effects of global warming.

H.R. 2337 would reform many of the ill-conceived provisions in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPACT) that currently provide unwarranted subsidies by taxpayers and other special treatment to the oil and gas industry. The bill would require the Interior Department to establish cost recovery fees on energy development of federal oil and gas resources to pay for the enormous and growing administrative costs associated with opening federal lands to oil and gas development, repeal the arbitrary deadlines for drilling permit approvals imposed by the EPACT, strengthen the use of best management practices in the development of federal oil and gas leases, provide for better fiscal accountability in the management of federal oil and gas resources, and repeal the mandatory and unmerited "categorical exclusions" from environmental reviews for numerous oil and gas activities on public lands. It would also prohibit the mandatory designation of inappropriate energy corridors required in the EPACT, prevent the development of energy corridors in ecologically sensitive areas and in areas that have been protected for their scenic, natural, cultural, or historic resources, and provide a more rational and careful framework for the potential development of publicly-owned oil shale resources.

H.R. 2337 would establish long-overdue reforms of the federal energy program. It would require the Interior Department to overhaul its oil and gas reclamation and bonding program to protect federal resources and taxpayers from the damage caused by oil and gas development. Current bonding rates have not been raised since the 1960's, leaving taxpayers stuck with the clean-up bill for dirty energy operations. H.R. 2337 would establish a fee on non-producing oil, gas, and coal leases to discourage speculative lease holdings and generate funds to repair damage to wildlife and habitats. It would protect water resources impacted by energy development and the rights of private surface owners of lands where the U.S. government holds the underlying mineral estate.

The bill would create a comprehensive national framework to address the impacts of global warming on wildlife. Global warming poses one of the greatest threats to ecosystem integrity and individual fish and wildlife species and their habitat. H.R. 2337 would direct the Interior Secretary, in consultation with other federal agencies, states, and the public, to establish a national strategy for assisting wildlife populations impacted by global warming, including consideration and integration of adaptation strategies in the planning and management of federal lands.

The bill authorizes funding to ensure that federal land management agencies including the National Park Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS's) National Wildlife Refuge System, the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management receive the coordinated federal scientific and management support they need to carry out their responsibilities for the nation's wildlife populations and that the FWS receives the resources it needs to implement federal wildlife laws and programs as well as various cost share programs. Marine programs under the jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service and tribal nations would also receive funding. In addition to funding federal-state cost share programs, the bill authorizes significant funding directly to states to ensure that they play an effective role in helping wildlife adapt to global warming, and permanently authorizes the existing and effective State and Tribal Wildlife Grant program.

The oceans and coast are expected to be heavily impacted by climate change and increasing atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels. Increased ocean acidity, rising sea levels, and detrimental changes to the distribution and abundance of fish, wildlife, and habitats are among some of the expected results. HR 2337 recognizes the importance of the oceans in climate change and promotes increased research and multi-jurisdictional planning and impact avoidance and mitigation. By establishing a National Integrated Coastal Ocean Observation System, our ability to document and predict climate change and its effects on the ocean will be greatly improved. In addition, HR 2337 provides resources for State and Federal governments to plan for the impacts of global climate change. This collaborative approach for coastal and ocean conservation and management is needed to deal with the effects of global warming on the ocean environment.

Finally, H.R. 2337 contains provisions to address impacts of wind energy generation on wildlife. We support wind energy development as an important means to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, we believe that wind energy and all other forms of energy development should be carried out in a manner that prevents significant harm to wildlife. We understand some revisions in language are under consideration. We appreciate efforts by the Committee to ensure that this balance is achieved in the most effective manner.

The "Energy Policy Reform and Revitalization Act of 2007" would help set America on the path toward energy independence, increase accountability in the management of federal energy resources, spur alternative energy sources, and provide the support necessary to help mitigate global warming's impact on wildlife.

We strongly urge you to support H.R. 2337.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Cindy Shogan  
Executive Director  
Alaska Wilderness League

Rebecca Wodder  
President  
American Rivers

Rodger Schlickeisen  
President  
Defenders of Wildlife

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National Audubon Society

Phil Clapp  
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