

VIA FACSIMILE

December 1, 2008

President-elect Barack Obama
Office of the President-elect
451 6th Street NW
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Scientist Support of Raúl Grijalva for Secretary of the Interior

Dear President-elect Obama:

As you make appointments to your Cabinet, we, the undersigned conservation scientists, encourage you to consider Congressman Raúl Grijalva for Secretary of the Interior. The position of Secretary of the Interior is critically important to ameliorating the eight years of environmental damage done by the Bush administration and we believe that Congressman Grijalva's background and record show him to be a leader ready for this challenge.

Grijalva recently released *A Report on the Bush Administration Assault on our National Parks, Forests and Public Lands (A Partial List)*, which shows the breadth and depth of his passion about conservation and public lands and reveals his experience as the Chairman of the House Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands. In this report he decries that under the Bush administration, "science has been manipulated to enrich industry." Most if not all conservation scientists share this frustration, often based on personal experience, and look forward to working with the agencies of the Department of the Interior under the direction of someone who understands and values science.

Congressman Grijalva has experience that would prepare him to lead the full range of agencies within the Department of the Interior. In addition to his chairmanship and work on public lands, he has worked closely with Native American communities — his district includes seven sovereign nations — and he has served on the Subcommittee on Insular Affairs. As a Representative from the arid southwest he is intimately familiar with the responsibilities of the Bureau of Reclamation.

The challenges facing the next Secretary of the Interior require a broad thinker who understands how to protect and steward natural resources and lands in a changing climate under the pressure for increased energy production. Congressman Grijalva has shown that he grasps the tradeoffs involved in such decisions. For example, he was a leading proponent of the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan, which protected the natural treasures of the desert environment while allowing reasonable development. This approach has become a template for proactive land use planning in other ecosystems.

We have read that there is pressure for you to appoint a person with a traditional sportsperson's background as the next Secretary of the Interior. But with the broad portfolio overseen by the Department of the Interior, we believe that it is far more important today to have a Secretary who understands ecosystem science and who is committed to science-based decisionmaking. It is not that Congressman Grijalva does not understand the interests of sportspersons — rather he sees them in a broad context. For example, he oversaw a study that linked oil and gas exploration to loss of Western hunting habitat.

As individuals who are directly involved in conservation science and regularly interact with the federal agencies within the Department of the Interior, we heartily endorse Raúl Grijalva to be appointed as its Secretary.

The affiliations listed below are provided for identification purposes only and do not indicate a position on behalf of the institutions.

Sincerely,

Travis Longcore, Ph.D.
Research Associate Professor of Geography
University of Southern California
Los Angeles, California

Catherine Rich, J.D., M.A.
Executive Officer
The Urban Wildlands Group
Los Angeles, California

Matt Aresco, Ph.D.
Conservation Director
Nokuse Plantation
Bruce, Florida

Richard A. Bradley, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, EEO Biology
The Ohio State University, Marion
Marion, Ohio

Jonathan L. Atwood, Ph.D.
Director, Conservation Biology Program
Environmental Studies Department
Antioch University, New England
Keene, New Hampshire

Clait E. Braun, Ph.D.
Director, Grouse Inc.
Tucson, Arizona

C. Dustin Becker, Ph.D.
Maui Forest Bird Recovery Project
University of Hawaii
Makawao, Hawaii

Peter F. Brussard, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus of Biology
University of Nevada, Reno
Reno, Nevada

Paul Beier, Ph.D.
Professor, School of Forestry
Northern Arizona University
Flagstaff, Arizona

Bryant Buchanan, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Biology
Utica College
Utica, New York

David Carroll, Ph. D.
Associate Professor of Biological Sciences
Florida Institute of Technology
Melbourne, Florida

Charles J. Cole, Ph.D.
Curator Emeritus
American Museum of Natural History
New York, New York

Joseph Cook, Ph.D.
Professor of Biology
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Walter R. Courtenay, Jr., Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus of Zoology
Florida Atlantic University
Gainesville, Florida

Cole Crocker-Bedford, M.S.
Chief of Natural Resources and Research
(Retired)
Grand Canyon National Park
Private Landowner Rep to the Dolores River
Dialogue of the BOR/BLM/USFS
Slick Rock, Colorado

Michael J. Connor, Ph.D.
California Director
Western Watersheds Project
Reseda, California

Ana Davidson, Ph.D.
National Science Foundation International
Research Fellow
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

James E. Deacon, Ph.D.
Distinguished Professor Emeritus
Departments of Environmental Studies and
Biology
University of Nevada Las Vegas
Las Vegas, Nevada

Dominick A. DellaSala, Ph.D.
Chief Scientist
National Center for Conservation Science &
Policy
Ashland, Oregon

Lee Dyer, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Biology
University of Nevada, Reno
Reno, Nevada

Aaron D. Flesch, M.S.
Senior Research Specialist, School of
Natural Resources
University of Arizona
Tucson, Arizona

Sidney A. Gauthreaux, Jr., Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus of Biology
Clemson University
Edisto Island, South Carolina

Daniel Gluesenkamp, Ph.D.
Director, Habitat Protection and Restoration
Audubon Canyon Ranch
Stinson Beach, California

Ed Grumbine, Ph.D.
Environmental Studies Program
Prescott College
Prescott, Arizona

Susanna Hecht, Ph.D.
Professor of Urban Planning
University of California, Los Angeles
Los Angeles, California

Philip Hedrick, Ph.D.
Ullman Professor of Conservation Biology
Arizona State University
Tempe, Arizona

Karen Holl, Ph.D.
Professor of Environmental Studies
University of California, Santa Cruz
Santa Cruz, California

Thomas Jervis, Ph.D.
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Philip Leitner, Ph.D.
Endangered Species Recovery Program
California State University, Stanislaus
Fresno, California

Jerry R. Longcore, B.S., M.W.M.
Certified Wildlife Biologist
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Retired)
Orono, Maine

Joyce E. Longcore, Ph.D.
Associate Research Professor
School of Biology & Ecology
University of Maine
Orono, Maine

Gary K. Meffe, Ph.D.
Editor-in-Chief, *Conservation Biology*
University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida

Brian Miller, Ph.D.
Wind River Ranch Foundation
Watrous, New Mexico

Lisa Moore, Ph. D.
Research Professor, Biological Sciences
Florida Institute of Technology
Melbourne, Florida

Marianne V. Moore, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Biological Sciences
Wellesley College
Wellesley, Massachusetts

Esteban Muldavin, Ph.D.
Division Leader
Natural Heritage New Mexico Division
Museum of Southwestern Biology
Department of Biology
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Reed F. Noss, Ph.D.
Davis-Shine Professor of Conservation
Biology
University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

Mary O'Brien, Ph.D.
Institute for a Sustainable Environment
University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon

David R. Parsons
Wildlife Biologist
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Retired)
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Trevor B. Persons
Herpetologist, Research Associate
USGS SBSC Colorado Plateau Research
Station
Flagstaff, Arizona

Tony Povilitis, Ph.D.
Life Net
Makawao, Hawaii

Brett R. Riddle, Ph.D.
Professor of Biology
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Las Vegas, Nevada

Gary W. Roemer, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Fish, Wildlife &
Conservation Ecology
New Mexico State University
Las Cruces, New Mexico

William H. Romme, Ph.D.
Professor, Warner College of Natural
Resources
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, Colorado

Nicole Rosmarino, Ph.D.
Wildlife Program Director
WildEarth Guardians
Denver, Colorado

Philip C. Rosen, Ph.D.
Research Scientist
School of Natural Resources
University of Arizona
Tucson, Arizona

Michael Salmon, Ph.D.
Research Professor
Department of Biological Sciences
Florida Atlantic University
Boca Raton, Florida

Melissa Savage, Ph.D.
Director, Four Corners Institute
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Paula Schiffman, Ph.D.
California State University, Northridge
Los Angeles, California

Michael E. Soulé, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus, UC Santa Cruz
Founder, The Society for Conservation
Biology and Wildlands Project
Paonia, Colorado

Peter Stacey, Ph.D.
Department of Biology
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Eric Stein, D.Env.
Southern California Coastal Water Research
Project
Costa Mesa, California

Thomas W. Swetnam, Ph.D.
Director & Professor of Dendrochronology
Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research
University of Arizona
Tucson, Arizona

Phil Tonne
Natural Heritage New Mexico
Biology Department
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Mercy Vaughn
President, Sundance Biology
Paso Robles, California

Peter Warshall, Ph.D.
Tucson, Arizona

Sharon Wise, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Biology
Utica College
Utica, New York

Peggy Wood, M.S.
Bozeman, Montana

cc: John Podesta