

April 2, 2023

Michael Regan, Administrator

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Dear Administrator Regan,

We, the undersigned outdoor and recreation businesses and sustainability-minded companies write to you today concerning clean air for our national parks, wilderness areas and communities. From Mount Rainier to the Everglades and Acadia to Joshua Tree National Parks, and all the incredible public lands in between, America has some of the most incredible places in the world in which people recreate and thrive outdoors. Our nation's public lands, with their stunning views and unique and sensitive ecosystems, are critical to the \$887 billion outdoor recreation economy. Our businesses thrive when our air is clean and people and ecosystems are healthy.

Sadly, though, on average, when people go to our national parks or wilderness areas they are missing out on over 50 miles of picturesque views due to haze pollution. A 2018 study on air pollution and national park tourism found that an increase of just three high ozone days in one month can cause a 27% drop in tourism. In other words, when people know that the air is unhealthy to breathe due to ozone and related pollution that causes hazy skies, they are less likely to embark on a trip into a national park. Often, these trips are once-in-a-lifetime opportunities for people to experience America's public lands and disappointing experiences can dampen enthusiasm for future trips.

The U.S. EPA has a critical opportunity right now to deliver cleaner air and clear views in our public lands for years to come, but it must act swiftly in 2023. With the vast majority of state regional haze plans already submitted to the EPA, the clock is ticking for the agency to approve or deny these plans – many of which are highly flawed. Through decisive action, EPA can and must hold states accountable to require pollution reductions that cut haze emissions from numerous industrial facilities nationwide. The same pollution that causes hazy skies also harms people's health who live closest to those polluting facilities and exercise or recreate outdoors.

Clean air is vital to our businesses. The U.S. outdoor recreation economy is nearly 2% of the country's GDP, and is the 4th largest category of consumer spending. Outdoor recreation activities directly support approximately 7.6 million diverse jobs and bring tourists and visitors from all over the world into our natural landscapes and the gateway communities nearby.

We call on the EPA to safeguard our business interests by taking actions on state haze plans that will reduce the emissions from polluting facilities that harm public lands. Such actions are necessary to support the recreation industry. The vitality of our lands and waters are of paramount interest to our consumers and stakeholders and safeguarding them necessitates clean air in which these natural resources and their visitors thrive. Given the combination of environmental, economic and public welfare interests at stake, we trust the agency will act in our collective best interests.

Sincerely,

A Walk in the Woods (Gatlinburg, TN)
Acadia Bike Rentals and Coastal Kayaking Tours (Bar Harbor, ME)

Acadia Mountain Guides (Bar Harbor, ME)
Acadia Stand Up Paddleboarding/Sand Beach Surf Co. (Bar Harbor, ME)
Alarka Expeditions (Franklin, NC)
Alaska Wildland Adventures (Cooper Landing, AK)
Aspen Skiing Company (Aspen, CO)
Backcountry Safaris (Jackson, WY)
Better Tomorrow Solar (Atlanta, GA)
Big Mountain Dreams (Park City, UT)
Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine (Charlottesville, VA)
Bridger Bowl Ski Area (Bozeman, MT)
Cactus & Tropicals (Salt Lake City, UT)
Capital City Kayak Adventures (Jackson, MS)
Channel Islands Expeditions (Santa Barbara, CA)
Coastal Expeditions (Charleston, SC)
CREAM Design and Print (Tucson, AZ)
Dogwood Refillery (Charlottesville, VA)
Dripolator Coffeehouse (Black Mountain, NC)
Echo Adventure Cooperative (Groveland, CA)
Fifth Element Camping (Marshall, NC)
Fogtown Brewing Company (Bar Harbor, ME)
Gin Majka Photo & Video (Rockport, ME)
Hamilton Consulting (Fresno, CA)
High Tor Gear Exchange (Charlottesville, VA)
Honey Island Kayak Tours (Pearl River, LA)
I Heart Pisgah Outdoor Business Coalition (Asheville, NC)
Illumine Collect (Springfield, MO)
Jessica Delfino / The Mom Report on Pocono 96.7 FM (Stroudsburg, PA)
Laura Stephan-Corio, Rural Tourism Advocate (Blairstown, NJ)
Liberty Bicycles Inc. (Asheville, NC)
Mariah Reading Art (Bangor, ME)
MAST (Tucson, AZ)
Meadowlark Ridge (Mount Solon, VA)
Mountain Light Sanctuary (Barnardsville, NC)
National Parks at Night (Catskill, NY)
New Mexico River Adventures (Embudo, NM)
One World Brewing (Asheville, NC)
Pacific Islands Institute (Honolulu, HI)
Partnership for Responsible Business (Santa Fe, NM)
Parks Project
Patagonia
Pivot Produce (Tucson, AZ)
Precipice Coffee (Ellsworth, ME)
Rachel Thornberry Creative (Trenton, ME)
Rim Mountain Bike Tours (Moab, UT)
San Luis Valley Great Outdoors (Alamosa, CO)
Santa Barbara Adventure Company (Santa Barbara, CA)
Selkie Sauna (Mount Desert Island, ME)
Small Changes Big Impact LLC (Tucson, AZ)
Snakeroot Ecotours (Burnsville, NC)
Volta Climbing (Trenton, ME)

Western Spirit Cycling (Moab, UT)
Wild Abundance (Weaverville, NC)
Wilderness Inc (Bainbridge Island, WA)
3 Rivers Outdoor Co (Pittsburgh, PA)

Footnotes:

1. Annual Consumer Spending figure from the Outdoor Industry Association: [THE OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY](#)
2. Air Pollution and Park Visitation at U.S. National Parks, <https://www.science.org/doi/full/10.1126/sciadv.aat1613>
3. U.S. data show that the outdoor recreation economy accounted for 1.9 percent (\$454.0 billion) of current-dollar gross domestic product (GDP) for the nation in 2021. [Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, U.S. and States, 2021 | U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis \(BEA\)](#)
4. Jobs figure from the Outdoor Industry Association: [THE OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY](#)