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July 12, 2018

The Honorable Paul Gosar  
House Western Caucus  
Chairman  
2057 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Gosar:

On behalf of the American Petroleum Institute, I write to express our support for the Western Caucus's efforts to reform and amend the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 so that the Act more effectively meets the desired objective of improving the conservation of species. The Western Caucus should be commended for drawing attention to the broad issue and focusing in on several key concerns that will enhance the ESA for years to come.

API represents over 625 oil and natural gas companies, leaders of a technology-drive industry that supplies most of America's energy, supports more than 9.8 million jobs and 8 percent of the U.S. economy, and, since 2000, has invested nearly \$2 trillion in U.S. capital projects to advance all forms of energy, including alternatives. API is a leader in developing the industry technical standards and programs that enhance the safety of operations worldwide.

API supports the Western Caucus's effort to improve the administration of the ESA through clarification of the listing, downlisting, and delisting processes, by assuring greater certainty for incidental take permit holders and encouraging voluntary conservation measures for species and their habitats, and by increasing the consultative role of the states and of local governments. It remains important that all ESA decisions and conservation measures are based on the use of sound scientific practices, better data collection and data transparency. Similarly, it remains important that all stakeholders understand the criteria by which decisions are being made under the ESA and have the benefit of regulatory certainty for the permit requirements that affect their activities and the role played by the ESA in shaping those requirements. In addition, we support increased involvement of state and local governments and the experience of many of their agencies in ESA decision-making, coupled with engagement with land owners to allow for greater collaboration and innovation in the search for conservation solutions. Last, we agree that an emphasis on limiting the backlog of listing



petitions will help better process petitions and put the emphasis back on conserving and recovering species. The bills being brought forward by the Western Caucus can make an important contribution to effective and balanced improvements to the ESA for the benefit of species populations and management of wildlife resources.

The oil and natural gas industry is committed to the conservation of species, which can be done in concert with the production of U.S. oil and natural gas. It is also clear that producing the energy that we rely upon to fuel our economy has been a proven tool for job creation, economic stimulation, federal revenues and national security. We applaud the Western Caucus shining a light on this important issue in the West and all across the United States. We look forward to working with you and members of the Caucus to forward the legislation the Caucus is promoting moving forward.

Thank you and please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "S. J. ...", written in a cursive style.