OUTDOOR ALLIANCE

March 12, 2021

Sen. Mitt Romney
124 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Rep. John Curtis
125 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Outdoor recreation community support for the Bonneville Shoreline Trail Advancement Act

Dear Senator Romney and Representative Curtis:

On behalf of the human powered outdoor recreation community, we write to express our support and gratitude for your efforts to introduce the Bonneville Shoreline Trail Advancement Act (BSTAA).

Outdoor Alliance is a coalition of ten member-based organizations representing the human powered outdoor recreation community. The coalition includes Access Fund, American Canoe Association, American Whitewater, International Mountain Bicycling Association, Winter Wildlands Alliance, The Mountaineers, the American Alpine Club, the Mazamas, Colorado Mountain Club, and Surfrider Foundation and represents the interests of the millions of Americans who climb, paddle, mountain bike, backcountry ski and snowshoe, and enjoy coastal recreation on our nation's public lands, waters, and snowscapes.

The BSTAA will help facilitate completion of the multiple-use 280-mile Bonneville Shoreline Trail (BST). The proposed boundary adjustments will remove 326.27 acres from Wilderness management across 19 carefully drawn areas, and these adjustments will be offset by the addition of an equal area of new Wilderness protection in Mill Creek Canyon. These adjustments will ensure bicycle access on the BST and allow for work on the trail to proceed using tools impermissible under Wilderness management. In addition to the direct benefits of the trail itself, the BST

is a central component for trail planning efforts for jurisdictions across the Wasatch Front.

The outdoor recreation community strongly supports the Wilderness Act. An outgrowth of that support and our fundamental commitment to protection of Wilderness includes a sensitivity to the need to maintain strong public support for Wilderness protections. We believe that goal of maintaining broad public support is advanced by an openness to judicious adjustments to existing Wilderness in carefully considered settings. Common sense, modest adjustments, offset by new Wilderness additions, can be an important tool for ensuring that existing boundaries do not create insurmountable obstacles to sustainable recreation in places where relatively minor adjustments can be made without undercutting the values that animate the Wilderness Act. We believe that these conditions are met here.

Additionally, Outdoor Alliance and the outdoor recreation community remain committed to the success of the Central Wasatch Commission (CWC) and Mountain Accord process. Wilderness boundary adjustment to facilitate completion of the Bonneville Shoreline Trail has been at times a component of the CWC process, and we would like to reiterate our commitment to seeing the goals of the CWC realized. Specifically, we strongly support sustainable solutions to the area's transportation needs and legislation to protect conservation values through new Wilderness designations; protect valued backcountry ski terrain from encroachment by ski area development through land exchanges; facilitate conservation of the watershed; and support sustainable access and maintenance of recreation infrastructure for dispersed human-powered outdoor recreation.

We very much appreciate Rep. Curtis's statements of support for the CWC process, and our support for the BSTAA is grounded in our belief that this bill represents a step forward in realizing a broader vision for conservation and sustainable outdoor recreation in the Wasatch.

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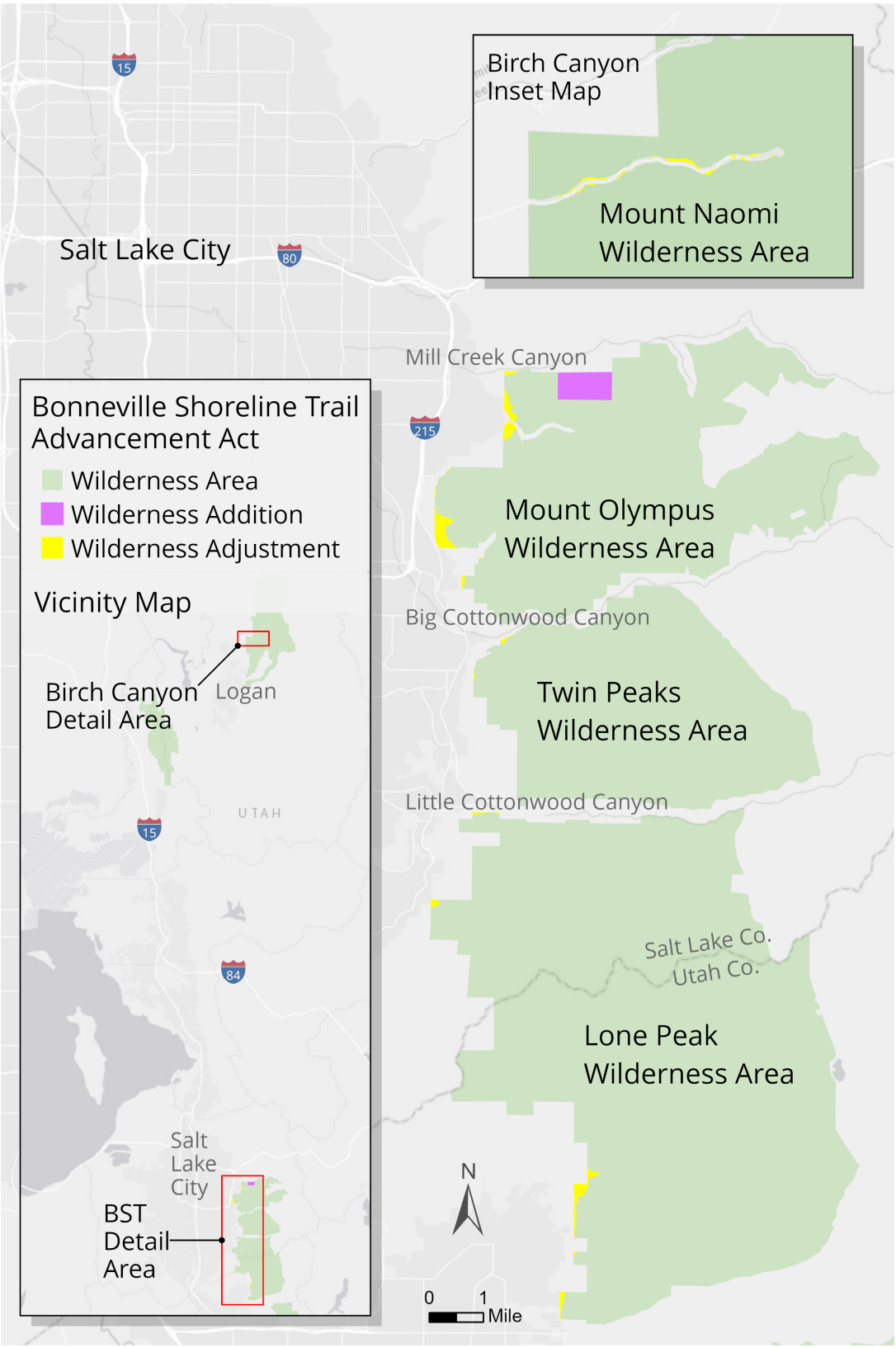
Thank you again for your leadership in this effort, and we look forward to continuing to work with you to pass the BSTAA.

Best regards,

Louis Geltman
Policy Director
Outdoor Alliance

cc: Adam Cramer, Executive Director, Outdoor Alliance
Chris Winter, Executive Director, Access Fund
Beth Spilman, Interim Executive Director, American Canoe Association
Mark Singleton, Executive Director, American Whitewater
Kent McNeill, CEO, International Mountain Bicycling Association
Todd Walton, Executive Director, Winter Wildlands Alliance
Tom Vogl, Chief Executive Officer, The Mountaineers
Phil Powers, Chief Executive Officer, American Alpine Club
Mitsu Iwasaki, Executive Director, the Mazamas
Keegan Young, Executive Director, Colorado Mountain Club
Chad Nelson, Chief Executive Officer, Surfrider Foundation

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