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**Written Statement Submitted by The Pew Charitable Trusts to the
House Natural Resources
Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands**

**For the record of the legislative hearing held on June 23, 2022
Regarding H.R. 2522 and H.R. 7509**

The Pew Charitable Trusts seeks to preserve ecologically and culturally significant U.S. public lands and rivers by working collaboratively with Tribes and stakeholders such as local businesses, policymakers, and sportsmen to develop collaborative solutions that protect landscapes and local communities. Federal legislative initiatives are an important component of this work.

Pew supports a number of proposals considered during the hearing of the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands held on June 23, 2022. Our specific comments follow.

Pew supports the Cerro de la Olla Wilderness Establishment Act (H.R. 2522)

This legislation would designate a 13,103-acre Cerro de la Olla Wilderness area, building on existing protections within the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument. The Cerro de la Olla has been important to nearby communities for centuries, as residents gather herbs and firewood to sustain a traditional way of life. It has also become a popular destination for outdoor enthusiasts, including hunters and hikers. Wilderness designation would protect this area and traditional uses for generations to come, and the effort is supported by sportsmen, community members in the Taos area, small businesses, faith leaders, Taos Pueblo, and conservation groups.

Pew supports H.R. 7509, the Wild Rogue Conservation and Recreation Enhancement Act

H.R. 7509, the Wild Rogue Conservation and Recreation Enhancement Act (WRCREA) designates approximately 60,000 acres of wilderness and establishes a nearly 100,000 acre recreation area in the Wild Rogue area of southwest Oregon.

Oregon's rivers and ancient forests define the rugged character of the State and offer ecological richness that is almost unparalleled in the continental United States. H.R. 7509 will ensure access to clean drinking water for thousands of Oregonians in both rural and urban

communities, help Oregon's extraordinary wild salmon populations to survive and thrive, offer economic benefits derived from outdoor recreation, and provide local communities with certainty that wildfire management will continue to be possible in the wilderness and recreation areas.

This legislation has been years in the making. Local businesses, sportsmen, veterans, and conservation organizations support H.R. 7509's goal of safeguarding these special wild and rugged landscapes. In the past several years, more than 4,000 regional residents and approximately 75 businesses from southwest Oregon wrote letters in support of these protections.

Expanding the Wild Rogue Wilderness will improve protections for the Wild and Scenic Rogue River. Enhancing wildlife habitat and old-growth forests along the Wild Rogue provides multiple benefits to southern Oregon communities and across the state. The Rogue River provides habitat for salmon and steelhead, supporting both the commercial and recreational fishing economies. The river is also internationally recognized for its recreation opportunities, from fishing to whitewater boating to hiking. Opportunities to recreate on the river increase the number of visitors and boost the regional economy.

Contacts:

Thank you for the Subcommittee's consideration of Pew's position on these bills. Please don't hesitate to reach out with to the contacts below with any questions. We look forward to continuing working together to move these efforts forward.

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