Leanne Marten

Regional Forester

USFS Region 1

U.S. Forest Service

26 Fort Missoula Road

Missoula, MT 59804

Dear Ms. Marten,

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for the U.S. Forest Service’s 2019 Land and Water Conservation Fund nomination of the Glacier Gateway Project in the Flathead National Forest. The acquisition of these properties along the North Fork of the Flathead river will connect existing public lands in a resource rich area with high public use and interest. [Insert your organization, your title if you’d like, and your organization’s mission and work]. We strongly support this project as it will accomplish [insert relevant benefits (economic, recreation, cultural, habitat protection, etc) to your organization] which are important to our mission.

We support the 2019 nomination of the Glacier Gateway project because: [insert reasons/value important to your organization].

EXAMPLES:

*Economic*- of the benefits to the local economy from tourism related to Glacier National Park and Northwest Montana. Scenic resources are critical to tourism in the area and this project will protect those resources in perpetuity. In addition, the Flathead National Forest is a large contributor to the local timber market through forest management projects. Their acquisition of these properties would support the continued contribution to the local timer economy.

*Recreation*- of the expanded recreational opportunities that provide public access to sportsman and members of the public that wish to enjoy these lands. The Flathead National Forest manages a large expanse of trails and public recreation sites. The acquisition of these lands would allow them to manage these lands in conjunction with the Ben Rover Cabin site, a popular and affordable destination on the Forest. These properties will also provide the unique opportunity to provide for a non-motorized travel route into Glacier National Park from the community of Polebridge, Montana.

*Wildlife*- of the benefits to wildlife. The North Fork Valley contains some of the highest densities of grizzly bears in the lower 48 states. These lands provide habitat for a variety of wildlife that include species of concern and those that are considered threatened or endangered. The river corridors on these properties provide the habitat for species to move securely throughout the valley and into the National Park. In addition, those riparian corridors also provide benefits to the cold waters of the North Fork of the Flathead River.

*Watershed and Fisheries*- of the benefits to the fisheries of the North Fork of the Flathead River. The designated Wild and Scenic North Fork of the Flathead River is critical habitat for threatened species such as bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout, a species of concern, both of which rely on cold, clean water. Acquisition of these properties will ensure that the water quality and quantity are protected in perpetuity.

*Cultural*- lands considered with this proposal are considered culturally significant.

We are excited for this unique opportunity to connect existing public lands, provide future access to a national park, and protect land important to water resources, wildlife, and people in the valley and from abroad. [I/we] strongly support the acquisition of these lands by the U.S. National Forest through the Land and Water Conservation Fund Thank you for your consideration of this important project and opportunity to express our support.

Sincerely,