

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 18, 2005

Dr. Peter S. Adler
President
The Keystone Center
1628 Sts. John Road
Keystone, Colorado 80435

Dear Dr. Adler:

We are writing to request that The Keystone Center convene and facilitate a cross-sector working group focused on the habitat provisions of the Endangered Species Act. We are aware of The Keystone Center's 30-year history of convening diverse groups and we see an opportunity for the Center to broker a productive information exchange and build consensus for a new approach to the complex policy problem of habitat conservation under ESA.

As you know, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 recognized that some fish, wildlife and plant species have gone extinct as a consequence of economic growth untempered by adequate concern and conservation, and that other species have been so depleted in numbers that they are in danger of or threatened with extinction. The purposes of the ESA, to provide for the conservation of such species and their habitat, remain a high priority for the Congress and the nation.

We are working together on legislation to address some of today's issues, but the habitat issue requires comprehensive examination. We need new ideas and we need new trust. Since the ESA was due for reauthorization in 1992, congressional actions to reauthorize it have not succeeded and have at times been divisive. Lawsuits and counter-suits over the meaning of Critical Habitat provisions in ESA are now common. However, the considerable frustration on all sides now seems to have created new interest in productive debate. With Keystone's help and a modicum of good will on all sides, we believe the broad issue of habitat conservation may be ripe for bringing reasoned voices together in a dialogue aimed at exploring possible solutions and breaking current impasses.

As we proceed concurrently with the legislative process to address the more tractable issues, we - with supportive voices from both the regulated and NGO communities - encourage The Keystone Center to convene an ESA Working Group on Habitat Issues composed of approximately 15 to 20 individuals who (a) represent diverse industry, NGO, and agency perspectives; (b) have standing and recognition among the interest groups they broadly represent; (c) believe that new and creative thinking is needed at this time; and (d) are willing to engage in a disciplined give-and-take round of discussions through this summer.

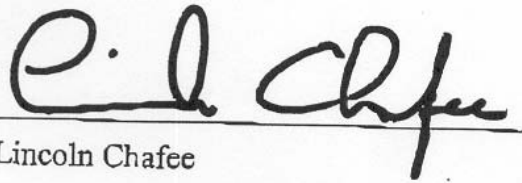
Dr. Peter S. Adler
May 18, 2005
Page two

More specifically, we would ask such a Working Group to address the following questions and provide us their best consensual guidance:

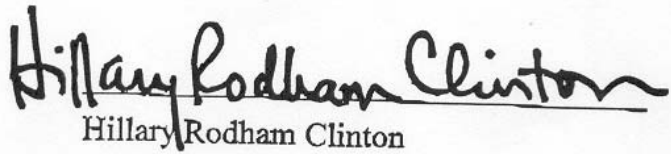
1. As currently written and implemented, is the ESA adequately protecting and conserving the habitat listed species need to recover?
2. If not, how can the ESA be improved to better conserve habitat and help species recover?
3. What specific changes and recommendations can the regulated and NGO jointly recommend, advocate for, and help implement?

We urge The Keystone Center to engage these questions, to help explore the possibility of finding a new common ground, and to report back to us by September 30, 2005.

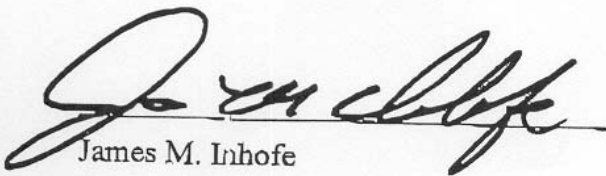
Sincerely,



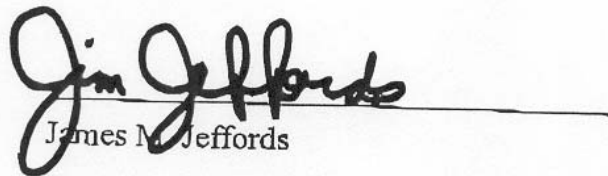
Lincoln Chafee



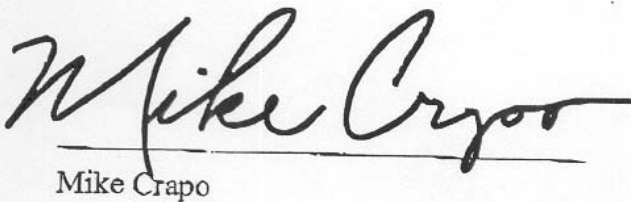
Hillary Rodham Clinton



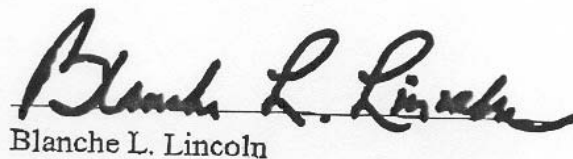
James M. Inhofe



James M. Jeffords



Mike Crapo



Blanche L. Lincoln