

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 21, 2023

Charles F. Sams III
Director
National Park Service
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Shalanda Young
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Director Sams and Director Young:

We write to you today regarding the need to use National Park Service (NPS) funds to address drought and recreational boating access issues impacting Lake Mead. As you know, Title VII of Division N of the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023* (P.L. 117-328) appropriated \$1.5 billion to NPS for “necessary expenses related to the consequences of wildfires, hurricanes, and other natural disasters occurring in and prior to calendar year 2023.” We request that you allocate a portion of this funding to the Lake Mead National Recreation Area to address the effects of the ongoing drought in the West on Lake Mead water levels and the resulting impact on recreational access at the lake.

For the last two decades, Southern Nevada and Lake Mead have been plagued by drought and declining water levels. These disastrous conditions have reshaped Lake Mead National Recreation Area’s one and a half million acres of incredible landscapes and slowly depleted the largest reservoir in the United States. Lake Mead National Recreation Area is our country’s first national recreation area and the fifth most-visited park in the National Park System. Visitors to Lake Mead play a significant role in the local economy, supporting small businesses and workers who depend on robust outdoor recreation tourism for their livelihoods. The low water levels have seriously impacted recreation, particularly with the closure of all but one boat launch ramp at the lake, putting businesses and jobs at risk.

Title VII funds are an appropriate solution to this potentially catastrophic economic and environmental disaster. It has been reported that funding from the FY23 omnibus for NPS disaster relief has already been distributed to Denali National Park and Preserve in Alaska and Yellowstone National Park in Montana to address infrastructure repairs due to landslides and severe flooding, respectively. We ask that you give the same consideration to the Lake Mead National Recreation Area and provide funding for critical infrastructure needs to protect the lake and ensure the recreation area, including the boat launch ramps around the lake, are accessible to all visitors. With this in mind, we also ask that should Congress appropriate additional funds for NPS in a Fiscal Year 2024 disaster supplemental, you allocate a significant portion of this funding to the Lake Mead National Recreation Area.

We appreciate your continued interest and outreach on the Lake Mead National Recreation Sustainable Low Water Access Plan and the preliminary management concepts being considered. We look forward to the next step in your public engagement process to see how you are taking

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steps to restore access to the lake, and ensure that no boat launch ramps or concessions are closed as part of the final plan. We urge you to consider allocating a significant portion of the disaster supplemental funding that Congress appropriated in the FY23 omnibus to the Lake Mead National Recreation Area to aid you in your efforts.

Thank you for your consideration.

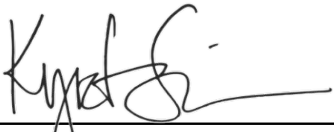
Sincerely,



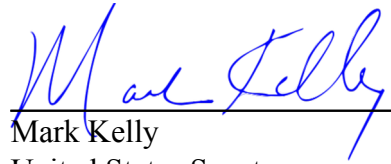
Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator



Mark Kelly
United States Senator