



**April 22, 2019**

**For Immediate Release:**

**Contact:**

**Maggie Coon**  
**Methow Headwaters Campaign**  
**509.341.9124**  
[margaretcoon@gmail.com](mailto:margaretcoon@gmail.com)  
[info@methowheadwaters.org](mailto:info@methowheadwaters.org)

**Methow Valley Community, Sen. Maria Cantwell Celebrate Headwaters Protection**

*Winthrop Event Marks Success of 340,079-Acre Mineral Withdrawal*

**Winthrop, Wash.** – U.S. Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA) joined about 350 enthusiastic Methow Valley community members Saturday evening to celebrate the permanent protection of the Methow Headwaters as part of the recently passed “John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management and Recreation Act.”

The act, which was championed by Sen. Cantwell, includes more than 100 public land, natural resource and water bills, including the mineral withdrawal of the Methow Headwaters, permanently protecting the Methow Valley from the threat of industrial-scale mining. Sen. Cantwell and Rep. Dan Newhouse (R-WA) attended the signing of the bill by President Donald Trump on March 12 in the Oval Office.

In her remarks at Saturday’s celebration, Sen. Cantwell noted the passage of the public lands bill recognizes the important economic contribution of outdoor recreation and its dependence on clean water and access to public lands. She said that the significant size of the 340,079-acre headwaters withdrawal is a testament to the Methow community’s commitment to the future of the valley, and its effort to support the outdoor economy and ensure the area remains a vital place for people to live.

“The United States of America has always had this responsibility to be a steward of our public lands and make good decisions and make the right investments for the future. I know exactly what this community has been able to do in standing down what has been a threat to an unbelievable economy that already exists here... Thank God the people in the Methow Valley helped us make the right decision for the future!” Sen. Cantwell said.

The senator also thanked Rep. Newhouse for his efforts supporting protection of the headwaters, and for the ongoing work and support of Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA). Sens. Murray and Cantwell sponsored the original 2016 Methow Headwaters Protection Act.

Via a pre-recorded video message, Congressman Newhouse congratulated the community on the successful protection of the headwaters. He applauded the bipartisan effort in passing the public lands bill, and called the outcome for the Methow Valley a great victory for north central Washington.

Maggie Coon, of the Methow Headwaters Campaign, thanked the gathered community for its significant and ongoing involvement in the effort. “Through it all you showed up, spoke from your hearts and focused on what it is that we all treasure. Our unified voice has really made all the difference in this campaign,” Coon said.

Headwaters’ supporter, Twisp Mayor Soo Ing-Moody, said in that in addition to winning protection for the headwaters, the community also was celebrating its ability to put aside differences to make the case for the withdrawal. “This took the cooperation of all groups – ranchers, farmers, hunters, environmentalists, recreationists, conservationists, conservatives and liberals alike, to all coming together for this common cause.”

Two community members received special recognition as part of the evening. Bill Pope, owner of the Mazama Country Inn, received the “Rabble Rouser” Award. Pope raised early community awareness of the potential for development of a large-scale copper mine in the headwaters and rallied the business community and others in support of protection.

Ing-Moody received the “Tireless Advocate” award for representing the community’s concern for the protection of its water, economy and rural character in numerous forums.

A special film featuring the voices of the community was shown to mark the celebration. The video is available online at <https://vimeo.com/331807321> .

“We deeply thank Sen. Cantwell for taking the time to join us in celebrating the headwaters and our community,” said Coon. “In addition to the senator, the list of committed community members and leaders who played a role in this effort is very, very long. That’s the true reason for this historic success.”

####

## **About the Methow Headwaters**

The Methow Valley and its headwaters are known for world-class, year-round recreational opportunities. These include alpine and rock climbing, backcountry skiing, hunting and fishing, wildlife viewing, mountain biking and more. The valley also is home to North America’s largest groomed cross-country ski trail system.

The economic contribution of all recreational lands to Okanogan County is more than \$150 million and recreation contributes more than 1,800 jobs. Recreation spending benefits food and beverage, lodging, retail, and other service sectors.

The headwaters also supply critical water to the Methow Valley and the Methow River, which is part of the Upper Columbia River Basin. The river supports general recreation, fish habitat, and water for farms, orchards, ranching and residents. The valley's groundwater is recharged from the headwaters, which made protecting the quality of the local water supply a vital need. The upper Methow is also critical to salmon recovery, and more than \$100 million has been invested in restoration and conservation efforts in the Methow Valley alone.

Methow Headwaters Campaign: <https://www.methowheadwaters.org>