



www.americanwhitewater.org

3691 S 3200 W
West Valley City, UT 84119
866-262-8429
kevin@americanwhitewater.org

March 3, 2010

Dear Senator,

I am writing on behalf of American Whitewater, a national non-profit organization with an office in Utah dedicated to protecting and restoring our Nation's whitewater rivers and enhancing opportunities to enjoy them safely. We represent thousands of whitewater kayakers, canoeists, and rafters that are either your constituents or are customers of your constituents. Our members have been contacting us in significant numbers and are deeply concerned with HB141, which would limit their well-established right to paddle the State's rivers.

Among Utah's many riches are its outstanding opportunities for outdoor recreation. Developed and backcountry ski areas, mountain bike trails, slot canyon hiking opportunities, crags with world class climbing routes, and spectacular whitewater rivers and creeks are all iconic parts of Utah for residents and visitors alike. These are the resources that attract the Outdoor Retailer show each year to your state. HB141 would significantly limit one of these outstanding values that Utah offers. HB141 would criminalize the simple act of floating down a river or stream. HB141 seeks to undercut existing state law, federal law, and the ancient and widely supported public trust doctrine that considers rivers and streams to be - like air, oceans, and wildlife - shared public resources. HB141 would make Utah the most restrictive and hostile state in the Nation with regards to floating rivers.

Perhaps never before in history have outdoor recreation opportunities been more important or more quickly disappearing. Simply getting outdoors is vital for the health and wellbeing of our citizens. Increasingly, research is showing that our children are suffering physical and psychological impacts associated with a lack of exercise and time outdoors. As more and more land is converted from open spaces to developed spaces these vital opportunities are disappearing. Often the closest and/or only remaining opportunities for outdoor recreation are on rivers and streams. HB141 would close countless backyard recreational opportunities for your citizens, their families, and visitors to your state.

Paddling is a healthy, low impact and ancient activity. It is an Olympic sport, an economic driver, and part of Utah's unique history and identity. Please **OPPOSE** HB141, and protect a vital part of Utah's heritage, lifestyle, and economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K. R. Colburn', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kevin R. Colburn
National Stewardship Director