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July 21, 2010

The Honorable George Miller  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2205 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Miller,

World Wildlife Fund (WWF) wishes to express its support for H.R.4416, The Great Ape Conservation Reauthorization and Amendment Act. We commend you for championing this important legislation and thank you for supporting wildlife conservation efforts in the developing world. As the House Natural Resources Committee prepares to mark up H.R.4416 on July 22, 2010, we write to support passage of your amendment in the nature of a substitute to reauthorize the Great Ape Conservation Fund at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

Great ape species around the world continue to experience declines in their populations due to numerous pressures, including poaching for bushmeat, capture for the pet trade, loss of forest habitat to logging and agriculture, human-ape conflicts over crops, and outbreaks of deadly diseases, such as Ebola. Grants provided through the Great Apes Conservation Fund not only address these threats; they also help to stabilize communities in the developing world by providing economic opportunities, slowing natural resource loss and engendering a culture of conservation. At the same time, they create local goodwill toward the U.S. government. Over time, these grant programs have proven to be outstanding investments, leveraging nearly three times as much in matching contributions from other national governments, corporations and private organizations.

In addition to reauthorizing the Great Ape Conservation Fund, H.R. 4416 would strengthen the existing law by allowing FWS to award multi-year grants. WWF strongly supports this change, which will help reduce the administrative burden on grant applicants and FWS alike while providing secure and reliable funding for conservation projects requiring more than a single year to complete. WWF also supports language in H.R.4416 that would increase the overall funds authorized to FWS for great apes conservation.

In addition to the above improvements, WWF has also advocated for the inclusion of language in H.R.4416 that would direct the FWS to formalize the goals and objectives of the Great Apes Conservation Fund through the development or identification of a strategic plan. We believe that such a planning requirement would help ensure the most effective and efficient use of the funds, establish a basis for measurement of the Fund's progress towards established conservation goals,

and provide important direction and transparency to grant applicants. Given that several strategic plans already exist for great apes conservation, including those published by IUCN and the UNEP Great Apes Survival Partnership, such a requirement would not create an excessive administrative burden on FWS. We hope to work with you and others in Congress on future legislation, including subsequent reauthorizations of Multinational Species Conservation Fund programs, in order to help achieve these important goals.

Thank you for your ongoing leadership on the conservation of great apes and other imperilled international species. We look forward to working with you to ensure H.R.4416 becomes law in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William M. Eichbaum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "W" and "E".

William M. Eichbaum  
Vice President & Managing Director  
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