STATEMENT ON CONGRESS’ APPROVAL OF A FULLY FUNDED EPA BUDGET

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Western Leaders Network has campaigned for a fully funded Environmental Protection Agency ever since the presidential administration proposed slashing the EPA budget by 31 percent. The impacts of such a cut would have devastated western communities that depend on EPA dollars to clean up polluted sites, improve air and water quality, and thus build stronger economies.

Last year, many Western Leaders Network members shared stories illustrating the important role EPA plays in their specific communities across the Interior West. In Helena, Montana, EPA dollars helped renew the city’s old railroad district, helping lead to tax increment grants for local businesses. In southeast Utah, EPA plays a central role in addressing a regional haze issue. And in southwest Colorado, EPA is critical to addressing a century-old mine pollution problem affecting the region’s waterways.

Congress’ decision late last week to not only approve an $8.1 billion budget for EPA – surpassing 2017 levels – but also an additional $763 million for water infrastructure and Superfund projects is a huge victory that means healthier economies and a healthier environment for all.

– Gwen Lachelt, Executive Director