

**Written Statement Submitted by The Pew Charitable Trusts to the
Senate Energy and Natural Resource
Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining**

**For the record of the legislative hearing held on December 1, 2022
Regarding S. 4860**

The Pew Charitable Trusts seeks to preserve ecologically and culturally significant U.S. lands and rivers by collaborating with Indigenous communities, local businesses and residents, policymakers, and others to achieve balanced, commonsense policy at the federal and state level.

Pew supports S. 4860, the Malheur Community Empowerment for the Owyhee Act. The legislation will designate more than 1.1 million acres of wilderness in Oregon; move more than 21,000 acres of federal land into trust for the Burns Paiute Tribe; implement a flexible grazing management program intended to improve the ecological health of public lands; and support economic development and recreational opportunities in Malheur County.

The Owyhee Canyonlands in Oregon encompass over two million acres of wilderness quality lands, spectacular canyons, rich human history, huge expanses of intact habitat for imperiled species like the greater sage-grouse, and unparalleled opportunities for solitude and recreation. It is also a vulnerable landscape, threatened by global temperature changes, invasive species, mining, and other industrial development that increasingly undermine the ecological integrity and wilderness values across the landscape.

Efforts to conserve the Owyhee Canyonlands have been ongoing for decades. The Malheur Community Empowerment for the Owyhee Act is the result of collaborative discussions and negotiations involving local ranchers, communities, policymakers, Tribes, and sporting, recreation, and conservation groups. Significant progress has been made over the past three years to secure balanced conservation and management of federal lands within Malheur County.

Thank you for the Subcommittee's consideration of Pew's comments. We are eager to engage with Senators Wyden and Merkley, Members of the Committee, Tribes, and stakeholders to continue to work on S. 4860 as it moves through the legislative process.

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