

The Conservation Alliance starts fund

BEND (AP) — The Conversation Alliance has long focused on providing grants to secure new public lands across North America, but now the Oregon-based environmental group is shifting its tactics and will offer a new fund dedicated to protecting existing public lands managed by the federal government.

John Sterling, the group's executive director, told *The Bulletin* that the decision is directly related to President Donald Trump's election, which he says has emboldened Republican lawmakers critical of federal land management.

"We have what we consider to be legitimate concerns about our public lands," Sterling said.

Since it was founded in 1989, The Conservation Alliance has worked with large outdoor product companies — including the Keen footwear company in Portland and the California-based Patagonia Inc. — to fund grants for organizations looking to secure and manage public lands. In 2016, the organization gave out \$1.6 million in grant funding, according to Sterling.

The organization based in Bend began discussing a new, secondary fund immediately following the November elections, Sterling said.

The so-called "public lands defense fund" will target local and regional conservation organizations that will oppose the transfer of public lands and defend federal laws on public lands. Such laws include the Antiquities Act, a 1906 act that allows the president to designate national monuments while bypassing Congress. Changes to that law would make it more difficult for future monuments to be created.

Patagonia and The North Face, a California-based outdoor apparel company,

have committed to provide The Conservation Alliance with \$100,000 over the next four years. The organization expects to give out around \$200,000 to various organizations across the country during its first funding cycle, which has an application deadline of May 1.

This year, congressional Republicans in the West have introduced several bills aimed at changing designations around federally managed land.

In January, U.S. Rep. Jason Chaffetz, R-Utah, introduced a bill that called for the sale or disposal of 3.3 million acres of public land. He later abandoned the bill.

Others have targeted the Bears Ears National Monument in Utah, which was designated under President Obama.

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"There are powerful members of Congress who have questioned whether the federal government should manage public land," Sterling said.

In Oregon, legislators introduced House Bill 2365 in February. The bill, which would establish a task force to study the possible transfer of public lands in Oregon, received a hearing from the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources on February 16, but no additional meetings or hearings have been scheduled at this time.



Fit For Sisters Andrew Luscutoff Columnist

The cost of fitness

Physical fitness and health costs can seem awfully expensive — and for someone on a budget it may seem unfathomable to consider a gym membership, at-home equipment, or even a \$120 pair of running shoes.

But it pays to put those costs in perspective — especially given the costs of NOT investing in your health and wellness.

Gym memberships: There are many examples of gyms that charge \$100-plus in monthly membership fees. This seems extreme and I can agree the sticker shock is valid. But let's consider the cost for other services: Cable and Internet: \$77 bundled with basic services and equipment (broadband). Cellphone: average single line: \$71 (JD Power and Associates) without added data. Shopping at a premium grocery store can have a big impact on

your bill. A Business Insider report bought the same products from Whole Foods and found a \$61 dollar difference from Kroger (Fred Meyer parent company).

What these statistics expose is the costs of many things people blindly accept are more, or similar to, the expense of a gym membership. It's all a question of priorities and mindset. Simply re-adjusting one's mindset around these costs to include personal fitness makes it less arduous to fork out for even the most expensive gym membership.

Beyond a basic gym membership the extra services in health and fitness can also be financially intimidating. A typical personal training session can cost \$30 for half-an-hour (or in metropolitan areas \$50-plus). This shouldn't be so much of a shock considering that \$30 for a meal at a restaurant is very typical, with drinks and gratuity. Some are willing to do this several times a week. A house-cleaning service and yard maintenance also surpass the cost of personal training. Movies, concerts, and many other activities approach the same costs — yet there lines out the door at venues.

When personal health is neglected other costs start to accrue rapidly. For example, many of the conditions for which a person will visit a physical therapist, massage therapist, or chiropractor would be avoided with a proper exercise protocol. Not only do these costs add

up, but you have to endure the pain and discomfort of knees, aching backs, and tight muscles. A co-pay at one of these clinics will shortly surpass the cost of a gym membership.

Consider the cost of medications for blood pressure and cholesterol. Looking at the webpage goodrx.com the typical cost of the most common meds with average dosage is \$24/month. Diabetes is another expense, the highest extreme approaching \$200/month in co-pay costs. All three of these conditions can be avoided when proper exercise and diet are observed.

Part of what makes it difficult for people to invest in health and fitness is the lack of immediate gratification. The human psychology cannot fathom the future as well as it can gratify the immediate. A tasty burrito will be an instant hit, while a few extra minutes on the treadmill will not be noticed for months.

Focus on the immediate aspects of exercise which are rewarding; a fun activity, an accomplished feeling, satisfaction with getting work done, increased energy and vitality which a good workout can provide.

Avoiding excess purchases of material possessions seems like another way to adjust a budget to include more room to invest in personal health.

However you go about it, the argument of cost should not be the excuse to neglect your fitness.



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