



**NEW MEXICO
WILDLIFE
FEDERATION**

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June 4, 2013

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary of the Interior
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Madam Secretary,

New Mexico sportsmen's groups strongly support the protection of backcountry areas that provide essential fish and wildlife habitat and therefore offer some of the highest-quality fishing and hunting in our state. Our organizations work collaboratively in communities around New Mexico with industry, farmers and ranchers, off-highway vehicle operators and local, state and federal agencies to develop stakeholder-driven management solutions to sustain fish and wildlife habitat. Healthy public lands are critically important for fish and wildlife resources and the hunting and fishing opportunities they support.

More specifically, southern New Mexico sportsmen have played a key role in promoting permanent protection for iconic places such as the Organ Mountains, Potrillo Mountains, Sierra de Las Uvas Mountains and Robledo Mountains in Dona Ana County. We had a seat at the table when then-Senator Jeff Bingaman worked to establish boundaries and access for his wilderness designation bill for these areas, and though the Senator has retired, the need to protect these special places is more urgent than at any time in history.

We look forward to Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich reintroducing legislation for permanent protection of the Organ Mountains - Desert Peaks, and they will have our full and complete support. We also understand the challenges of passing legislation in this Congress. If legislation should stall, then we would encourage President Obama to exercise his executive authority and designate the Organ Mountains - Desert Peaks National Monument.

On behalf of the following groups, I would personally like to extend an invitation to you to visit southern New Mexico and let us show you why these areas are so important to the current generation of sportsmen and, more important, to future generations of outdoor recreationists.

Respectfully,

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Dona Ana County Associated Sportsmen – John Cornell, President
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Mule Deer Foundation, Las Cruces Chapter – Jim Bates, President
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Wild Turkey Sportsmen's Association – C. J. Goin, President
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The Wildlife Society, New Mexico State University Chapter – Zachary Tiemann, President
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Mesilla Valley Longbeards – Jim Bates, President
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NMSU Student Subunit of the American Fisheries Society – Matt Zeigler, President
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New Mexico Quail Inc. – John Moen, President
Las Cruces, NM

El Paso del Norte German Shorthair Pointer Club - Rick Petersen, President
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Back Country Horsemen, Lower Rio Grande Chapter – Don Patterson, President
Las Cruces, NM

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, New Mexico Chapter – Oscar Simpson, Chairman
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