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The **TRUTH** about the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument

*The Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument came after nearly a decade of public dialogue, where stakeholders ranging from hunters and ranchers to border security experts and local elected officials crafted a proposal that protects the people and land in Doña Ana County. Yet, immediately following the designation, a vocal minority which is **ideologically opposed** to protecting our natural resources for future generations is using fear-mongering tactics to spread false claims in the media. It's time to set the record straight.*

RANCHING MISINFORMATION

Conservative shock jock **Rusty Humphries** [said](#) in "The great Organ Mountains land grab — What's the 10th Amendment?"

"Ranchers are worried that they won't be allowed to graze their cattle in the area. They got the distinct impression nobody in the administration was listening to their concerns. After the confrontation with the Bundy family in Nevada, they have a good idea how the Bureau of Land Management likes to deal with uppity ranchers. The feds will probably set up another "free speech zone" surrounded with a fence, where the First Amendment will be grudgingly tolerated." <http://bit.ly/1kwljmy>

THE TRUTH ABOUT RANCHING

The Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument [proclamation states](#):

"Laws, regulations, and policies followed by the BLM in issuing and administering grazing permits or leases on lands under its jurisdiction shall continue to apply with regard to the lands in the monument, consistent with the protection of the objects identified above." <http://1.usa.gov/1p0JihS>

Reactions from southern New Mexico ranchers:

"I applaud and welcome the designation of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument. By working alongside their constituents, Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich led the way for the president to protect ranching and recreation on our public lands. People from all walks of life were consulted, and now we have a national monument that will preserve our way of life for generations to come." - **Donna Muncrief**, *life-long registered Republican, Doña Ana County rancher, and member of the Back Country Horsemen of America.* (Ms. Muncrief can be reached by contacting Eric Schmeltzer at 646.290.8586)

“The Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument will allow ranchers to continue grazing and should lead to better travel management. Without lasting protection, these public lands could be overly developed and we could see also wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities degraded. The Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument will preserve what makes southern New Mexico special and allow present and future generations to have a place to hike, hunt and explore.”

— **Dale Henderson**, Rancher, *Dusty Ranch*, Winston, New Mexico

BORDER SECURITY FEAR MONGERING

Conservative anti-immigration film-maker **Dennis Michael Lynch** wrote in “Obama’s Latest Land Grab” that the national monument will “end up creating a safe haven for drug cartels to operate within the U.S.” <http://bit.ly/1k1Lwpy>

Speaker of the House John Boehner said in *Politico*, “At a time of continued cartel violence in Mexico, we should not be putting any additional restraints on efforts to protect our borders.”

<http://politi.co/1jDqnXf>

The Investor’s Business Daily wrote in “Obama’s Land Grab Opens Path for Cartels, Illegals, “The Bureau of Land Management plans a Bundy-like seizure of New Mexico land for a national monument that will restrict Border Patrol access and provide an open corridor for drug and human traffickers.”

<http://bit.ly/1mexnK5>

THE TRUTH ABOUT BORDER SECURITY

The **monument proclamation** states, “Nothing in this proclamation shall be deemed to affect the provisions of the 2006 Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Department of the Interior, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture regarding “Cooperative National Security and Counterterrorism Efforts on Federal Lands along the United States’ Borders.” <http://1.usa.gov/1p0JihS>

A spokesperson for the **U.S. Customs and Border Protection** said in *Environment & Energy Daily*: “This designation will in no way limit our ability to perform our important border security mission, and in fact provides important flexibility as we work to meet this ongoing priority... CBP is committed to continuing to work closely with the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Forest Service to maintain border security while ensuring the protection of the environment along the border.”

<http://bit.ly/RUcOIk> **CBP’s statement about the designation is available by contacting Public Affairs Officer Jacqueline Wasiluk at (619) 744-5245**

Sheriff Raymond Cobos of Luna County, New Mexico (location of some new monument lands) said: “After learning more about national monuments, I am satisfied that the President’s action on 19 May 2014 will not hamper the ability of the Luna County Sheriff’s Department to enforce applicable New Mexico statutes within the area covered by the proclamation. I am comfortable with the manner in which local law enforcement jurisdiction and authority is preserved. I am always glad to see protection of our environment balanced by the safety of New Mexicans particularly in my jurisdiction.”

According to the [Albuquerque Journal](#), the Santa Teresa station of Border Patrol’s El Paso Sector apprehended only 13 illegal immigrants south of the Potrillo Mountains in Fiscal Year 2009, an area it patrols. This was 0.1 percent of the 14,999 total apprehensions in the El Paso Sector, which covers the

entire state of New Mexico and the two western most counties in Texas, and only 0.002 percent of the apprehensions along the entire U.S. Southwest Border. <http://bit.ly/1d1IL5T>

“The current wild character of Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks has led to extremely low rates of illegal border crossing activity. Simply put, this is not a problem area for illegal border crossings. Representative Bishop’s conflating of Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks with areas where illegal border crossing has been a problem, such as parts of Arizona, is misleading and shows he hasn’t done his homework about the area in question.” -- **Garett Reppenhagen**, *regional coordinator for Vet Voice Foundation, U.S. Army veteran who served as a cavalry scout sniper in Kosovo and Iraq, 719-235-7030*

“President Obama deserves congratulations for responding to local communities and protecting the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument. This designation will stimulate the local economy, preserve our history, and protect a beautiful part of our nation -- while allowing Border Patrol to continue doing their job keeping these public lands among the most secure along the Southwest border.” -- **Retired U.S. Army Brigadier General Steven M. Anderson**, 202-450-0848

Other responses from local veterans and security experts can be found at <http://bit.ly/Sssyme>.

For more information about the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument, visit www.organmountains.org/media