

To: House Natural Resources Committee

Attn: Bryson Wong

RE: Support for HR 4334

To the Committee Members:

We are residents and ranchers of Dona Ana County, NM. We support HR 4334, introduced by our Congressman Steve Pearce. Our support is based on the following:

Virtually all County residents favor strong preservation and protection of the Organ Mountains.

HR 4334 will become law only after appropriate public comment and debate.

HR4334 as amended will pose no threat to border security, to ownership of private land and water rights, or to grazing rights. It will allow appropriate access for law enforcement, livestock operations, and for the public.

HR4334 is far superior to Senator Bingaman's S1024, and to the proposed 600,000 acre Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument. These proposals pose threats to border security, to ownership of water and grazing rights, to private land ownership, to the customs and culture of our cattle industry, even to the ability to continue operating historic cattle ranches.

HR4334 in total area is 58,512 acres, a rational size.

The 316,000 acres in S1024 and the 600,000 acres in the proposed Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument proposal are irrational in the huge size. The special features, historic sites and pre-historic sites could be well protected with much less acreage.

As ranchers we truly would not expect to be in business for long under either S1024 or the 600,000 acre monument proposal. The sad history of ranching in wilderness and national monuments support these concerns. The language of S1024 and the expected language of a monument proclamation under the 1906 Antiquities Act offer no hope for continued, long-term, successful grazing operations.

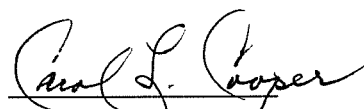
HR4334, with its appropriate language regarding livestock grazing, would introduce protections and bring hope that livestock grazing can, and will, survive a monument designation.

We would favor a change in the monument name, to include "Cox Family Ranch".

We ask for your vote for HR 4334, and we appreciate the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

  
Tom Cooper

  
Carol Cooper

June 25, 2012