



June 24, 2012

The Honorable Barack Obama, President
United States of America
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Re: Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument Proposal

Dear Mr. President:

I represent "People for Preserving Our Western Heritage," a 791 member coalition of business owners in Dona Ana County, New Mexico, who strongly oppose the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance initiated Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument. We have over 600 signatures of those who currently oppose the proposal, and will send notice of additional signatures as this community becomes fully informed about what has been proposed.

On May 21, 2012, the Dona Ana County Commission adopted a resolution endorsing the national monument based solely on testimony from the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance without public hearings and with only token input allowed from opponents of the proposal.

No prior notice in advance of the commission action was provided to citizens who own private lands within the boundaries of the proposed monument or to the New Mexico Commissioner of Public lands who holds state lands within the monument area in trust for the citizens of New Mexico.

This coalition firmly contends that the action of the Dona Ana County Commission in support of the proposed Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument should be viewed strictly as the opinion of the individual commissioners and not the position of the citizens of Dona Ana County.

Without question, there are special lands and individual sites within the proposed monument area. Those lands are now protected by the Bureau of Land Management under administratively established protective designations. However, before a determination is made that the protection afforded these lands under existing law is inadequate, local hearings should be conducted by the Department of Interior with ample opportunity for input from all citizens.

A land designation of this magnitude should require public input and debate.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jerry G. Schickedanz".

Jerry G. Schickedanz, Chairman
People for Preserving Our Western Heritage

cc: Congressman Steve Pearce
Senator Jeff Bingaman
Senator Tom Udall