

U.S. Senators Tom Udall & Martin Heinrich

Organ Mountains–Desert Peaks Conservation Act



Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks, PHOTO: Conservationlands.org

The Organ, Sierra de las Uvas, Robledo, and Potrillo Mountains are among the many scenic landscapes in Doña Ana County that define Southern New Mexico and the rich culture of its people.

The *Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks Conservation Act*, introduced by U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, would provide protection of cultural resources, such as petroglyphs and historic sites; ecological resources, such as watersheds and wildlife; and iconic vistas. Their proposal to designate the Organ Mountains–Desert Peaks a national monument would also enhance outstanding hunting and recreational opportunities, while preserving traditional uses such as livestock grazing as well as protecting sensitive areas from development and vandalism.

This legislation will preserve some of New Mexico’s most special places and experiences for us now and for generations to come, while promoting tourism and economic development in the region. By protecting these and other areas from development, we will preserve healthy habitat for game and sensitive species, quality grazing land, and the unique geologic formations that surround us.

Many individuals and groups were consulted during the drafting of this legislation, including grazing permittees and private landowners within the proposed areas; electric, natural gas, and pipeline utilities; local governments and community leaders; sportsmen, heritage, veteran, conservation, and archaeological organizations; flood control and irrigation authorities; airport authorities; the New Mexico State Land Office; and federal agencies, including the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Border Patrol, White Sands Missile Range, and Fort Bliss.

“ Designating a national monument would put the Organ Mountains and other spectacular areas of Doña Ana County on recreation maps around the world, attracting tourists to Southern New Mexico, creating jobs and bringing in millions of dollars in tourism revenue. The Organ Mountains and surrounding area form a beautiful and iconic backdrop for Las Cruces and are beloved by New Mexicans. Our bill would help ensure local families and visitors will continue to be able to hike, hunt, and learn from the thousands of significant historic sites throughout the hills for generations to come.”

–**U.S. Senator Tom Udall**

“ The Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks region offers outstanding cultural resources, tourism and recreational opportunities like hunting, hiking, and camping, and links us strongly to our past. For years, diverse coalitions in New Mexico have worked tirelessly for its permanent protection. By designating this natural treasure a national monument, a critical piece of our shared outdoor heritage will be protected for us now and for future generations of Americans to enjoy. I look forward to working with Senator Tom Udall and communities across New Mexico to get this done.”

–**U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich**

Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks Conservation Benefits New Mexico

- ❖ Showcases to residents and those around the world not only a highly diverse set of resources and opportunities, but also the rich culture and identity of our state.
- ❖ Preserves iconic view sheds as well as outstanding historic, cultural, and natural resources.
- ❖ Maintains and preserves traditional use on the landscape by directing the Bureau of Land Management to continue livestock grazing, hunting, and recreation.
- ❖ Helps identify and prioritize key watersheds for restoration by directing the completion of a watershed health assessment, which will benefit both conservation and flood prevention efforts.
- ❖ Increases flexibility for the Border Patrol to conduct operations.
- ❖ Protects the missions of White Sands Missile Range, NASA White Sands Test Facility, and Fort Bliss into the future.
- ❖ Through increased tourism generates an estimated \$7.4 million in annual new economic activity, new jobs, and other economic benefits.