



THE OFFICES OF U.S. SENATOR MARTIN HEINRICH U.S. REPRESENTATIVE MELANIE STANSBURY

The Buffalo Tract Protection Act - Statements of Support

**Pueblo of Santa Ana Governor Nathan Sanchez &
Pueblo of Santa Ana Lt. Governor Rueben Lujan**

"The Pueblo of Santa Ana is grateful for the re-introduction of the Buffalo Tract Protection Act by Congresswoman Stansbury and Senator Heinrich.

As previously stated, the lands now known as the Buffalo Tract are part of the ancestral lands of the Pueblo of Santa Ana and form part of the link between our modern villages along the Rio Grande with our historical village of Paak'u. These lands, and the sites on these lands, have cultural and ecological significance to the Pueblo of Santa Ana – in other words they are sacred to the people, and protecting this area from new mineral development is vital to the future of the Pueblo of Santa Ana and the surrounding communities.

Passage of the Act, will protect this special area from the potential negative impacts to our natural environment, water resources, and community health. Furthermore, passage of the Act will protect a vital wildlife corridor link between the Sandia and Jemez Mountains. Protecting this link is vital to local wildlife moving through this important corridor, and as we support wildlife, wildlife supports our cultural preservation. Many of the Pueblo's efforts in more recent times mirror the intent of the Act to protect, preserve and restore many of the Pueblo's natural resources and wildlife. The Pueblo strongly urges Congress to do the same."

**Pueblo of San Felipe Governor Carl Valencia &
Pueblo of San Felipe Lt. Governor Clyde Aguilar**

"The Pueblo of San Felipe has advocated and worked for many years to reclaim, preserve and protect the area known as the Buffalo Tract from mineral development and extractive mining. The Buffalo Tract is an important part of our ancestral lands containing cultural sites and resources, including those eligible under NAGPRA; and migration paths between the Sandia and Jemez Mountains.

Protection of the Buffalo Tract will allow our youth and future generations to know our ancestral lands as we have and will ensure wildlife are able to continue to have a place here in New Mexico. The Pueblo of San Felipe is thankful for the work of Congresswoman Stansbury, Senator Heinrich, and the entire New Mexico Delegation in the continued work in partnership with Tribal Leaders and local advocates to protect ancestral land of ongoing importance.

**Sandoval District 5 County Commissioner, Katherine A. Bruch &
Sandoval District 1 County Commissioner, Joshua Jones**

"We are writing you to thank you for your reintroduction of the Buffalo Tract Protection Act. Sandoval County has been in full support of efforts to preserve these lands and protect the nearby communities and tribal land. We appreciate your leadership on this legislation.

Gravel mining in these areas presents a significant danger to the health and cultural well-being of the communities that surround the Buffalo Tract. Sandoval County has been attempting to protect these areas through our land use policies – specifically the Placitas Area Plan – which calls for protection of the semi-rural character of the region as well as the character and identity of specific neighborhoods.

Each year since 2019, the Sandoval County Commission has expressed bipartisan support for this legislation through its federal legislative priorities resolution. The same is true for the 118th Congress. We are encouraged by your reintroduction and stand ready to assist you in your efforts to finally make this very important legislation a reality."

Mary-Rose de Valladares, President, Land Use Protection Trust

"The Land Use Protection Trust invokes the Placitas community's 25 year effort to protect the Buffalo Tract and related lands in the Rio Puerco as proof positive of our unified local determination to prevent gravel mining that will further damage our land, air, water, wildlife and cultural heritage. We are very grateful to Rep. Stansbury for introducing legislation that will preserve these resources while providing opportunities for wildlife corridors, designated trails, recreational activities and economic growth that enhance the sustainable use of the Buffalo Tract for this rural residential community and the Albuquerque metropolitan area."

Executive Director of New Mexico Wild, Mark Allison

"I am proud to support Congresswoman Melanie Stansbury's introduction of the Buffalo Tract Protection Act. The Buffalo Tract Protection Act protects a vulnerable landscape from the increasingly aggressive activities of extractive industries. Our nation's mining laws haven't been updated since the Grant administration, so it's refreshing to see Senator Heinrich and Representatives Stansbury and Leger Fernández use their offices to address unchecked development here in New Mexico. It's time to withdraw more of our federal public lands from leasing."

President of Eastern Sandoval Citizens Association (ES-CA), George Franzen

"Representing half of Sandoval County, ES-CA deeply appreciates Rep. Stansbury's reintroduction of the Buffalo Tract Protection Act. Passage of this act will protect only public health, air and water resources, wildlife and cultural opportunities of Placitas/Sandoval County but the local and state economies as well. ES-CA pledges continuing support for this legislation whose passage is vitally important to our culturally diverse, high-desert residential community in the greater Albuquerque metropolitan area."

President of Sundance Mesa Homeowners Association, Sue Overley

"The Sundance Mesa Homeowners Association is comprised of over 200 residential properties in Placitas. We fully support The Buffalo Tract Protection Act. Our members want to protect our air quality, water resources, environment and the wildlife surrounding our homes. We already border an active gravel mine on the south side of our neighborhood. Sundance Mesa Homeowners oppose additional mining and all the negative impact it will impose on us. We are a rural residential community and believe the Buffalo Tract Protection Act will enable us to remain so.

Gene Stone, President, La Mesa Homeowners Association

Members of the La Mesa Homeowners Association have long been adversely impacted by gravel mining in Placitas, notably from mining activities that were slated to sunset in 2015 but instead remained in operation. It took unified community effort to secure another closing date for that mine – extending its life for more than a decade. Placitas does not need more gravel mines that threaten public health and damage our resources and landscape. The La Mesa Homeowners Association firmly supports withdrawal of mineral mining on the Buffalo Tract and related parcels.

Peter J. Adang, President of Anasazi Homeowners Association

"The Anasazi Homeowners Association in Placitas, New Mexico consists of 236 memberships (lots) representing more than 500 persons. We are adamantly opposed to any mining on the Buffalo tract and support legislation prohibiting such activity. Our community has had to contend with gravel mining on property adjacent to our subdivision for many years now. Such mining has caused health issues from air pollution, excessive noise, depreciation of property values, and deterioration in the quality of life here. Further mining of that type needs to be banned."

Peter Callen, Chairman and Board of Directors of Pathways: Wildlife Corridors of NM

"Thank you Congresswoman Stansbury and Senator Heinrich for again introducing the Buffalo Tract Protection Act. To protect this Public Land from mineral extraction makes sense for the Wildlife Corridor proposed by the NM Dept. of Transportation and the NM Dept. of Game and Fish in this area. To spend the money on crossing structures for animals to traverse Interstate 25, only to run directly into an active sand and gravel mine does not make sense. For that reason we support the language of the Buffalo Tract Protection Act that would withdraw mineral extraction and sand and gravel mining from this parcel of Public Land."

President of Las Placitas Association (LPA), Sandy Johnson

"Once again, The Las Placitas Association writes to express our support for the Buffalo Tract Protection Act first introduced by Representative Michelle Lujan Grisham and later by Representatives Debra Haaland and Ben Ray Lujan.

Withdrawal of the four federally owned parcels in Unit 5 of the Rio Puerco – including the Buffalo Tract and the Crest of Montezuma -- is the most important action our congressional representatives can accomplish for Placitas.

Preserving the quality of life and environment in this semi-rural residential community for our members and the community at large has been the goal of The Las Placitas Association for the past 49 years. Passage of legislation assuring that gravel mining will no longer spoil the air quality, water resources, viewsapes and recreational lands from in our beautiful residential community will allow Placitas to grow and flourish. We thank you."