



Endorsements for the Buffalo Tract Protection Act

The Buffalo Tract Protection Act permanently withdraws minerals from development on four parcels of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands in southern Sandoval County, including the Buffalo Tract and the Crest of Montezuma.

For years, local communities, Tribes, and homeowners have advocated for the protection of the Buffalo Tract and Crest of Montezuma. These lands hold ancestral and spiritual significance for the Pueblos of San Felipe and Santa Ana, and also provide accessible outdoor recreation opportunities, including hiking, sightseeing, and hunting.

The Buffalo Tract Protection Act is led by U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.), Ranking Member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and U.S. Representative Melanie Stansbury (D-N.M.). U.S. Senator Ben Ray Luján (D-N.M.) and U.S. Representative Teresa Leger Fernández (D-N.M.) are original cosponsors.

The Buffalo Tract Protection Act is endorsed by Santa Ana Pueblo, San Felipe Pueblo, Land Use Protection Trust, New Mexico Wild, Eastern Sandoval Citizens Association, Sundance Mesa Homeowners Association, La Mesa Homeowners Association, Anasazi Homeowners Association, Pathways: Wildlife Corridors of NM, and Sandoval County Commission.

Statements of Support:

“The Buffalo Tract is a place of immense cultural significance to the Pueblo of Santa Ana, located along our ancestral migration route from Paak’u to Middle Rio Grande. Since 2008, the Pueblo has worked closely with the Bureau of Land Management to assist in the stewardship of these lands. We wish to thank Senator Heinrich for bringing this legislation forward to protect the land from any future mining development. The Pueblo of Santa Ana strongly supports the Buffalo Tract Protection Act,” **said Santa Ana Pueblo Governor Myron Armijo.**

“The Pueblo of San Felipe is in full support of the work being done by so many to protect the Buffalo Tract. The land known as the Buffalo Tract is ancestral San Felipe land, rich in history and vital to the preservation of pueblo cultural values including wildlife corridors and functioning mountain systems. Preservation of cultural sites and resources is part of the solemn responsibilities Pueblos must fulfill to steward the land.

Today more than ever it is important to work together to protect land, watersheds and cultural values to ensure high quality of life for all New Mexicans so that our way of life will continue for this and future generations. The Pueblo of San Felipe gives our full support to the legislation and permanent protection for the Buffalo Tract,” **said Pueblo of San Felipe Governor Anthony Ortiz and Lieutenant Governor James Tenorio.**

“The Buffalo Tract provides critical habitat connectivity for species like mule deer, allowing for seasonal migration and genetic diversity. As a hunter who relies on healthy wildlife populations, I support protecting this wildlife corridor to maintain the ecological balance that sustains both game species and the broader ecosystem,” **said Jeremy Romero, Regional Connectivity Coordinator for Western Lands, National Wildlife Federation.**

"The longstanding team of Las Placitas Association and Eastern Sandoval Citizens Association, representing half of Sandoval County, applauds Senator Heinrich and Rep. Stansbury’s reintroduction of the Buffalo Tract Protection Act, whose passage will protect not only the public health, air and water resources, wildlife, cultural heritage and recreation opportunities of Placitas/Sandoval County but the local and state economies as well. ES-CA sincerely appreciates the Department of Interior for removing the Buffalo Tract from further gravel mining. Now we must adopt this legislation to permanently remove the Buffalo Tract from any mineral extraction, which is vitally important to our culturally diverse, high-desert residential community in the greater metropolitan Albuquerque area," **said George Franzen, President, Eastern Sandoval Citizens Association.**

"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 Ulysses S. 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 mineral leasing," **said Mark Allison, Executive Director, New Mexico Wild.**

"Only legislation can ensure permanent protection and sustainable stewardship of the Buffalo Tract consistent with the community vision for wildlife connectivity and conservation of natural resources, sacred and cultural sites, and outdoor recreation potential. The diverse Placitas/Sandoval County community – including the Pueblos, the Land Grant, and dedicated citizen groups – is deeply grateful to Sen. Heinrich for his unflinching leadership and support for the public land known as the Buffalo Tract," **said Mary-Rose de Valladares, Chair, Land Use Protection Trust.**

“The reintroduction of the Buffalo Tract Protection Act, which would permanently protect that area in southern Sandoval County from new mineral development, has community support. As those of us who live here know, this particular region, part of a wildlife corridor that connects the Sandia Mountains to the Rio Grande Valley and the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, is a place of spiritual and historic significance for the Pueblo of Santa Ana, the Pueblo of San Felipe, the residents of Placitas, and the Merced De Comunidad De San Antonio De Las Huertas land grant. This bill will preserve the sanctity of the Buffalo Tract and protect the integrity of the area’s landscape by limiting disruption to the environment.” **said Katherine Bruch Sandoval County Commissioner, District 1.**