

HIDALGO SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

405 Duncan Hwy.
Lordsburg, NM 88045
(575) 542-9141

April 15, 2013

US Congressman
Steve Pearce
570 N Telshor Blvd
Las Cruces, NM 88011

Mr. Pearce,

The Board of Supervisors of the Hidalgo Soil and Water Conservation District would like to show support of HR 995, the Organ Mountains National Monument Establishment Act of 2013.

Our board feels that this bill, if passed would ensure the protection of the Organ Mountains, one of New Mexico's most majestic mountain ranges. Not only will this piece of legislation protect the mountain range from development, it will also protect the water rights of the city and the local landowners. Stormwater rights should also be protected, due to current, and future infrastructure on the upper slopes adjacent to the proposed Monument Area. We also support the addition of the wilderness study areas within the monument, which we feel will allow the entire area to be monitored by one central agency. In addition we strongly support the following sections:

Section 6 – We feel the inclusion of grazing rights will help to protect the land and supply water to the wildlife that inhabits the mountain range.

Section 8 – We feel the provision to not affect activity on private land is important and should specifically include access to any such land if this is not already guaranteed under the roads provision of Sec 6.

Section 11 – We strongly support allowing unfettered access to Federal, State and local law enforcement to the entire monument.

It is our recommendation that you seek, in the designation of this area, resolution of the status of the remaining WSA's in Dona Ana. That must be done for the well being of the community. In such action, the customs and culture of this region must be given priority, and safe guarded. We do not support any legislation that may attempt to encumber other lands.

We respectfully request your support for this legislation.

Sincerely,



Walt Anderson
Chairman
Hidalgo Soil and Water Conservation District

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