



November 18, 2013

The Honorable Steve Pearce
U.S. House of Representatives
2432 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Pearce:

As representatives of national motorized recreation organizations we write to support H.R. 995, the “Organ Mountains National Monument Establishment Act.” While we generally believe that public land agencies have all the necessary tools to protect public lands without restrictive designations that often limit management options, H.R. 995 would set aside a truly remarkable area in the Organ Mountains for singular recognition. Most importantly, the legislation seeks to designate an appropriately sized area that calls special attention to the extraordinary Organ Mountains while not locking out multiple uses from thousands of additional nearby acres.

As you know, the Antiquities Act provides that the President has the authority to declare areas, “...the limits of which in all cases shall be confined to the smallest area compatible...” as National Monuments. It is clear that several Presidents have stretched this authority to designate enormous swaths of public lands as National Monuments, often locking out multiple uses like motorized recreation. We support H.R. 995 as it would reverse the trend of National Monuments becoming ever larger designations that are little more than thinly veiled efforts to circumvent the clear statutory authority of Congress to designate areas as wilderness.

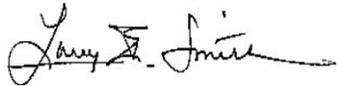
Too often when widespread local and Congressional support to designate public lands as wilderness cannot be established, wilderness proponents turn to a strategy of calling for the President to achieve similar goals by administratively designating the area as a National Monument. Despite the unambiguous intent of the Antiquities Act that National Monuments be confined to the smallest area compatible, even in Dona Ana County there is a proposed National Monument for the “Organ Mountains” that would restrict multiple uses on 600,000 acres of public lands. Clearly this would be an overreach. Thank you for introducing legislation that, in Dona Ana County at least, recognizes the true intent of the Antiquities Act.

Lastly, we thank you for including a provision in H.R. 995 that would allow motorized vehicles on designated roads. The Organ Mountains are treasures that should be enjoyed, but without access they would be simply locked away from public use.

Again, thank you for introducing H.R. 995. We will continue to support this legislation throughout the process provided the bill is not amended in a manner that is contrary to the best interests of the OHV community. While we may continue to ask for additional modifications where appropriate, we applaud your efforts and look forward to working with you to enact this legislation into law.



Sincerely,



Larry Smith
Executive Director
Americans for Responsible Recreational
Access



Christine Jourdain
Executive Director
American Council of Snowmobile Associations



Wayne Allard
Vice President
Government Relations
American Motorcyclist Association



Don Amador
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Duane Taylor
Director, Federal Affairs
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