



**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ARCHULETA COUNTY, COLORADO**

P.O. Box 1507 / 398 Lewis Street / Pagosa Springs, Colorado 81147
Tel (970) 264-8300

July 5, 2022

Honorable Michael Bennet
Southwest Office
1309 East 3rd Avenue, Suite 101
Durango, CO 81301

RE: Lower Dolores River National Conservation Area

Dear Senator Bennet,

The Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners fully supports the proposal for a National Conservation Area (NCA) along the lower Dolores River. The proposal is the result of a long-standing collaborative effort to protect the Dolores River and the interests of the various stakeholders that it services, including water users, agricultural entities, local governments, OHV users, conservation groups and recreationalists.

The creators of the NCA proposal sought to address a myriad of concerns, including those arising from the finding that the Dolores River is "suitable" for designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. It is our position, as well as other southwest Colorado counties, that designating the Dolores River as Wild and Scenic would result in significant consequences for water users and other groups seeking to access natural resources along the river corridor.

By supporting the proposal for an NCA, it is Archuleta County's intent to ensure that portions of the lower Dolores River that run through Montezuma, Dolores and San Miguel counties will not be designated as Wild and Scenic, and it is our position that the NCA proposal sets forth an acceptable compromise between the various stakeholders interested in utilizing water and land resources in and along the Dolores River.

We appreciate the time and effort that working groups have spent developing the current NCA proposal. Archuleta County supports Montezuma, Dolores and San Miguel County's request that you introduce legislation reflecting the recommendations contained in the NCA proposal and hope that your office will see such legislation enacted into law.

Sincerely,


Alvin Schaaf, Chairman