



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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HILARY COOPER KRIS HOLSTROM LANCE WARING

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June 24, 2022

Senator Michael Bennet  
261 Russell Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
Attn: John\_Whitney@bennet.senate.gov

Dear Senator Bennet,

We are writing to you to enthusiastically update our support for the proposed Dolores National Conservation Area. San Miguel County has been actively participating in the stakeholder team working on the Draft legislation and Map released for comment by your office in September 2021. We feel that the latest proposed Draft even more adequately reflects the substantial stakeholder collaboration representing a wide variety of interests around the Dolores River. These include local and tribal governments, water users, agricultural interests, conservation groups and recreationists.

We welcome Montezuma County, who is now in support of the bill including the boundary extension into their county, and join our neighbors and colleagues in Dolores County in our unified support for the updated Dolores NCA. We also welcome the support of our Ute Mountain Ute partners. Their support and participation in crafting the language of this bill is especially important to San Miguel County as we recognize and honor their historic use of these lands and deep knowledge of the natural resources. The partnership of San Miguel, Dolores, Montezuma Counties and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe is one that we celebrate locally and reflects the broad support for this proposal across Southwest Colorado.

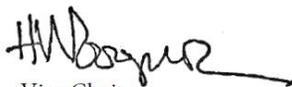
The main purpose of the Dolores NCA continues to be protection of all identified Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) while respecting and protecting private property rights, water rights and the Dolores Project/McPhee Reservoir and its allocations. The updated proposed NCA also protects historic uses and develops a locally crafted alternative to a potential federally designated Wild & Scenic River. We are confident that this NCA proposal protects the conservation, recreation and scientific resources of the Dolores River Corridor and maintains water rights and other uses important to the regional community. Key provisions include prohibition on new road construction, emphasis on native fish protection and protection of the Dolores River corridor included in the NCA, while also preserving water rights and continued operations in support of those water rights, private property rights, agricultural opportunities and the MCPhee Reservoir operations and contracts.

Thank you for being a true champion for public lands in Colorado. We appreciate your support of the Dolores River collaborations to date, including the active participation of your staff. We look forward to working diligently with you and your staff as we move this important legislation forward.

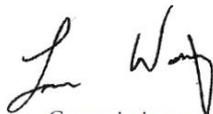
Sincerely,  
San Miguel County  
Board of County Commissioners



Chair



Vice Chair



Commissioner