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Friends,

There is no other country in the world that has a system of public lands like the United States—and there is not a state in this country that values public lands more than Colorado. This is evident even more so today, as thousands gather across the state to celebrate the first-ever Colorado Public Lands Day.

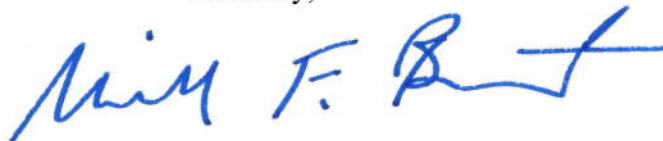
We are all joint owners of America's 618 million acres of public lands—24 million of which are in Colorado. These lands enrich our daily lives, as we hike, bike, ski, hunt, fish, snowmobile, camp, or just find peace in the scenic wonder of the landscapes. They also support our thriving outdoor recreation economy—an economic driver for businesses large and small, as we've seen around monuments like Chimney Rock and Browns Canyon.

While we may not always agree on every detail regarding the management of our public lands, as Coloradans, we have consistently demonstrated our shared belief that they should remain in public hands. That is why we steadfastly oppose the current Administration's efforts to diminish these areas around the country. Whether it is selling the lands or strangling the budgets of land management agencies, we will not stand for policies that threaten access to our iconic public lands.

The President's recent Executive Order to review certain national monuments, including Colorado's Canyons of the Ancients, is another example of Washington overreach and an unprecedented attack on the Antiquities Act. Bears Ears National Monument, which the Ute Mountain Ute and Southern Ute Tribes worked so hard to create, is one of the many sacred places targeted in this review that we will continue to defend.

Thank you for your efforts today, on Colorado Public Lands Day, to defend our proud tradition of conservation. We all must continue to encourage engagement from Coloradans, as your voices can make a difference in Washington. I stand with you in this effort, because I believe our character as a nation is revealed in what we choose to preserve—now, and for generations to come.

Sincerely,



Michael F. Bennet
U.S. Senator