

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 21, 2022

The Honorable Debra Haaland  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C St., NW – 6156  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland,

We write to again request that you use your authority under Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) to establish Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) on deserving Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands.

There are nearly 30 million acres already identified by BLM that need protection as WSAs and even more lands identified by local community groups that deserve consideration. These are some of the nation's most cherished public lands and contain untold numbers of sacred and cultural sites, as well as a sweeping range of ecosystems and species. Western communities and business depend on these lands for their way of life and economic livelihood.

In our January 21 letter, we explained that WSAs are an important and durable way to protect public lands and make meaningful progress toward the goal of addressing our climate crisis. In her response to our letter, BLM Director Stone-Manning did not commit to using this important tool as a way for BLM to meaningfully contribute toward meeting President Biden's goal to protect 30 percent of the nation's lands and waters by 2030 (30 x 30). The response only confirmed that BLM is charged to inventory and manage lands with wilderness characteristics as part of its ongoing land management responsibilities.

We request that you use your authority to establish new WSAs as part of the BLM planning processes, including national monument and resource management plans and plan amendments. Places like Cerro de la Olla and Rio San Antonio (East) in Rio Grande del Norte National Monument, English Ridge and Trinity Alps in the Arcata-Redding Field Office, and the Greater Hart-Sheldon complex in the Lakeview Field Office are good places to begin this important work. Additional planning processes also are underway in Colorado and Utah that would provide immediate opportunities to establish WSAs.

Resuming Wilderness Study Area designations would be a significant step toward meeting the President's 30 x 30 goals. We support any efforts to protect these fragile lands for future generations.

Sincerely,



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Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator



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Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator



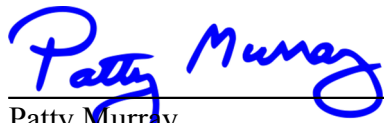
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Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator



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Alex Padilla  
United States Senator



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Patty Murray  
United States Senator



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Robert Menendez  
United States Senator



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Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator