



# Board of Commissioners

Anne Brown | Galena Gleason | Lance Waring

March 5, 2025

Senator Michael Bennet  
261 Russell Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator John Hickenlooper  
374 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Congressman Jeff Hurd  
1641 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Bennet, Senator Hickenlooper, and Congressman Hurd:

We write to enthusiastically update our support for the proposed Dolores National Conservation Area. We ask you to reintroduce the bill in the current Congressional session. San Miguel County has been an active member of the stakeholder team working on the legislation for nearly two decades and our strong support has not wavered. We feel that the legislation and the map reflect 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 join our neighbors and colleagues in Montezuma and Dolores County in our unified support for the 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 proposed NCA also protects historic uses and develops a locally crafted alternative to a potential federally designated Wild & Scenic River. We are confident 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

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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 supporting this bi-partisan effort in southwest Colorado and for being champions for public lands in Colorado. 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