

November 13, 2018

The Honorable Tom Udall
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Michelle Lujan Grisham
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Steve Pearce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ben Ray Luján
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Udall and Heinrich, and Representatives Lujan Grisham, Pearce, and Luján:

As business leaders, owners, and managers in New Mexico, we're enthusiastic about the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and the benefits it has provided for our state and nation. This program has done a great deal to help protect and enhance the natural areas, cultural heritage, and places to recreate that are essential to our local economies and community well-being.

We ask that you do all you can to achieve full funding for and permanent reauthorization of this vital program as soon as possible. Without the certainty that LWCF provides, the collaborative work by willing sellers, non-profit partners, and government agencies on many of the conservation acquisitions and successes described below would never have happened, and future efforts have ground to a halt since LWCF was allowed to expire on September 30.

In particular, we are concerned about the future of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDT), a world-class resource that draws thousands of visitors to New Mexico each year. In central New Mexico, the CDT and its travelers are forced to walk along the side of a road for more than 50 miles due to lack of access to public lands. In 2016, LWCF was used to finance the purchase of 5,867 acres of land near Pie Town. This was an important step in connecting existing public lands and expanding access, but more acquisitions are necessary to move the CDT off the road and onto a route appropriate for a National Scenic Trail.

Without LWCF, there is no obvious way to fund the willing sales necessary to create this protected public corridor, leaving this 40-year-old National Scenic Trail with no path to completion.

With LWCF, however, protection of the CDT corridor outside of Pie Town would add to an already long list of successes for New Mexicans financed by the fund. Since its creation by Congress 54 years ago, LWCF has invested more than \$312 million to protect New Mexico's outdoor places, public access to trails, sportsmen's access, and urban parks through both its "state side" and "federal side" programs. These investments have paid off in the expansion of New Mexico's booming \$9.9 billion outdoor recreation industry, an economic powerhouse in our state supporting 99,000 jobs which generate \$2.8 billion in wages and salaries and \$623 million in state and local tax revenues each year.

LWCF's federal program has provided funds for protection of many of the iconic places where New Mexico residents and visitors go to hike, hunt, bike and horseback ride, as well as learn about our culture and history. These places include Rio Grande del Norte National Monument, El Malpais National Monument, the Gila National Forest, the Rio Chama and Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge, among many others.

Its state side funding, which provides grants to local governments and the state, has also made incredible impacts on our communities. Since 1965, these grants have funded projects like the Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park in Doña Ana County and the Eagle Nest Lake State Park in Colfax County. Matched with state and local funds, these grants have enabled construction and enhancement of state and local parks, pools, ball fields, and many other recreation facilities in our communities, benefiting New Mexicans from all over the state.

LWCF funding has leveraged hundreds of millions of dollars of state, local, and private matching funds to contribute to the betterment of New Mexico and well-being of its citizens, and its reauthorization is critical to our future. New Mexicans need the tool of LWCF to protect public land access, critical drinking water supplies, and community resources.

Now that LWCF has expired, with each passing day the American people lose out on funding that should be going toward expanding access and protection of public lands. We urge you to work toward this program's permanent reauthorization and full funding without delay. Doing so will ensure that our nation will continue to invest in its natural, cultural, and recreational heritage, which benefits our communities, our economy, our children and our grandchildren.

Sincerely,

Martyn Pearson and
Chris Schlabach
Gila Hike and Bike
Silver City

Howard Richardson
Corner Kitchen
Restaurant
Silver City

Christina Carlson and
Brendon Lamoreaux
Triple Crown Hostel
Silver City

Marshall Fischer
Coach Massage
Silver City

Raymond Cressler
The Jumping Cactus
Silver City

Holly Sytch
Encore
Silver City

Laurie Wilson
Finn's Gallery
Silver City

Nora Fiedler
Guadalupe's
Silver City

Laura Hart Howell
Howell Graphic Design
Silver City

AJ Tow
Twin Sisters Cycling
Silver City

Polly Cook
Javalina Coffee House
Silver City

Karen Hymer
Light Art Space
Silver City

Lynnette Mondello
Morning Star
Silver City

Robert Fischhoff
Robert Fischhoff IT
Consulting
Silver City

Shawn Sanchez
The Murray Hotel
Silver City

Desire Liska
Opening Spaces
Silver City

Jamie Crockett
Rising Sun Midwifery
Silver City

Dennis O'Keefe
O'Keefe's Bookshop
Silver City

Josh White
Syzygy Tile
Silver City

Tatiana Kurakin
Tatiana Maria Gallery
Silver City

Gaye Rock
The Rock Center
Silver City

Dale Rucklos
Tranquilbuzz Coffee
House
Silver City

Thomas T. Perez, Jr.
The Silver Clipper
Silver City

Michael Lacey
Silver City Bookshop
Silver City

Kristen Warnack
Yada Yada Yarn
Silver City

David Chapnan and
Kevin W. Hubbs
Tapas Tree Grill
Silver City

Naava Konigsberg
Bear Creek Herbs
Silver City

Benjamin F. Lewis
Hillsboro General Store
Café
Hillsboro

Dennis C. Liddy
Bode's Mercantile, Inc.
Abiquiu

Constance Liddy
The Abiquiu Trust, LLC
Abiquiu

Henry D. Lackey
Route 66 Junkyard
Brewery LLC
Grants

Zachary Smith
Coco Bean Café
Grants

Derrick Morris
Check It Out Collectibles
Grants

Linda Callaghan and
Albert Duran
Elkhorn Lodge
Chama

Julia Rosner
Sky Mountain Resort RV
Park
Chama

Matthew Wallace
Chama Local LLC
Chama

Michele Marino
Freedom Realty, Inc.
Chama

Rose Benavidez
Chama Station Inn
Chama

Brittany Wallace
Chama Troutstalkers LLC
Chama

Yvonne Martinez
Eleanor Daggett
Memorial Library
Chama

Gregg Flores
Gregg Flores Films
Albuquerque

Kelly Gossett
New Mexico Kayak
Instruction, Inc.
Albuquerque

Seth Bush
Zia Rides
Albuquerque

Matthew Gontram
New Mexico River
Adventures
Embudo

Steve Miller
New Wave Rafting
Company
Embudo

Melissa Green
Green Serene Massage
Gila Hot Springs

Suzanne Jamison
Jamison Management
and Development
Gila Hot Springs

Jane Bruemmer
The Wilderness Lodge
Gila Hot Springs

Kristy Lopez
Doc Campbell's Post
Gila Hot Springs

Tom Price
Circle A Guest Ranch
Cuba

Aparcio and Cynthia
Herrera
Copper Mug
Cuba

Carey Beam
Eelahas Resource
Group, LLC
Cuba

Flora Lopez
Cuban Hotel
Cuba

Vince Keating
Juicy Jitters Coffee
Cuba

Kelly Gossett
Kokopelli Rafting
Adventures
Santa Fe

Kathy Knapp
Pie-O-Neer Pies
Pie Town

Steve Harris
Far-Flung Adventures
El Prado

Patrice Mutchnick
Heart of the Gila
Mimbres

Michael D. Barragree
Mimbres Film LLC
Mimbres

Roger Harrington
ArtQuesta
Questa

Eric Bailey
RaceNM
Rio Rancho

Yvonne Swartz
Artemisia Artwear, Inc.
Taos

Renee Hardy
Common Thread
Taos

Deborah Sherman
Monet's Kitchen
Taos

Cathy Book
Mooncat Fiber
Taos

Jonah Reynolds
Pangea Builders
Taos

Sue Westbrook
Taos Blue
Taos

Nick Streit
Taos Fly Shop
Taos

Kathleen Fowler
Sam's Shop
Taos

Sara Basehart
Seconds Eco Store
Taos

Dan Irion
Taos Mesa Brewing
Taos