



Native Plant Society of New Mexico
PO Box 35388
Albuquerque, NM 87176-5388

Was sent to:
New Mexico Bureau of Land Management State
Director, District Managers and Field Office
Managers
New Mexico United States Forest Service
Regional Forester, Forest Supervisors and
District Rangers

July 5, 2016

Dear Federal Land Manager,

The Native Plant Society of New Mexico is a non-profit group of over 750 members, both lay and professional botanists, who work and award grants to protect the native flora and habitats of New Mexico. Our Board of Directors and members would like to express our support for the continued federal ownership and management of the federal public lands and for the resource professionals who manage these lands in our state.

We are aware of the increasing attacks on federal land managers, both physical take-overs as in the case of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon, and verbal attacks from a growing number of state and county officials and members of the public. The proponents of these movements would like to see the federal public lands turned over to the states or counties for management. We do not believe that the states would be financially able to provide sound, science-based management, nor would they comply with federal laws necessary for the long-term health of the land.

We are aware of and support the multiple-use and sustained yield mandates for the federal lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management and the US Forest Service. We believe that the implementation of such federal laws as the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Air and Water Acts, the Archaeological Resource Protection Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, provide the direction required to provide for public involvement in management decisions and to maintain the productivity of our public lands for future generations. New Mexico lacks the state laws needed to protect the health of the lands of our state.

The immense power of the New Mexico State Land Commissioner to determine the management of state lands, including the disposal of those lands without any other governmental oversight, combined with the absence of state environmental protection laws, cause us to seriously doubt the ability of the state to manage additional public lands in a sound manner. If federal lands were lost to the states, many expect that vast acreages of these lands would have to be sold to private interests or developers to provide the funds needed for sound management

of the remaining lands. The cost of fighting wildfires in our warming and drying climate alone would strain the state finances, let alone replacing the payments-in-lieu-of-taxes the federal government pays on the federal lands to support infrastructure, schools, fire-fighting, public safety and policing.

In addition to the sound management necessary for the health of the environment, our members understand the importance of public lands in providing places for people to recreate and regenerate their spirits in our increasingly stressful lives. These lands are also essential as landscapes where an appreciation and understanding of nature and natural processes can be taught. As botanists, significant numbers of our members dedicate their professional careers to the scientific study and management of plants and plant communities in our state.


We would also like to voice our support of your efforts as agency managers when you and your agencies request budget allocations from Congress that realistically reflect the needs for management of the land in a sound manner. Sufficient funding levels would support the increased hiring of the Botanists and Range Conservationists that we feel are essential for proper management of plant resources, their habitats and the multiple uses that occur on federal lands. The presence of these resource professionals on your units supports the natural diversity of our state and the health of the environment.

Our members will be further encouraged to write to our New Mexico Congressional delegation in support of the values that we as the Native Plant Society of New Mexico hold regarding the ownership of our public lands and the funding needed to carry out the mandated management practices.

We thank you for your work in directing the proper management of the federal lands and we look forward to working with you in the future for the continued health of our environment.

Sincerely,

The Native Plant Society of New Mexico



Barbara Fix
President



Linda M. Barker
Secretary