

Date _____

The Honorable Tom Udall
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
The Honorable Martin Heinrich
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: S. 1110-THE NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM TRAILS STEWARDSHIP ACT

Dear Senators Udall and Heinrich,

I am writing to express my support for S. 1110, the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act, sponsored by Senators Michael Enzi and Michael Bennet, and I urge you to co-sponsor this important legislation.

Across the United States, National Forests provide world class recreational opportunities. Access to many of these wonderful lands would not be possible without adequate trails. For many years now, the Forest Service's trail system has been declining. Only a quarter of the trails are maintained to Forest Service standards and the agency is facing a maintenance backlog of more than \$500 million. Failing to address the trail maintenance backlog will result in reduced public access to the backcountry, increase the potential to degrade our forest's natural resources and will accelerate future maintenance costs.

S. 1110 will help improve maintenance of our National Forest trail system by establishing a critical program that expands the use of volunteers and partner organizations that will assist in maintaining, clearing and repairing trails in our National Forest. This legislation will also ensure that the Forest Service will prioritize its trail maintenance work and the public will have a Notice on which trails are most important to them.

This legislation will help outfitters and guides play an increased role in maintaining trails on public lands and it will study other ways to expand trail maintenance at no cost to the Federal government. These solutions are vitally important, especially in an era of declining budgets where over 50% of the Forest Service budget is spent on forest fires and associated restoration.

Over 90 equestrian, sportsmen, conservation, motorized recreation, outfitters and guides, trails, and governmental organizations including the Western Governors' Association, National Association of Counties, America Outdoors Association, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Back County Horsemen of America, and The Wilderness Society support this legislation. The House of Representatives has 64 members that have co-sponsored this legislation and includes all three Representatives from New Mexico. So far, only six members of the Senate have signed on. This legislation has recently been titled the most bi-partisan bill in Congress and your voices and leadership in the Senate are needed to get this legislation passed in 2016.

Because of the important benefits this legislation will bring to New Mexico and forests all across the nation, I respectfully request that each of you co-sponsor this essential legislation.

Sincerely,

Sign Name: _____

Print Name: _____

Address: _____ State: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____