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Steven Pearce
Member of Congress
New Mexico – District 2
400 Telshor Ste E
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001

RE: Dona Ana Wilderness, Attn: Grant A. Olson

Dear Representative Pearce:

I am the owner of a frozen custard chain. Our home and our corporate office are based in Las Cruces. You should recognize my name in that I have been a loyal supporter of your office and past campaigns.

The reason that I am writing is that I was approached by the wilderness proponents that have been actively pushing the wilderness effort in Dona Ana County. I was lead to believe that they had gained a broad consensus among the various stakeholder groups, and, as a result, I was somewhat inclined to support their position. Normally, I have not agreed with their actions, but they had told me that the stewardship group of the stakeholders, the ranchers, was aligned with them. Since that time, I have learned more about the situation and know now that the ranchers were largely left out of the process. I am opposed to that sort of political maneuvering and I will not support this attempt at pushing this effort through the back door.

I have spent my life putting my name and reputation on the line. I have been in debt, I have taken risks, and I have gone to bed more times than one praying that somehow I persevere. I have been blessed in that the rewards of all that risk have come to fruition. I know what it takes to go out on thin ice and to rely on your own actions to succeed. In this process, I have always dreamed of being able to get into a position to buy a ranch. The likelihood of that has always been more feasible where federal and state lands and an allotment permit were involved. With the placement of 300,000-600,000 acres of federal and state lands into 4-7 different wilderness areas, that likelihood becomes more difficult. Now, it may seem a bit strange to you in that I am writing to you with the notion that I want to do such a thing, and how in the world can my little ambition play into this wilderness plan. The fact is there are many, many reasons why federal lands must stay in multiple use status and not be locked up for the ambition of a few elitists! If your assumption that these lands must be placed in wilderness status "to protect" them into perpetuity, how on earth do they qualify now if they have been so blatantly mistreated. The fact is they haven't, that the real stewards are the ranchers that are on these permits, and that I fully intend to someday be among their ranks pursuing the same stewardship standards! Stop this nonsense, and, if you really want to do something about the long term benefit of these lands, work on issues that promote the maintenance of open space where people and families are involved!

Respectfully,

David Wortham
Owner/President/CEO
Caliche's Frozen Custard