

HARDING COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. 2017 - 56

**A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE VALUE OF NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS
TO HARDING COUNTY**

WHEREAS, a majority of Americans value national public lands as part of our national heritage and desire to have them protected for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations; and

WHEREAS, national public lands in New Mexico encompass vast tracts of grasslands, mountain landscapes, riparian habitats and desert ecosystems that collectively contain a diverse array of fauna and flora, as well as valuable natural resources; and

WHEREAS, many of the watersheds and irrigation systems essential to healthy wildlife, sustained economic activity and resilient communities originate on these lands; and

WHEREAS, national public lands are generally managed under a multiple-use mandate that requires collaborative stakeholder input at the local level, while encouraging volunteer activity and fostering intra-governmental collaboration; and

WHEREAS, access to and stewardship of national lands in New Mexico is important for Native American religious and cultural practices, as well as basic economic activities such as hunting, ranching, forestry, and many forms of outdoor recreation and traditional subsistence activities; and

WHEREAS, outdoor recreation on national public lands in New Mexico generates more than \$6 billion in estimated consumer spending each year, while employing more than 68,000 people; and

WHEREAS, almost 202,000 sportsmen participate in hunting, fishing and trapping, spending in excess of \$613 million annually in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, almost 1,560 Harding County sportsmen participate in hunting, fishing and trapping, spending \$1,463,199 annually in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, on an annual basis hunting, fishing and trapping contribute almost \$232,402 in labor income, over \$385,603 in gross domestic product, over \$47,387 in federal tax revenues and over \$68,126 in state and local tax revenues to Harding County; and

WHEREAS, proposals are being circulated among New Mexico counties favoring the transfer of national public lands to state government; and

WHEREAS, should national public lands be transferred to state ownership, New Mexico taxpayers would be liable for rehabilitating 3,989 abandoned mines at an estimated cost of up to \$842 million, as well as the cost of fighting wildfires in these areas—an amount in excess of \$240 million in FY 2011-12; and

WHEREAS, Harding County residents share in all of the benefits of national public lands located within Harding County and the State of New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, Harding County is the proud home of Mills Canyon, Kiowa National Grasslands, Canadian River Canyon and Mosquero Canyon;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Harding County Board of Commissioners:

- Supports continued national ownership and management of existing national public lands in Harding County, as well as in New Mexico and the United States generally, because of their irreplaceable value to our economy, quality of life and national heritage;
- Does not favor transfer of national public lands to the state because of the financial burden such a transfer would impose on New Mexico residents, as well as the increased risk of environmental degradation, profiteering and loss of public access to traditionally open areas; and
- Does strongly endorse robust public-private partnerships and active dialog between stakeholders and federal agencies in all aspects of national public lands management; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution shall be distributed to the New Mexico Congressional delegation, New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez, members of the State Legislature and the New Mexico Association of Counties.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2017, by the Board of County Commissioners of Harding County, State of New Mexico.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
HARDING COUNTY, NEW MEXICO**

Harold B. Maskey

, Chairman, District 2 For Against

Ab E. A.

, Vice Chairman, District 1 For Against

Debra J. Lumbard

, Member, District 3 For Against

ATTEST:

County Clerk