

Dear Chair Murkowski and Ranking Member Manchin;

The undersigned organizations, as “Sportsmen for the Rubies”, write to you in strong support of S. 258, the Ruby Mountains Protection Act, introduced recently by Senator Cortez Masto (D-NV). This legislation conserves the iconic Ruby Mountains by permanently withdrawing portions of the landscape from oil and gas exploration. Our organizations, which represent thousands of Nevada sportsmen and women, would like to thank the Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining for this May 14, 2019 hearing. The Sportsmen for the Rubies also urge the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to hold a markup on this issue and move this legislation forward to the Senate floor.

The Ruby Mountains are unique to Nevada’s landscape. Known as the “Swiss Alps of Nevada,” this area is arguably one of the most important tourism and recreational destinations in all of Nevada. The area has valuable wildlife resources, some found nowhere else in the lower 48.

The Ruby Mountains are home to the largest mule deer herd in Nevada. Each year this herd uses generations old migration corridors from summer range in the Ruby Mountains to and from wintering ranges, often traveling more than 50 miles. Due to the thriving mule deer herd, this hunting unit is one of the most celebrated and popular in the state, with profound economic importance. Hunters, anglers, backpackers, hikers and bird watchers come to the Rubies and help contribute to the \$165 million outdoor recreation economy in Elko County.

The Rubies are also a treasured place for important wildlife. Greater Sage Grouse habitat is abundant in the Ruby Mountains with bird numbers that allow an annual “Sage Grouse Experience” for birders far and wide to come view these iconic western birds. Habitat for this species is shrinking due to a number of factors including wildfire, invasive species and development. Additionally, the cold, clear water of many Ruby Mountain streams provide the best habitat in the state for threatened Lahontan Cutthroat Trout recovery.

The Rubies aren’t just a thriving boost to our economy and place to experience world-class wildlife, they are also sacred to the constituent Bands of the Te-Moak Tribe. The undersigned groups stand with the Tribe and urge passage of S.258 to protect their sacred mountain and this irreplaceable treasure in the State of Nevada.

Respectfully,

Sportsmen for the Rubies

Coalition for Nevada’s Wildlife  
Elko Bighorns Unlimited  
Fraternity of the Desert Bighorn  
Nevada Bighorns Unlimited  
Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, Midas Chapter  
Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, Fallon Chapter  
Nevada Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers  
Nevada Chukar Chasers

Nevada Muleys  
Nevada Sporting Dog Alliance  
Nevada Waterfowl Association  
Ruby Mountain Fly Fishers  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership  
Trout Unlimited

cc: Senator Cortez-Masto, Senator Rosen, Representative Amodei