

Daniel "Danny" Mayfield
Commissioner, District 1

Miguel M. Chavez
Commissioner, District 2

Robert A. Anaya
Commissioner, District 3



Kathy Holian
Commissioner, District 4

Liz Stefanics
Commissioner, District 5

Katherine Miller
County Manager

DATE: *October 14, 2014*

TO: *Board of County Commissioners*

VIA: *Katherine Miller, County Manager*

FROM: *Kathy Holian, Commissioner, District 4*

RE: **A Resolution Honoring the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act
(Commissioner Holian)**

ISSUE:

On the agenda for your consideration is a resolution recognizing the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act. Wilderness Week was held on September 14th – 20th.

BACKGROUND:

The Wilderness Act was written by Howard Zahniser in 1964. It created the legal definition of wilderness in the United States, and protected 9.1 million acres of federal land. It was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on September 3, 1964, which created the National Wilderness Preservation System.

In 2014, America celebrated "50 Years of Wilderness" Since it was signed into law a growing coalition of federal agencies, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, and other wilderness user groups have been created to document this historical commemoration honoring America's "True American Legacy of Wilderness."

ACTION REQUESTED

Commissioner Holian seeks board approval for the resolution.

THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
SANTA FE COUNTY

RESOLUTION NO. 2014- _____

A RESOLUTION HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE WILDERNESS ACT

WHEREAS, in 1964 the United States Congress passed the Wilderness Act (Pub.L. 88-577) by an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote, and this farsighted legislation was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on September 3, 1964;

WHEREAS, the Wilderness Act brought into being America's National Wilderness Preservation System which administers federal lands for the use and enjoyment of the American people, leaving the lands unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness, and providing for the protection of these areas and preservation of their wilderness character;

WHEREAS, as set forth in 16 U.S.C.A. § 1131, “[i]n order to assure that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition, it is hereby declared to be the policy of the Congress to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness”;

WHEREAS, wilderness is defined in the Wilderness Act as follows: “in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is recognized as Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, which generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable, and has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation”;

WHEREAS, in a presidential proclamation issued on September 1, 2011, President Barack Obama designated September as National Wilderness Month, and included the following language in that proclamation: “The mystery and wonder of wilderness is deeply rooted in our national character. For many of the first Americans – American Indians and Alaska Natives – the wilderness provided a source of sustenance and a foundation for their ways of life. Later, as explorers and the pioneers of a young country moved west, they found adventure and new beginnings in the landscapes of our Nation. From our earliest days, America's identity has been tied to the powerful waterfalls, soaring peaks, and vast plains of its land”;

WHEREAS, in the presidential proclamation President Obama also stated, "...in the 21st century, the importance of maintaining our wilderness heritage has only grown. Protecting our wilderness areas and their riches -- clean water, stretches of undisturbed land, thriving wildlife, and healthy ecosystems -- is critical to the health of our environment and our communities. Today, wilderness areas serve as places for us to roam, hunt, fish, and find solitude. They are also strong engines of local economies, providing tourism and recreation revenue for communities"; and

WHEREAS, inspired by Aldo Leopold and the Wilderness Act of 1964, New Mexico established the first designated wilderness area, the Gila Wilderness, and now there are twenty-five congressionally designated wilderness areas that cover one hundred nine million five hundred eleven thousand nine hundred sixty-six acres, allowing past, present and future New Mexicans to take special pride and additional pleasure in enjoying the benefits of wilderness.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Santa Fe County, to recognize the significance of the National Wilderness Preservation System to America's cultural, scientific, historical, and spiritual heritage.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the American wilderness be recognized as a place where everyone can experience the spirit that has shaped America.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that on this golden anniversary of the Wilderness Act, all Americans are urged to visit and enjoy wilderness areas, to learn their history and to aid in the continuing protection of America's precious national treasures.

APPROVED, ADOPTED AND PASSED this 14th day October, 2014.

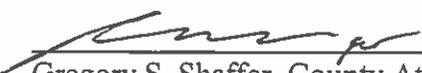
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Daniel W. Mayfield, Chairman

Attest:

Geraldine Salazar, Santa Fe County Clerk

Approved As To Form:


Gregory S. Shaffer, County Attorney



