SAN MIGUEL COUNTY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

ELAINE FISCHER ART GOODTIMES JOAN MAY

August19, 2015

The Honorable Michael Bennet
261 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Bennet:

We are writing you concerning our long-standing support for the San Juan Mountains Wilderness Act, and in the hope that you will take the lead on the legislation moving forward. As you know, the bill was first introduced in the House in 2009 by former Representative John Salazar, and soon thereafter by former Senator Mark Udall and yourself. Both the House and Senate bills were marked up and reported, but never saw a final vote.

The bills were based on years of work by regional citizens and local governments, and continue to enjoy broad and deep support in the region. San Miguel, Ouray, and San Juan Counties remain in full support, as well as numerous affected stakeholders and well over 120 local businesses. Advocates worked diligently over many years to fine-tune the proposal to ensure that it won't negatively effect users of the areas proposed for protection. Given the amount of work put into this proposal, and the level of support after many years, we consider this a major piece of unfinished business in the region.

You have been a great champion of community based land protection initiatives, and you skillfully shepherded the Hermosa Creek legislation to enactment – we congratulate you for that. We respectfully request that you take on the San Juan Mountains legislation and navigate it through the Senate. We stand ready to assist you in any way to bring the San Juan Mountains legislation to completion.

Thank you very much,

SAN MIGUEL COUNTY, COLORADO
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Joan May

Joan May, Chair

cc: Scott Tipton, US Representative 3rd District Colorado
Cory Gardner, US Senator Colorado

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