



New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light

PO Box 27162

Albuquerque, New Mexico 87125

www.nm-ipl.org**info@nm-ipl.org**505-266-6966

April 9, 2014

Dear President Obama,

As spiritual leaders within our congregations, communities and organizations in New Mexico, we write to ask you to designate the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks as a National Monument.

We do not approach this subject on the ground of policy or politics. Rather, we know the sacredness of this land and the need to protect it. All of our religious traditions hold land, water, air, and wilderness as sacred and the meeting place of God or the places of Holy and numinous experiences. Places such as the Organ Mountain-Desert Peaks have been prayerful retreat and renewal places for people of all spiritual traditions throughout the ages. It is important to us to protect such places for the inspiration of future generations; for cherishing water sources and our watersheds as we move deeper into climate change; and for reverencing the Holy speaking through irreplaceable gifts of creation.

The Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks of Southern New Mexico has been the gateway to the north from Mexico along the Camino Real for hundreds of years. Its majestic, craggy peaks were a signal to travelers and settlers alike that they had entered another land. In addition, the public lands in Doña Ana County contain many sacred sites for Native American's. The Organ, Potrillo, Robledo, Doña Ana and Uvas Mountains are key fixtures of the entire region and national treasures that must be preserved.

Responsibility for taking care of creation and its natural gifts are the moral responsibility of each of us. We are stewards of the land, air and water and that is why we feel it is important to clearly state our support for permanent protection of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks region.

We want to ensure a heritage of place that inspires future generations and touches their souls as they face life's challenges. May we always protect sacred places. We also realize as pastors and faith leaders that our people continue to face economic challenges and that protecting gems, such as Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks region assists with local employment and economic benefits through tourism, amenity migration and service industry growth that offer sustenance to our communities during difficult economic times.

We are grateful for your leadership and understanding of this important concern. We wait in hope for your leadership to create the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument. The people of faith across New Mexico would welcome and applaud this bold action from you, our President.

In peace and good,

Most Rev. Michael J. Sheehan, Archbishop
Archdiocese of Santa Fe

The Right Rev'd Michael L. Vono, D.D.
IX Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande

Very Rev. John D. Cannon, Chancellor
Archdiocese of Santa Fe

Fr. Kevin Finnegan, Chancellor
Diocese of Gallup

The Rev. Dr. Donna L. McNeil, Executive Director
New Mexico Conference of Churches, Bernalillo

Sr. Joan Brown,osf, Franciscan Sister
Executive Director of New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light, New Mexico

Rev Sue Joiner
Called Back to the Well, Albuquerque

Sister Rose Marie Cecchini, MM, Coordinator
Office of Life, Peace, Justice & Creation Stewardship
Catholic Charities Gallup, Gallup

Anne Avellone, M. Div, LMSW
Director, Office of Social Justice and Respect Life, Archdiocese of Santa Fe

Imam Shafi Abdul Aziz, Islamic Center of New Mexico
Albuquerque

Fr. Daniel Gutierrez, Canon to the Ordinary
Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande.

Kathryn Turnipseed, Dharma Teacher
Buddhist, Albuquerque

Fr. Richard Rohr, O.F.M., Founding Director
Center for Action and Contemplation, Albuquerque

Rt. Rev. Joel P. Garner, O.Praem., Abbot
Santa Maria de la Vid Abbey, Albuquerque

The Rev. Holly Beaumont, D. Min., Organizing Director
Interfaith Worker Justice – New Mexico

Sister Marlene Perrotte, rsm, Mercy Sister
Partnership for Earth Spirituality, Albuquerque

Rev. Talitha Arnold, Senior Minister
The United Church of Santa Fe, A United Church of Christ, Santa Fe, NM

Rabbi Larry Karol, Jewish (Reform)
Las Cruces, New Mexico

Rev. Brandon Johnson, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Associate Minister of United Church of Santa Fe, Santa Fe

Rev. Harry W. Eberts III, Pastor
First Presbyterian Church, Santa Fe

Gerald M. Kane, Rabbi Emeritus
Temple Beth-El, Las Cruces

Rev. Sarah Tevis Townes, Pastor for Christian Education and Community Life
Church of the Good Shepherd, UCC, Albuquerque

Rev. Laurie Lewis, Lead Minister
Monte Vista Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Albuquerque

Joy Dinero, Director of Social Ministries
Immaculate Conception Church, Albuquerque

Lynn R. Anner-Bolieu, B.Sc.; M.Div.
Deacon (Ret.); Episcopal Church of Navajoland

Fr. Warren Broussard, S.J., Pastor
Immaculate Conception Church, Albuquerque

Christina Spahn, Pastoral Associate for Outreach
Holy Rosary Catholic Community, Albuquerque

Rabbi Paul Citrin, Jewish
Taos Jewish Center, Taos

Rev. Larry Bernard, O.F.M.
Pastor, San Diego Mission, Jemez Pueblo

The Rev. Angela Herrera, Associate Minister
First Unitarian Church, Albuquerque

Rev. Andrew Clouse, Associate Pastor for Youth
Albuquerque Mennonite, Albuquerque

Rev. Anita Amstutz, Pastor
Albuquerque Mennonite Church, Albuquerque

Eleanore Voutselas, Coordinator Santa Fe Pax Christi
Santa Maria del la Paz Catholic Community, Santa Fe

The Rev. Canon Carole McGowan, Honorary Canon
Cathedral of St. John, Albuquerque

The Rev. Susan Allison-Hatch, Missioner to the Homeless
Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande

Lynn Lee, Chairperson, Justice and Peace committee
St. Bede's Episcopal Church, Santa Fe

Rev. Lorelei Kay
Presbyterian Church (USA), Gallup

The Rev. Lin S. Lilley, Interim Priest
St. Thomas of Canterbury, Albuquerque

Sr. Patricia Bietsch, Pastoral Minister
St. Mary Mission, Tohatchi

The Rev. Paul Moore, Rector
Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, Silver City, NM

Fr. Adam Ortega, Pastor
Cristo Rey Parish as well and Santo Nino Regional Catholic School, Santa Fe

Rev. George V. Salazar, Pastor
Immaculate Conception Parish, Las Vegas

Rev. Stephen J. Miller, D.Min.
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Albuquerque

Rabbi Harry Rosenfeld, Rabbi
Congregation Albert, Albuquerque

Rev. Jennifer Phillips, Pastor
St. Francis Episcopal Church, Rio Rancho

Rabbi Deborah J. Brin
Congregation Nahalat Shalom

Rev. Anne Morawski, Lutheran Campus Pastor
UNM and CNM, Albuquerque

The Rev. Philip L. Wangberg, Pastor
All Saints Lutheran Church, ELCA, Albuquerque

The Rev. Christopher McLaren, Rector
St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Albuquerque

The Rev. Dr. Wallace Ford
Retired clergy, Albuquerque