

Fraternity of the Desert Bighorn * Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, Fallon

Wild Sheep Foundation

American Woodcock Society * Archery Trade Association * Backcountry Hunters & Anglers * Boone and Crockett Club * Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation * Conservation Force * Council to Advance Hunting and Shooting Sports * Dallas Safari Club * Delta Waterfowl * Houston Safari Club * Masters of Foxhounds Association * Mule Deer Foundation * National Bobwhite and Grassland Initiative * National Deer Association * National Shooting Sports Foundation * National Wild Turkey Federation * Orion: The Hunters' Institute * Pheasants Forever * Pope and Young Club * Professional Outfitters and Guides of America * Quail Forever * Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation * Ruffed Grouse Society * Safari Club International * Sportsmen's Alliance * Whitetails Unlimited * Wildlife Forever * Wildlife Management Institute * Wildlife Mississippi

July 20, 2022

The Honorable Joe Manchin
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
US Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Barrasso
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural
Resources
2406 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Manchin and Ranking Member Barrasso:

We write representing thousands of conservationists in Nevada and millions around the country to oppose Title III of S. 567. The bill is scheduled for consideration at the business meeting on July 21, 2022.

As previously communicated to Senator Cortez Masto, the sponsor, the proposed Wilderness designation in Title III would interfere with her own efforts – and ours – to resolve the primary issue on the Desert National Wildlife Refuge.

Management of the Refuge is shared by the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Air Force but lacks effective coordination in providing access to managers and visitors. New direction from Congress in 2020 has not been executed adequately, just as the 20-year-old previous direction

was never fulfilled. Until this issue is resolved, further constraints on access for recreation and management are premature and counterproductive.

Second, this or any new Wilderness designation should include the latest language, developed with bipartisan support, to preserve management access. This includes ensuring that existing management plans be updated to comport with the directives of a new designation. Also, provision must be made for the Secretary to control invasive species, and for outfitters and guides to operate (which multiplies opportunities for visitors). Furthermore, designation must preserve the means and methods of state wildlife agencies in exercising their authority to monitor, track, and handle wildlife – including the use of mechanical equipment as addressed in House Report 101-405, Appendix B, (see Pub. Law 108-424, Sec. 209), as has been included by reference in other Wilderness designations.

Third, workable Wilderness designations require collaboration. An official map of the proposed boundaries must be drawn and discussed. Technical assistance from the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) must be obtained on needs for access for wildlife and the habitat management. Stakeholders who provide volunteers, labor, and materials for habitat management projects should be consulted.

Thank you for your consideration,

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