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**Sierra Club statement on Biden Administration Protections for Buffalo Tract
50-year Mineral Withdrawal Will Protect Sacred Sites, Wildlife Corridors and Boost
Recreation**

Placitas, N.M. – Today, the Biden Administration [announced new protections](#) for critical public and ancestral tribal lands in New Mexico. An order issued by Interior Secretary Deb Haaland protects more than 4,200 acres of New Mexico landscapes known as the Buffalo Tract and the Crest of Montezuma from gravel mining and other extraction for the next 50 years. The Pueblos of San Felipe and Santa Ana were central in advocating for the protection of these places that are their ancestral homelands. For over twenty-five years, residents in and around Placitas have worked to protect Buffalo Tract, the Crest of Montezuma, and adjacent lands from gravel mining. Community members have long raised concerns about the negative impacts of mining on public health, quality of life, sacred sites, and air and water resources.

In response, Our Wild New Mexico Organizing Representative, Miya King-Flaherty released the following statement:

"This is welcome news and Senator Heinrich and Congresswoman Stansbury have been instrumental in this effort. The Biden administration committed to protecting 30% of US lands and waters by 2030 and slashing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% below 2005 levels by 2030. If we are to meet these goals, actions like mineral withdrawals that prevent new mineral leasing and mining will be key and play an important role in conserving ecosystems, protecting ecological and cultural resources, and protecting wildlife corridors.

"We're grateful that Secretary Haaland finalized the withdrawal to protect places like Buffalo Tract, the Crest of Montezuma, and adjacent lands for years to come."