



Letters

Protecting the Rio Grande del Norte

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Three cheers for Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and Congressman Ben Ray Luján for reintroducing legislation to protect the Rio Grande del Norte.

Safeguarding this wild place as a national conservation area with wilderness not only will preserve an important piece of the Northern New Mexico landscape but also boost our state's outdoor recreation economy, which supports 47,000 jobs and contributes billions of dollars in sales and services.

Local on-the-ground support for this effort is strong too, as evidenced by the overwhelming positive input given to Interior Secretary Salazar at a listening session in Taos in December.

The last Congress failed to designate any public lands for protection, and while I hope this time the bill gets over the finish line, I am grateful that its champions have also asked the president to consider safeguarding it as a national monument.

However we get Rio Grande del Norte protected, the important thing is to keep it the way it is for all time. We owe this to our children.