



National Cattlemen's  
Beef Association



March 24, 2014

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker  
H-232, US Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
H-204, US Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: Ensuring Public Involvement in the Creation of National Monuments Act**

Dear Speaker Boehner and Minority Leader Pelosi:

Public Lands Council (PLC) and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) strongly support H.R. 1459, the *Ensuring Public Involvement in the Creation of National Monuments Act*. We appreciate your leadership in taking up this important legislation, which will help protect our members' livelihoods into the future by preventing rash, oversized national monument designations that impose new regulations and restrictions on multiple uses such as livestock grazing.

PLC is the only national organization dedicated solely to representing the roughly 22,000 ranchers operating on federal lands. NCBA is the nation's oldest and largest national trade association for cattlemen and women, representing more than 170,000 cattle producers through direct membership and their state affiliates. PLC and NCBA are producer-directed and work to preserve the heritage and strength of the industry by providing a stable business environment for our members. Sweeping national monument designations have had detrimental impacts on our members in the past, and we encourage a thorough public process with economic analysis and public comment prior to the designation of any new monument that stands to further damage our industry and local economies.

Even though many special land designations, including monuments, often "grandfather in" existing grazing practices, over time the trend is undeniable: grazing numbers are reduced either by direct agency decisions, or because the cost of doing business in the designated area simply becomes prohibitive. The diminished presence of ranchers and livestock on the range contributes to the degradation of range health on federal lands, and encourages the ex-urban development of the associated private lands. Given the cultural, economic and environmental impact that national monuments have, we fully support Representative Bishop's proposal to require that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process be applied prior to their designation. Though we believe that NEPA has often been misused to stymie productive multiple-use activities, we believe that it is a matter of fairness and common sense that NEPA apply to the president in the same way it applies to everyone else. By providing an analysis of the true impacts, allowing for public review and comment, and providing for local government input as required by NEPA, H.R. 1459 will improve the likelihood that carefully considered decisions will be made when it comes to national monuments.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue. Keeping ranchers in business is good policy for conservation of both private and public land. By preventing *de facto* wilderness designations by the executive branch, the *Ensuring Public Involvement in the Creation of National Monuments Act* will promote greater stability for the livestock industry. This, in turn, will allow for the continuation of the broad public benefits provided by ranchers, the caretakers of our public lands and providers of food and fiber for the nation.

Sincerely,

Public Lands Council

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

*cc: Members of the House of Representatives*