

Date: _____

BLM Rio Puerco Field Office
Attn: Placitas Withdrawal
100 Sun Avenue NE, Suite 300
Albuquerque, NM 87109

To whom it may concern:

I am _____ and I live at _____ in _____ NM _____

I SUPPORT THE PLACITAS WITHDRAWAL BECAUSE:

MINING: Gravel mining is a threat to our land, water, health and the entire ecosystem. Given that local government (Sandoval County) is not able to regulate air quality and water usage on BLM lands surrounding Placitas through zoning restrictions, this administrative action is our only hope of keeping Placitas the vibrant community many of us chose to retire to. For many others, their families have lived here for generations and they hope to pass the land to their descendants. Mining of any kind is incompatible with the quality of life we expect and deserve regardless of economic status. The benefits retirees and other residents bring to the area far outweigh any benefit Sandoval County might derive from mining.

WILDLIFE CORRIDORS: I wish to see the mountains of New Mexico connected by protected passage for wildlife of all kinds. The Sandia Mountains are not yet fully ringed with development. At their north end is the only wildlife passage still open and unobstructed. The U.S. Forest Service manages a portion of this area while the BLM manages the Crest of Montezuma. This one wildlife corridor, this one narrow opening, provides the Sandias with a vital connection to the Rio Grande and our mountains to the north. The way to keep this area wild for as long as possible is to restrict human activities. The area known as the Buffalo Tract is also used by wildlife to travel through their habitat along Las Huertas Creek to the Rio Grande. Mining is not compatible with wildlife corridors.

RECREATION: The Buffalo Tract is in a natural, scenic setting with proximity to the highest population area of Placitas, greater Albuquerque and Santa Fe, which makes the location popular for quiet recreational activities such as hiking, horseback riding, sightseeing, birding and biking. My desire is to see this large tract developed into a low-impact, multi-use recreation area with some handicap accessibility.

CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE: We need to respect the significance of these lands to the peoples who have been here for hundreds, even thousands of years. The BLM lands in Placitas are considered ancestral and sacred to the Pueblos of San Felipe and Santa Ana and have historic significance to the San Antonio de Las Huertas Land Grant heirs (granted to them by the King of Spain in 1721). Desecration of these lands and destruction of archeological sites cannot be reversed regardless of the amount of reclamation promised (and too often, not completed).

The proposed Placitas Withdrawal is a step in the right direction toward protecting these tracts of BLM land in Placitas for generations to come.

Respectfully yours,