

Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico proposed resolution for the 2017 Annual Meeting of BCHA

**RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL GRASS-ROOTS CAMPAIGN
TO:**

**PREVENT THE CONVEYANCE, SALE OR TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITY OF THE NATION'S FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS, AND**

**ENSURE THAT THE VARIOUS FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCIES
HAVE THE RESOURCES TO PROTECT AND MANAGE OUR PUBLIC LANDS,
AND**

**ENSURE EQUESTRIAN ACCESS AND TRADITIONS WILL BE PRESERVED
FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS ON OUR PUBLIC LANDS**

WHEREAS, the mission of Back Country Horsemen of America is to work to ensure public lands remain open to recreational equestrian saddle and pack stock use, and

WHEREAS, the public lands of this nation are a national treasure and our heritage that are primarily managed by the United States Departments of Interior and Agriculture, and

WHEREAS, these public lands are held in perpetuity to benefit future generations of Americans because of the renewable resources and historical and recreational value, and

WHEREAS, we support the sustainable management of resources on federal lands in cooperation with other stakeholders, and

WHEREAS, the conveyance, sale or transfer of management authority of these lands will remove large acreages from the nation's federal public lands system, fragment existing land areas, compromise public access, and set a precedent for the privatization and exploitation of our public land, and

WHEREAS, the disposal of these federal public lands will decrease the opportunity for all recreational use of these lands, and

WHEREAS, congress submitted over 100 anti-public lands-related bills over the past six years, and

WHEREAS, at the start of the 115TH session of Congress (2017-2018), similar legislation is being introduced that will convey, sell or transfer management authority to states, eliminate monument designations and other public land & water protection regulations, allow bicycles or other mechanized modes of transportation in Wilderness, provide funding (\$50 million) to expedite disposal of our public lands and change designations that determine public lands and their associated resources (oil & gas, minerals, timber, grazing, etc.) have no value, which streamlines the disposal process and prevents any objection to the process, and

WHEREAS, the 2016 Republican National Platform requested that Congress immediately pass universal legislation providing for a timely and orderly mechanism requiring the federal government to convey certain federally controlled public lands to states, and

WHEREAS, the Executive (President) and Legislative (Senate & House) branches of the US Government are controlled by the Republican party and Western lawmakers control critical committees that oversee America's public lands and the federal purse strings that fund their management, and

WHEREAS, the President is signing legislation or Executive Orders that restrict or eliminate public input on land management, eliminates regulations that prevent degradation of our public land, waters and wildlife habitat – all under the guise that these measures hinder “economic development and jobs”, and

WHEREAS, the President is evaluating the reorganization of the federal government with the goal of significantly reducing or eliminating the size of the Federal government – which could significantly hinder the various Federal land management agencies' ability to protect, manage, sustain or restore our public lands, waters and watersheds, trails and related infrastructure and therefore could severely limit access, and

WHEREAS, the majority of voters across political parties support the Federal government's role in the protection and maintenance of our National Parks, Monuments, public lands and natural places and support adequate funding for the land management agencies to accomplish and fulfill these responsibilities, and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Back Country Horsemen of America will develop and implement a national grass roots campaign for the following priority issues:

- 1) Prevent the conveyance, sale or transfer of management authority of our Federal public lands as per BCHA's 2016 national resolution;

- 2) Take appropriate measures to ensure that our public lands and trails remain open to recreational equestrian saddle and pack stock use;
- 3) Ensure that management of our public lands remains under the control of the Departments of Interior and Agriculture;
- 4) Pursue adequate funding and staff for the various Federal land management agencies in the Department of Interior & Agriculture to enable them to protect, manage, maintain and restore our federal public lands and associated infrastructure with emphasis on trails, trailheads and the network of roads that provide access;
- 5) Support legislation and funding for the Land & Water Conservation Fund or similar legislation that provides or improves access to our Federal public lands;
- 6) Support legislation to create a wildfire disaster funding mechanism which will prevent the diversion of funds (50+ percent) from the various Federal land management agencies' programs dedicated to the management, restoration and maintenance of our public lands and related infrastructure;
- 7) Pursue increased funding for trails managed by the Forest Service, National Park Service and BLM;
- 8) Take appropriate measures to ensure the integrity of wilderness with emphasis on not allowing bicycles or other mechanized devices to access or utilize designated Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas or wilderness quality lands;
- 9) Coordinate BCHA's national campaign with other partners that are aligned with our values;
- 10) Pursue other issues as needed to ensure BCHA values and traditions are perpetuated for present and future generations.