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**Colorado Businesses Support National Monuments, Urge their Congressional Delegation to Stand Up to Trump's Attack**

The Continental Divide Trail Coalition, in partnership with the Colorado Mountain Club, sent a letter today from over 180 small businesses across the state to the Colorado congressional delegation and Governor Hickenlooper asking them to urge the Trump administration to stop its unprecedented National Monuments "review," that aims to weaken public lands protections and shrink borders of recently created National Monuments.

The letter was sent just moments after President Trump announced in Salt Lake City that his administration would attempt to undo protections and shrink the size of Bears Ears National Monument and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in Utah by hundreds of thousands of acres to allow development, a move that many legal scholars say the president lacks the authority to execute and only an act of congress can approve.

The letter from business owners calls on the bipartisan Colorado congressional delegation to continue its support of public lands, which in part has brought the famed Outdoor Retailer show to Colorado from Utah following what many in the outdoor industry viewed as a series of attacks on access and public lands originating in the Beehive State. The letter cites the robust outdoor recreation economy, access for customers and employees, and increased tourism in Colorado that protected public lands and national monuments create, adding significantly to the state's economy with \$28 billion in consumer spending. "Potential recommended changes to national monuments erodes our faith in the current Administration to keep our state's national monuments – and public lands more broadly – safe for future generations," the letter states.

Teresa Martinez, Executive Director of the Continental Divide Trail Coalition, said, "Aside from the incredible natural beauty of these public lands that define this state and its outdoor lifestyle, we know that business depends on protecting these places rather than creating a situation where they can be auctioned off. In fact, in a recent survey we found that an overwhelming 95% of businesses polled say that protecting, promoting and enhancing public lands in general is important to the well-being of businesses, jobs, and their community's economy."

P.T. Wood, owner of Wood's High Mountain Distillery and mayor of Salida said, "It is critical that our Colorado congressional delegation stands up to efforts to undermine public lands like this. We have seen the benefits of permanently protecting Browns Canyon National Monument here in the Arkansas Valley, not only for our businesses, but in also knowing that this treasure will be preserved for future generations of all Americans to access."

More than 2.8 million Americans wrote to oppose attacks on public lands during the public comment period on President Trump's National Monument review. More than 98% of all comments received expressed support for maintaining or expanding national monuments.

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