August 10, 2018

Hello guardians of lands we hold sacred;

If the bombardment of 2018 is any indicator, it’s no wonder that this request has been our first opportunity this year to rally member financial support for the SLV Ecosystem Council. It’s easy to Donate on-line: www.slvec.org. Wow, what a journey it has been.

Let’s count the ways, the current Administration has been: 1) ignoring successes of National Monuments/Parks and greatly downsizing two 2) proposing rollbacks to the Endangered Species Act 3) halting fossil fuels producers obligation to track methane emissions and overrule EPA scientists’ plea to ban insecticide chlorpyrifos 4) cutting NASA’s climate monitoring program 5) rolling back car emission standards 6) backing out of Paris Climate Change agreement 7) through FEMA, expelling “climate change” from its strategic plan, on the heels of one of the most expensive years of natural disasters in US history 8) proposing cuts to climate and clean energy research and programs 9) through EPA, loosening regulations on toxic air pollutants 10) proving so difficult to work with that the National Park Advisory Board resigns, which was first chartered by congress in 1935 11) determining that Climate change is no longer a national security threat 12) through the Interior Department, proposing largest ever oil and gas leasing program……

So, how is SLVEC responding? We have been proactive to public land attacks by providing public response, due largely in part to the enormous cooperation among national, regional and local coalitions of environmental and conservation organizations throughout the country. This coalition is a dedicated group of citizens who keep their eyes on the big picture and their feet firmly planted on the ground. We will continue to challenge bad ideas that impact public lands, health and the environment and present policy alternatives that embrace solutions to current ecological challenges.

Public policy response is poetry in motion

This year, SLVEC coordinated a coalition who recently galvanized public comment to challenge and delay the sale of 18,000 acres of potential oil and gas leases in the Huerfano valley, located on the back side of the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve. Some of these nominated parcels are also adjacent to designated Wilderness in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. The Navajo Nation has requested formal consultation with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), before this sale can move forward. The Navajo consider Mt. Blanca (near this potential lease sale) to be a unique area and important to ancestral lands.
Wolf Creek

After almost twenty years of SLVEC spearheading public comment and challenging the Village at Wolf Creek developers in court, Federal District Court Judge Matsch set aside the latest Forest Service Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in May 2017, citing “The Forest Service cannot abdicate its responsibility to protect the forest by making an attempt at an artful dodge.”

Well, guess what, The Rio Grande National Forest just announced in July its intention to circumvent Judge Matsch’s federal court ruling and instead, move ahead with providing access to the developers by choosing another alternative (C) previously analyzed in the above mentioned EIS. The Forest Service is using ANILCA (Alaska National Interests Conservation Act) as justification.

We have a 45 day comment period ensuing, deadline is September 4th, the EIS and draft ROD are available on-line, at: https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=35945. E-Mail comments to: r02f09admin_review@fs.fed.us. For further information, please go to our website: www.slvec.org. SLVEC is sending out an e-alert with further details.

SLVEC recently published an SLV recycling brochure, we hope you received it in your post office box. If not, it is available on-line at www.slvec.org or contact our office and we will mail it to you. (719) 589-1518 or e-mail: info@slvec.org. There are recycling resources currently available, and so much more waste reduction infrastructure we could build over the next decade!

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR.** Finally, please join with us in celebration with the SLV Foods Coalition to commemorate the SLV Ecosystem Council’s 20th year by receiving an “Activist of the Year” Badger award from Fund for Wild Nature. It will be a fun day at the Rio Grande Farm Park, Alamosa, Sunday, August 26th in the afternoon, our presentation will be at 4:00 PM. The Farm Park is located across from Cole Park, via the foot bridge-- or off highway 17, across from Loaf and Jug.

**We need your financial support to continue this critical work. We can strive together to preserve clean air, water and wildscapes!** Public policy response truly is poetry in motion.

Sincerely,

Christine Canaly, Director
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“your public lands advocacy organization”