

December 18, 2022

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader McCarthy,

On behalf of the **six Utah rural counties** that constitute the Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area, I am writing in **support of the inclusion of the National Heritage Area Act, S. 1942, in any year-end omnibus package**. S. 1942 will reauthorize both of Utah National Heritage Areas, Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area (MPNHA) and Great Basin NHA, for a period of 15 years. S. 1942 also codifies robust protections for private property rights, an issue of great importance in the rural west. Currently, 591 counties across the United States are home to 55 National Heritage Areas (NHAs) authorized by Congress. NHAs serve as economic catalysts for communities across the country, collectively supporting tens of thousands of jobs and contributing billions of dollars to local economies.

We believe the **MPNHA has distinguished itself in leveraging federal funds**. By keeping administrative expenses low, we have maximized grants for local projects. Between 2006 (when the MPNHA was authorized) and 2022, **we received \$4.1 million in federal funds**. In that same time frame, **we supported projects valued at \$54.1 million**, which comes to **\$13 in matching funding** from state and local governments, nonprofit organizations, and individual donors **for every federal dollar**.

The six counties in our heritage area, with a cumulative population of 68,000, are rural and economically disadvantaged. The area is below national and state norms in household income and job creation. Most counties in the heritage area have above average unemployment. Based on a conservative multiplier, the MPNHA, by helping spur **\$54.1 million in projects**, contributed to a **\$90 million economic impact in Mormon Pioneer Heritage Area counties**.

Existing and future NHAs face ongoing uncertainty due to the congressional reauthorization process that frequently puts federal funding for NHAs at risk. Congressional authorizations for 35 NHAs, including both Utah NHAs, are set to expire in 2023, with 10 more following March 2024.

The authorization for NHAs provide funding stability for communities to improve the local economy, quality of life and tax base through locally controlled public-private partnerships. NHAs foster investments in historic and natural resource preservation and cultural heritage development. In order to sustain their important work, NHAs need long-term predictability.

Sponsored by Senators Debbie Stabenow and Roy Blunt, the National Heritage Area Act, S. 1942, would establish common sunset dates for 45 National Heritage Areas in 35 states by extending the authorization for 15 years. It would further establish the first-ever standardized criteria for designating new NHAs and strengthen accountability by creating an evaluation process for existing sites. S. 1942 was reported favorably of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and placed on the Senate Legislative Calendar on September 21, 2022.

The House has also advanced similar legislation, having passed the bipartisan National Heritage Area Act, H.R. 1316, as part of the Protecting America's Wilderness and Public Lands Act in February 2021.

I strongly support this bipartisan legislation and urge its inclusion in any year-end omnibus package. I thank you for your leadership and respectfully request your support of the National Heritage Area Act, S. 1942.

Sincerely,



Monte Bona
Director
Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area

On behalf of the following supporters,

Government

1. Scott Bartholomew- Sanpete County Commission Chair
2. Kevin Christensen - Sanpete County Travel & Economic Development
3. Lori Nay- Mayor, Gunnison City and Executive Director of Casino Star Theatre
4. Janet Fautin- Mayor, Town of Marysvale,
5. Kim Soper- Mayor, Panguitch City
6. Brent Chamberlain- Kane County Commission
7. Roger Roper- Utah Division of State History
8. Mike Olsen- Mayor, Mt. Pleasant City
9. Garth Ogden- Six County Association of Governments
10. Stephen Lisonbee- Utah Center for Rural Life
11. Adus Dorsey- Wayne County
12. Johnny Parsons- Mayor, Monroe City
13. Kelly Stowell- CEBA Kanab Utah

14. Dawn Coates- Mt. Pleasant City Library
15. Darin Bushman- Piute County Commission
16. Shaun Kjar- Ephriam City Manager
17. Kent Barton- Manti City Manager

Businesses

18. Robert Stevens- Sanpete Messenger
19. Paige Frame- McKinnon-Mulherin Inc.
20. David Grow- Growth Factors
21. Janiel Segó- Beck's Home Furnishings
22. George Jones- Track 89 North and South
23. Jon Swapp- Eureka Roofing, LLC.
24. Bim Oliver- Bim Oliver Consulting
25. Faylyn Catmull - CentraCom
26. Scott Griffin- Griffin Paint
27. Bill Burgoyne- Solar Tek
28. Jack Widdison- White Peak Ranch
29. Thomas Plustwik- Thomas Plustwik Restoration
30. Brad Smith- Foremost West
31. Nicolas Mooney- Restoration
32. Jesse Gilstrap- Restoration

Individuals

33. L. Randall Wootton- Volunteer
34. Mark and Vicky Allen- Allred Hotel Spring City
35. Marcus Ewell- Discovery Road
36. Sandra Bigler- Former Mayor and City Council Member
37. Emery Polelonema- Native American Ombudsman
38. Steven Clark- Mt. Pleasant Mainstreet Committee
39. Hannah Bowles- Former Intern
40. Mike Earing- Volunteer
41. Maryda Gallo- Discovery Road
42. Ginny Oliver- Discovery Road
43. Ann Bath- Discovery Road
44. Teresa Ewell- Volunteer
45. Brooke Allred- Former director of public relations
46. Sheenah Christensen- Volunteer
47. Sierrah Massey- Volunteer

Non-Profits

48. Courtney Syme- Spring City Veterans Memorial Association
49. Jerry Klinger- Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation
50. Alison Anderson- Friends of Historic Spring City
51. Paul Applegarth- Wasatch Academy
52. Wendy Hacking- North Sanpete Arts Council
53. J. Anthony LaGuardia- Italian Center of the west

54. Cindy Shogren- Coffee Depot Gathering Place
55. Robert Williams- Teasdale Historical Society

56. Gloria Winter- Ephraim Co-op
57. Steven Clark- Panoramaland RC&D
58. Gaylynn Widdison- Skyline Eventing
59. Tudy Standlee- Mt. Pleasant Pioneer Museum and Relic House
60. Randee Jaques- Sanpete County Western 4H Horse Council
61. Amy Jorgensen- Granary Arts
62. Clive Romney- Utah Pioneer Heritage Arts
63. Lynn Barton- Central Utah Back Country Horsemen
64. Chad Lyman- Escalante Heritage Center