

1 A MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND FISH TO WORK WITH THE
3 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE TO DETERMINE THE FEASIBILITY OF
4 CONDUCTING LIMITED-ENTRY BOW HUNTS FOR ELK IN THE BACKCOUNTRY
5 OF BANDELIER NATIONAL MONUMENT.

6
7 WHEREAS, Bandelier national monument in the Jemez
8 mountain range was established in 1916 and is comprised of
9 nearly forty thousand acres; and

10 WHEREAS, by 1916, unregulated hunting had eliminated elk
11 from the Jemez mountain range, and other wildlife game
12 species were on the brink of elimination in the Jemez
13 mountains as well; and

14 WHEREAS, today, elk have been restored to the Jemez
15 mountains and have grown rapidly in population, largely
16 through conservation efforts funded by hunters; and

17 WHEREAS, hunting on public lands is an important
18 management tool to ensure the health of the ecosystem,
19 particularly in the absence of some species of large, natural
20 predators; and

21 WHEREAS, in October 1976, nearly seventy percent of the
22 backcountry of Bandelier national monument became a
23 designated wilderness area, allowing greater focus on the
24 restoration of elk and other endangered wildlife; and

25 WHEREAS, today, these remote areas of the backcountry

1 see few visitors, but they could offer a unique backcountry
2 experience to hunters; and

3 WHEREAS, on other land managed by the national park
4 service, overpopulation of wild ungulates has been shown to
5 cause long-term habitat degradation; and

6 WHEREAS, instances of habitat degradation of aspens and
7 other native plant species that are heavily browsed by elk
8 have been documented in Bandelier national monument, putting
9 the regeneration of aspen stands at risk; and

10 WHEREAS, a proposed transfer of the management of Valles
11 Caldera national preserve to the national park service
12 includes a requirement that a hunting program be established
13 at Valles Caldera national preserve; and

14 WHEREAS, given that Valles Caldera national preserve is
15 contiguous to Bandelier national monument, establishing a
16 hunting program in the backcountry of Bandelier national
17 monument should also be considered; and

18 WHEREAS, a limited-entry bow hunt for elk in the
19 backcountry portions of Bandelier national monument could
20 provide an important management tool for preserving the
21 ecological integrity of the monument lands and could help to
22 redistribute elk onto surrounding national forest lands; and

23 WHEREAS, the department of game and fish is charged with
24 managing wildlife in trust for the public; and

25 WHEREAS, the national park service oversees and manages

1 all of the national parks, including Bandelier national
2 monument and, potentially, Valles Caldera national preserve;

3 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
4 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department of game and fish be
5 requested to work with the national park service to determine
6 the feasibility of conducting limited-entry bow hunts for elk
7 in the backcountry of Bandelier national monument; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the feasibility study
9 consider the appropriateness of requesting federal
10 legislation to permit the United States secretary of the
11 interior to allow limited-entry bow hunting of elk to
12 preserve the ecological health of backcountry areas and to
13 provide expanded hunting opportunities in Bandelier national
14 monument for New Mexico residents; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of game and
16 fish formulate a report of the findings and recommendations
17 of the feasibility study and present the report to the
18 appropriate interim committee by October 2011; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of game and
20 fish transmit the feasibility study findings to the members
21 of the New Mexico congressional delegation for further
22 consideration; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
24 transmitted to the superintendent of Bandelier national
25 monument, the United States secretary of the interior, the

