



2018 NEW MEXICO CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

U.S. HOUSE

Outdoor recreation including hunting and fishing is a multi-billion-dollar industry in New Mexico and the United States, supporting jobs and economic development in rural communities. But for many sportsmen and women, hunting and fishing are more than a pastime – they are a passion. Hunters and anglers care deeply about wildlife, habitat and the public lands they have used for generations. They also have a long track record of civic engagement.

For all of those reasons, the New Mexico Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, with the concurrence of the New Mexico organizations listed below, developed a short general public interest questionnaire for every candidate listed the 2018 primary ballot for Governor, Commissioner of Public Lands, U.S. Senate and U.S. House. Our goal was to develop questions that affect all New Mexicans, but which are not often considered during the course of a typical political campaign.

The races to represent New Mexico in the U.S. House of Representatives are packed, with nine individuals vying for Congressional District 1 (the Albuquerque area), six hoping to represent CD 2 (Southern New Mexico) and three seeking the nod for CD 3 (Northern New Mexico). We submitted the same questions to each campaign on April 16, then followed up to ensure they had received the questionnaire. We followed up again with a reminder on April 26, and gave the campaigns additional time if needed.

In CD 1, we received responses from Democrats Pat Davis, Damian Lara and Antoinette Sedillo Lopez; we did not receive responses from Democrats Deb Haaland, Damon Martinez, Paul Moya, or write-in Democratic candidate Jesse Heitner. We received a response from Janice Arnold-Jones, who is running unopposed in the Republican primary, but did not hear back from Libertarian candidate Lloyd Princeton, who is running unopposed.

In CD 2, both the Democratic candidates – Xochitl Small and Madeline “Mad” Hildebrandt – responded to the questionnaire, as did Republicans Dr. Gavin Clarkson and Clayburn Griffin. Republicans Yvette Herrell and Monty Newman did not respond.

In CD 3, none of the three candidates – Democrat Ben Ray Lujan, Republican Steve McFall and Libertarian Christopher Manning – responded. All are unopposed in their respective primaries.

The candidates who did answer are on the following pages, along with a short, campaign-provided biography of the candidate and a photograph. We specifically asked the candidates to keep their answers short. We hope that New Mexico voters of all political backgrounds will find the responses informative.

Backcountry Hunters & Anglers and the following groups are nonprofit charitable 501(c)(3) organizations. We do not endorse or oppose any candidate or party for any political office. We do urge all eligible New Mexico residents to vote.

Jarrett Babincsak, Chairman
New Mexico Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers

On behalf of:

- New Mexico Wildlife Federation
- Albuquerque Wildlife Federation
- United Bowhunters of New Mexico
- Wild Turkey Sportsmen’s Association
- Southwest Consolidated Sportsmen
- Doña Ana County Associated Sportsmen
- Sportsmen Concerned
- New Mexico Sportsmen





2018 NEW MEXICO CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE U.S. HOUSE, DISTRICT 1



JANICE ARNOLD-JONES REPUBLICAN

Janice Arnold-Jones is a former state Representative from Albuquerque's District 24, the 2012 Republican nominee for New Mexico's First Congressional District and an appointee to the Albuquerque City Council in 2013. An Albuquerque High School Bulldog and 1974 graduate of the University of New Mexico, she is the mother of two and the proud wife of Commander John L. Jones (USN Ret). Janice's active involvement in Youth Soccer, PTA, the Boy Scouts of America, neighborhood associations and other community organizations eventually compelled her to run for the state legislature in 2002. As a four-term representative, she served on multiple committees and commissions, including Taxation & Revenue, Voters & Elections, and the Blue Ribbon Tax Commission. For her commitment to transparency and open government, Janice was awarded the William S. Dixon Freedom Award by the New Mexico Foundation for Open Government. A former small business owner and contractor to Sandia National Laboratories, Janice was privileged and challenged in 2013 to be her Mother's primary care-giver as she battled Cancer.

Bio provided by candidate

1. WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES TO NEW MEXICO SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN THAT YOU CAN AFFECT IN THE U.S. HOUSE?

Continued and new access to public lands.

WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY TOWARD THE SALE OR TRANSFER OF FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS, INCLUDING THE TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY?

As a former New Mexico State Legislator, I have seen first-hand the impact of significant portions of State lands being held by the Federal or other Governments. It puts the eight western States in the challenging position of being conservator to the most pristine hunting and hiking lands of our country. It also makes the eight western States less competitive than the other 42 States with a significantly reduced tax base. To be conservators, New Mexicans must be able to make a living. Therefore, sale or swaps of land to provide more access to outdoorsmen that also protect habitat is a reasonable policy especially when all stakeholders are fully informed and involved.

DO YOU FEEL THE BUDGETS FOR FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES ARE TOO HIGH, TOO LOW OR ABOUT RIGHT?

The eight western states alone are huge. There are never enough resources to do everything. However, the increase of funds for BLM is a step in the right direction.

THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND AUTHORIZATION EXPIRES THIS YEAR. DO YOU SUPPORT PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION AND FULL AND DEDICATED FUNDING FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND? WHY OR WHY NOT?

Currently, undecided. On the pro side, permanent authorization would assure our commitment to access to public land. On the con side, there are many instances of LWCF grants going urban interests that are beyond the intent of the appropriation. Sun setting the current law and revising the statute could make LWCF more agile and improve focus on providing access to and preserving public lands.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT WILDERNESS DESIGNATIONS OR OTHER PROTECTIVE DESIGNATIONS FOR PUBLIC LAND TEND TO IMPROVE OR REDUCE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITY?

Generally, these designations limit access for hunting and fishing and provide safe cover to drug and human traffickers.

ENERGY COMPANIES TYPICALLY HAVE THE OBLIGATION TO MITIGATE NEGATIVE IMPACTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT, WHEN OIL, GAS OR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS ARE DEVELOPED ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS. DO YOU BELIEVE ENERGY COMPANIES HAVE BEEN MEETING THEIR MITIGATION OBLIGATIONS OR SHOULD THEY BE REQUIRED TO DO MORE?

Energy companies are meeting the currently defined obligation. There are new impacts to be considered caused by wind turbines and large scale solar arrays. To date, these impacts have not been mitigated and long-term impact is mostly unknown. Bonds must be secured from companies to guarantee mitigation now and when lease activity is terminated.

WHAT, IF ANYTHING, COULD CONGRESS DO TO IMPROVE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITIES AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN NEW MEXICO?

Work with States to engage in land swaps that consolidate public lands with better access.

THERE IS A HUGE BACKLOG OF MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORK ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LAND FACILITIES, SUCH AS NATIONAL FORESTS, PARKS AND WILDLIFE REFUGES. WOULD YOU PREFER TO TACKLE THAT BACKLOG THROUGH INCREASED USER FEES OR BY INCREASING THE AGENCY BUDGETS?

I have always believed that what is most important should be sufficiently funded via the agency budgets. I believe federal lands (parks, wildlife refuges) should be accessible to as many as possible. User fees and enterprise funds tend to limit access to only those citizens who can "afford" the fee.

DO YOU SEE A NEED TO MODIFY GRAZING PRACTICES ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN THE WEST? IF SO, WHAT WOULD YOU PROPOSE?

We must change the model from intentionally imposed conflict to planned negotiation. There must be a balance between food production, conservation and public access. We should use science to guide policies and improve processes.

WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU SUGGEST FOR THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT?

The weight and responsibility of the endangered species acts should not be borne by rural communities alone. Some consideration should be given to habitat conservation in urban areas as well as to predation of stock in rural areas. Processes should be examined with an eye towards making co-habitation work.





2018 NEW MEXICO CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

U.S. HOUSE, DISTRICT 1



PAT DAVIS
DEMOCRAT

Pat Davis is a proven progressive champion with a clear track record of getting progressive policies enacted and holding our leaders accountable. A former police officer in the U.S. Capitol and the University of New Mexico, Pat is uniquely suited to tackle the criminal justice and public safety issues important to New Mexicans. Pat is a veteran of the campaigns to oppose shrinking national monuments and the fight for a clean energy economy in New Mexico.

As a current member of the Albuquerque City Council and the former Executive Director of ProgressNow NM, Pat fights everyday to bring real progressive change to New Mexico. Whether it's bringing more green energy jobs, defending women's access to reproductive health care, or protecting New Mexico's working families, Pat is always fighting for us. Pat lives in Albuquerque with his partner Christopher, their dogs Jack & Okra, and their cat Gus.

Bio provided by candidate

1. WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES TO NEW MEXICO SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN THAT YOU CAN AFFECT IN THE U.S. HOUSE?

Congress is the only entity that can designate wilderness areas, a tool that is vital to preserving our public lands for our sportsmen and women. Additionally, climate change, which can affect wildlife patterns, spur dangerous fires, and have other detrimental effects on our land is an issue that needs to be addressed in order to preserve our lands for future generations.

I believe keeping our public lands in public hands is an issue that affects every New Mexico sportsman and woman. As the head of ProgressNowNM, I partnered with the NM Wilderness Alliance and NM Wildlife Foundation on campaigns to oppose shrinking national monuments and protecting stream access for anglers.

WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY TOWARD THE SALE OR TRANSFER OF FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS, INCLUDING THE TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY?

I am strictly against the selling off of our public lands and will join Senators Udall and Heinrich in fighting to protect our public lands and national monuments from Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's chopping board. And I oppose plans by the state land office to transfer federal lands to state management.

DO YOU FEEL THE BUDGETS FOR FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES ARE TOO HIGH, TOO LOW OR ABOUT RIGHT?

I believe our federal public lands are a big part of what makes New Mexico unique and truly makes us the Land of Enchantment. We know funding for management is too low. As a former police officer, I'm most concerned about underfunding wildlife enforcement programs and national wildland fire programs which are critical for protection. I support new legislation now before Congress to finally create an emergency contingency fund for wildland firefighting so management agencies don't have to pay for the \$2B in annual fire fighting funds from operations budgets. In Congress, I will always fight for the most robust federal funding for public lands and wildlife management, particularly because New Mexico has such a high acreage of public lands.

THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND AUTHORIZATION EXPIRES THIS YEAR. DO YOU SUPPORT PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION AND FULL AND DEDICATED FUNDING FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND? WHY OR WHY NOT?

I support a permanent reauthorization and full and dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This fund is good for New Mexico and having the certainty of a permanent fund will help our state tremendously. Just last September New Mexico received \$1.1M in a LWCF grant for our parks and outdoor recreation and I will continue to fight for these grants in Congress.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT WILDERNESS DESIGNATIONS OR OTHER PROTECTIVE DESIGNATIONS FOR PUBLIC LAND TEND TO IMPROVE OR REDUCE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITY?

Access to our public lands for hunting and fishing is critical to New Mexico's way of life, and I believe wilderness designations or other protective designations for public land absolutely improve hunting and fishing opportunities. New Mexico's public lands, such as the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks and Río Grande del Norte National Monument, would benefit immensely from these types of designations. By issuing protective designations for our public lands, we are ensuring these majestic lands remain protected for our children and grandchildren and are also keeping the land accessible for hunting, fishing, and recreation.

As head of ProgressNowNM, I led campaigns with NM Wildlife Foundation to oppose legislation allowing private landowners to fence off public streams and charge anglers private fees to access public waterways. In Congress, I'll continue to protect angler and hunter access.

ENERGY COMPANIES TYPICALLY HAVE THE OBLIGATION TO MITIGATE NEGATIVE IMPACTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT, WHEN OIL, GAS OR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS ARE DEVELOPED ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS. DO YOU BELIEVE ENERGY COMPANIES HAVE BEEN MEETING THEIR MITIGATION OBLIGATIONS OR SHOULD THEY BE REQUIRED TO DO MORE?

I believe in the Trump era of massive deregulation, we cannot simply trust energy companies to do the right thing when it comes to environmental protection. Methane regulations require them to cap waste and fix leaks, protecting our resources and generating the full value of their development of public resources. We should restore the Methane Rule and require extraction companies to fully mitigate and remediate natural spaces, without exemption or exception.

Congress must ensure that mechanisms in place to require companies to mitigate their negative environmental impact actually have the funding and teeth to be effective. I favor a more rigorous process of environmental impact studies and benchmarks corporations must meet before beginning new projects on federal public lands.

WHAT, IF ANYTHING, COULD CONGRESS DO TO IMPROVE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITIES AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN NEW MEXICO?

New Mexico's outdoor recreation, which includes hunting and fishing, is one of the things that makes the state so unique, and it supports more than 68,000 jobs locally. I believe by strengthening our commitment to keep public lands in public hands, Congress can ensure these opportunities continue to be abundant for our coming generations, expand our economy in a sustainable way, and increase the \$6.1 billion in spending in this sector in New Mexico.

THERE IS A HUGE BACKLOG OF MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORK ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LAND FACILITIES, SUCH AS NATIONAL FORESTS, PARKS AND WILDLIFE REFUGES. WOULD YOU PREFER TO TACKLE THAT BACKLOG THROUGH INCREASED USER FEES OR BY INCREASING THE AGENCY BUDGETS?

I believe increasing agency budgets to allow them to adequately deal with maintenance and infrastructure work backlogs is the right way to go.

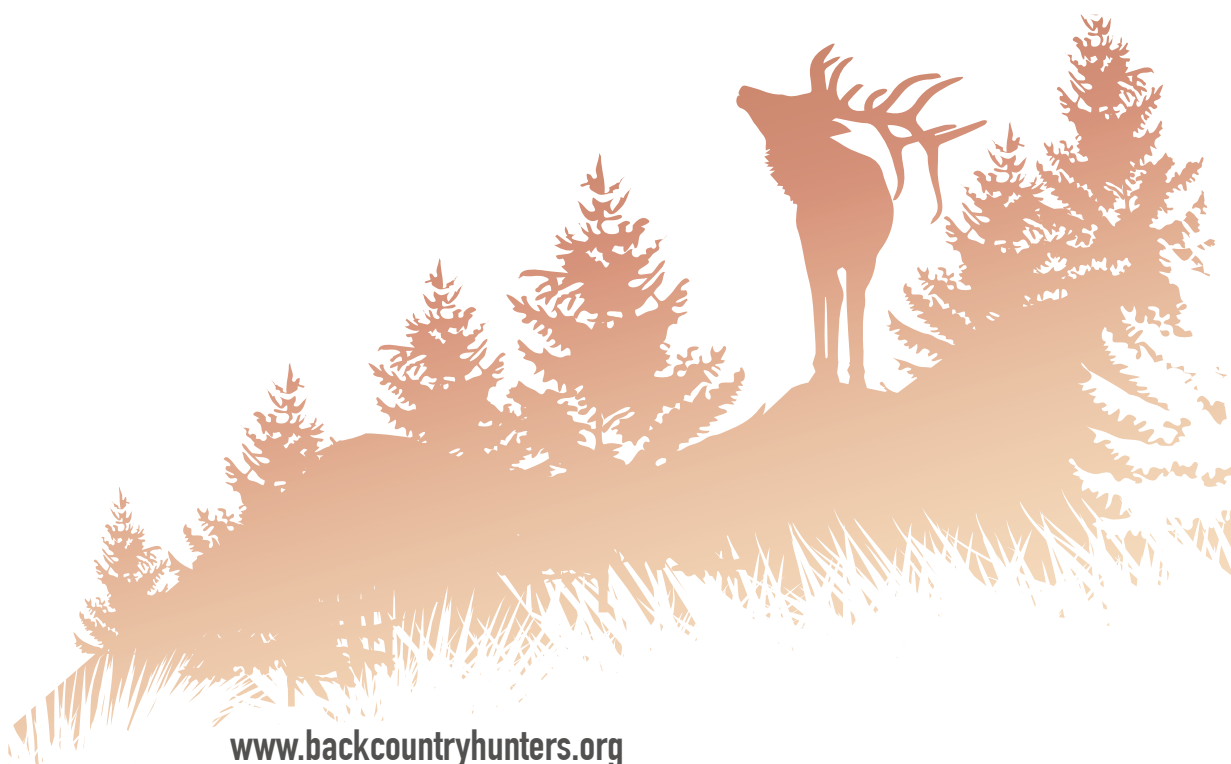
As a city councilor, I chaired a committee reviewing and updating a novel new partnership between the Petroglyphs National Monument and the City of Albuquerque. It allows the city to assist with the maintenance backlog so that access to the monument remains available. We have to do more to eliminate the backlog while keeping fees low enough to encourage children and families to enjoy their natural places.

DO YOU SEE A NEED TO MODIFY GRAZING PRACTICES ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN THE WEST? IF SO, WHAT WOULD YOU PROPOSE?

The standoffs at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon and the Bundy ranch in Nevada brought to light the conflict that grazing policies on federal land could create; however, we must do everything we can to prevent the selling of our public lands and can't allow confusion about grazing practices to be used as an excuse to seize public land. In Congress I will work with local ranchers and conservation and wilderness groups to ensure any proposed changes to grazing laws don't jeopardize the environment or the ownership of our public lands.

WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU SUGGEST FOR THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT?

The ESA is a strong piece of legislation that needs protecting. I would fight against Republican attempts to change the ESA to make it harder to protect species at risk of extinction simply to benefit private industries and corporations.





2018 NEW MEXICO CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE U.S. HOUSE, DISTRICT 1



DAMIAN LARA DEMOCRAT

Damian has lived his values - from immigrating to southeastern New Mexico with his single mother and three siblings to working the potato and onion fields. He worked his way through high school, college, and law school, and has dedicated his entire career to public service and improving the lives in our community. Damian has experience reading and writing legislation at the municipal, state, and federal level. Notable legislation he has assisted for in New Mexico towards the preservation of public lands and water is reclamation of abandoned uranium mines, and securing funding for the Bernalillo County jet fuel leak. Damian is currently an Albuquerque-area attorney specializing in immigration, family, and tax law. He and his wife, Iris, live in Albuquerque. He enjoys running, playing with his two dogs, and spending time with his extended family.

Bio provided by candidate

1. WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES TO NEW MEXICO SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN THAT YOU CAN AFFECT IN THE U.S. HOUSE?

Preserving our wilderness areas is key to having access to a thriving wildlife. By protecting federal public lands, we preserve our wildlife and heritage for our children. I am opposed to the Trump administration advocating for shrinking our federal public lands such as view sheds, historical sites, and locations of scientific interest.

When I am in Congress, I would demand long-term funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. I support the Antiquities act and I believe it has been successful and should continue to exist. Upholding the legacy of Theodore Roosevelt is within upholding the Antiquities Act.

New Mexico specific issues I would legislate through Congress are the responsible use of OHVs and UAVs. irresponsible OHV usage can contribute to erosion much quicker than naturally occurring, which can cause damage to our lands. Irresponsible UAV usage leads to the degradation of the serenity outdoor spaces, as well as being against fair chase.

WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY TOWARD THE SALE OR TRANSFER OF FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS, INCLUDING THE TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY?

Federal public lands are one of the greatest shared American values in our country. Having a collective responsibility to promoting the protection and prevention of exploitation of our public lands is imperative to my platform. Through powerful self interest groups lobbying state governments, they have successfully leased previously public lands leading to their contamination.

DO YOU FEEL THE BUDGETS FOR FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES ARE TOO HIGH, TOO LOW OR ABOUT RIGHT?

The budgets for these organizations is too low, and they are understaffed.

THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND AUTHORIZATION EXPIRES THIS YEAR. DO YOU SUPPORT PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION AND FULL AND DEDICATED FUNDING FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND? WHY OR WHY NOT?

Yes, I will do absolutely everything to protect public lands. Congress should absolutely not divert funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund towards unrelated issues. I support a permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT WILDERNESS DESIGNATIONS OR OTHER PROTECTIVE DESIGNATIONS FOR PUBLIC LAND TEND TO IMPROVE OR REDUCE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITY?

I believe wilderness designations and other protective designs are a good use of public lands.

ENERGY COMPANIES TYPICALLY HAVE THE OBLIGATION TO MITIGATE NEGATIVE IMPACTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT, WHEN OIL, GAS OR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS ARE DEVELOPED ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS. DO YOU BELIEVE ENERGY COMPANIES HAVE BEEN MEETING THEIR MITIGATION OBLIGATIONS OR SHOULD THEY BE REQUIRED TO DO MORE?

I believe that the fossil fuel industry should do more to entirely transfer towards renewables. Irresponsible placement of renewable energy sources can damage our wilderness. I would propose requiring guidelines towards the responsible location of renewable energy sources, such as existing man-made structures. I support subsidizing decentralized electricity production.

WHAT, IF ANYTHING, COULD CONGRESS DO TO IMPROVE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITIES AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN NEW MEXICO?

Protecting our water and land from pollutants and unnecessary erosion is important. We must keep the current amount of federally protected lands we have.

THERE IS A HUGE BACKLOG OF MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORK ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LAND FACILITIES, SUCH AS NATIONAL FORESTS, PARKS AND WILDLIFE REFUGES. WOULD YOU PREFER TO TACKLE THAT BACKLOG THROUGH INCREASED USER FEES OR BY INCREASING THE AGENCY BUDGETS?

I would increase agency budgets. There is no need to discriminate against the economically disadvantaged. Public lands should be preserved and cherished by all Americans and guests, not just the wealthy.

DO YOU SEE A NEED TO MODIFY GRAZING PRACTICES ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN THE WEST? IF SO, WHAT WOULD YOU PROPOSE?

A stricter liability process for the owners of livestock which are grazing on public lands. Grazing should be regulated by science based policy.

WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU SUGGEST FOR THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT?

I would propose the enforcement of preventing the use of all toxic chemicals and traps on public lands. They have been shown to adversely affect endangered animals and eventually our environment.





2018 NEW MEXICO CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE U.S. HOUSE, DISTRICT 1



ANTOINETTE SEDILLO LOPEZ DEMOCRAT

Antoinette Sedillo Lopez most recently served as the executive director of Enlace Comunitario, an anti-domestic violence non-profit that serves all and focuses outreach efforts in the Latino immigrant community of Central New Mexico. Prior to her role at Enlace, she served as a Law Professor at UNM for over 27 years, including eight years as the first Latina Associate Dean of UNM's Clinical Law program. In this role she supervised law students in serving low income clients in a variety of settings. Antoinette's leadership in legal education and on critical social and civil rights issues has earned her numerous awards and national recognition.

Antoinette grew up on her parents' farm in Los Chavez, New Mexico. After graduating, Antoinette pursued her dream of becoming an attorney, enrolling and excelling first at UNM and then at UCLA School of Law.

Bio provided by candidate

1. WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES TO NEW MEXICO SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN THAT YOU CAN AFFECT IN THE U.S. HOUSE?

The protection of our public lands and water are our top priority for New Mexico's sportsmen and women. As a clinical law professor who has worked on conservation issues, I am deeply committed to the protection of our public lands, water and wildlife here in NM. Our conservation efforts not only help protect our rich outdoor history, but it has been the lifeblood of our economy. Outdoor recreational activities spur tourism in to our state, produce annual consumer spending in excess of \$6 billion, and is responsible for nearly 70,000 jobs in our state. In Congress, I will fight for additional safeguards that protect our public lands, water and wildlife, and will oppose the current administration's efforts to open up wild public lands and waters protected as national monuments to energy production and development.

WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY TOWARD THE SALE OR TRANSFER OF FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS, INCLUDING THE TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY?

I believe that, while there can surely be some improvements as to how the federal government manages public lands, transferring them to the states would be a mistake that would result in them not truly being public. Moreover, the transfer to state management would likely result in additional restrictions that would alter their status as truly public.

DO YOU FEEL THE BUDGETS FOR FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES ARE TOO HIGH, TOO LOW OR ABOUT RIGHT?

I was happy to learn that earlier this spring Congressional leaders passed a \$425 million reauthorization for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). However, I believe that these appropriations need to be scaled up based on needs and other demands placed on agencies that protect our federal public lands, and that the LWCF must be permanently reauthorized. The fund allows for the necessary restoration of our habitats, and we must protect funding for critical programs that seek to protect clean air, water and access to public lands.

THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND AUTHORIZATION EXPIRES THIS YEAR. DO YOU SUPPORT PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION AND FULL AND DEDICATED FUNDING FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND? WHY OR WHY NOT?

Yes, I unequivocally support a permanent reauthorization. Annual fights over reauthorization don't allow for proper planning and undermine long term restoration programs that are dependent on this fund.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT WILDERNESS DESIGNATIONS OR OTHER PROTECTIVE DESIGNATIONS FOR PUBLIC LAND TEND TO IMPROVE OR REDUCE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITY?

I believe wilderness designations tend to improve hunting and fishing opportunities. The designation is intended to give federal wildlands permanent protections.

ENERGY COMPANIES TYPICALLY HAVE THE OBLIGATION TO MITIGATE NEGATIVE IMPACTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT, WHEN OIL, GAS OR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS ARE DEVELOPED ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS. DO YOU BELIEVE ENERGY COMPANIES HAVE BEEN MEETING THEIR MITIGATION OBLIGATIONS OR SHOULD THEY BE REQUIRED TO DO MORE?

No, they're not doing enough to meet their mitigation obligations, and should be required to do more. Unfortunately, mitigation efforts often ignore the expert recommendations made by federal and state fish and wildlife agencies, and thus fall short of their obligations. The law should be amended to include additional safeguards that require mitigation policies follow expert recommendations.

WHAT, IF ANYTHING, COULD CONGRESS DO TO IMPROVE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITIES AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN NEW MEXICO?

Congress can pass Senator Martin Heinrich's common sense legislation, the Hunt Unrestricted on National Treasures (HUNT) Act, which works with federal management agencies to improve hunting and fishing opportunities by studying access issues and creating additional access routes where feasible.

THERE IS A HUGE BACKLOG OF MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORK ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LAND FACILITIES, SUCH AS NATIONAL FORESTS, PARKS AND WILDLIFE REFUGES. WOULD YOU PREFER TO TACKLE THAT BACKLOG THROUGH INCREASED USER FEES OR BY INCREASING THE AGENCY BUDGETS?

I believe that we need to increase agency budgets to tackle this backlog in infrastructure projects. The backlog is now severe enough that it requires a concerted effort by the federal government to really resolve this issue.

DO YOU SEE A NEED TO MODIFY GRAZING PRACTICES ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN THE WEST? IF SO, WHAT WOULD YOU PROPOSE?

Grazing practices on federal public lands must prioritize the protection of those lands for multiple uses. These multiple uses include public access and enjoyment, wildlife habitat conservation, wilderness, watershed protection, and other uses protected under federal statute.

WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU SUGGEST FOR THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT?

I would strengthen the ESA to prioritize the recovery of species. While the ESA has been successful in the prevention of extinction of species, it has been less so on recovery. We need to increase funding to ensure that the program has sufficient funds to protect all species at risk of extinction and to create innovative ways of spurring recovery.





2018 NEW MEXICO CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE U.S. HOUSE, DISTRICT 2



GAVIN CLARKSON REPUBLICAN

Disgusted by what he saw inside the bowels of the bureaucracy in Washington, D.C., Dr. Gavin Clarkson knew the only way to stop the swamp and protect New Mexico was to run for Congress where he can use his real-life experiences to enact conservative changes legislatively. Dr. Clarkson, an enrolled member of the Choctaw Nation, earned his MBA from Rice University and his Doctorate in Technology and Operations Management from the Harvard Business School. While in Boston, he also chaired the board of a pro-life crisis pregnancy center, graduated cum laude from Harvard Law School, and served as president of the Native American Law Students Association. Named the nation's "leading scholar in tribal finance" by The Financial Times, he has been cited by Bloomberg and other financial media on tribal finance and economic development, subjects he has taught as a professor at the University of Michigan, the University of Houston, and now at New Mexico State University where he is currently on a leave of absence. Most recently, Dr. Clarkson served in the Department of the Interior under President Trump as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Policy and Economic Development – Indian Affairs, where he managed the Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development and the Office of Self-Governance. He is a member of the Federalist Society, the Southwest Coalition for Life, and is a lifetime member of the National Rifle Association and the American Indian Science and Engineering Society. Gavin has one son, is a member of the Baptist church, and is a former national Country Western Dance champion.

Bio provided by candidate

1. WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES TO NEW MEXICO SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN THAT YOU CAN AFFECT IN THE U.S. HOUSE?

New Mexico sportsmen and women care about public access to public land, and I share that concern. In many cases, collaboration between federal and state entities facilitates this access. As a member of Congress, I plan to work with the Trump administration and Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke on reorganizing the Department of the Interior around common regions. Pushing resources to these regions, with boundaries that take into account where recreation actually occurs, can improve the way we administer the land for public enjoyment. As I saw firsthand while working for President Trump at the Interior Department, Congress plays a major role in any reorganization of the executive branch.

WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY TOWARD THE SALE OR TRANSFER OF FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS, INCLUDING THE TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY?

I am not for the sale of federal lands when it leads to the removal of public access. I support full funding of PILT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) to help local governments fund first-responders and other vital governmental functions. I support full funding of Impact Aid, which is similar to PILT, but for school district funding. The best services are delivered at the local level - we should give communities the tools they need to best serve the people with whom they directly interact. I trust local county governments far more than I trust Washington, D.C.

DO YOU FEEL THE BUDGETS FOR FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES ARE TOO HIGH, TOO LOW OR ABOUT RIGHT?

To call the federal bureaucracy in Washington, D.C. a necrotic cesspool is an insult to zombies everywhere. As a battle-tested swamp warrior, I am advocating specific plans to eliminate \$1 billion of government waste every day, much of which I observed as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Economic Development in President Trump's Interior Department. When we get rid of the waste, we can focus federal resources on tackling major challenges in public land and wildlife management.

THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND AUTHORIZATION EXPIRES THIS YEAR. DO YOU SUPPORT PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION AND FULL AND DEDICATED FUNDING FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND? WHY OR WHY NOT?

I support the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) - it has withstood the test of time and has had a great impact on our natural and cultural heritage. We must ensure that the LWCF is achieving the best possible conservation purpose in the modern day; where the money goes should reflect our conservation priorities. As an example, Representative Steve Pearce had it right when he introduced the Making Public Lands Public Act in the House of Representatives; the Act places a high value on access in the context of the LWCF. Just as I support the LWCF, I also support fiscal responsibility, and I want to make sure we are doing the best we can do with every dollar of federal money.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT WILDERNESS DESIGNATIONS OR OTHER PROTECTIVE DESIGNATIONS FOR PUBLIC LAND TEND TO IMPROVE OR REDUCE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITY?

It is difficult to answer this question generally, because every management plan is different. For some New Mexicans, prohibitions on motorized access in wilderness areas or national monuments make it more challenging to recreate on the land. We should strike a balance in the way we manage the land, and we should maximize hunting and fishing opportunities. In addition, much of the land in New Mexico possesses the "Wilderness Study Area" designation, pending a final determination from Congress. We should clear this backlog and decide one way or another if we are going to give these lands the wilderness designation.

ENERGY COMPANIES TYPICALLY HAVE THE OBLIGATION TO MITIGATE NEGATIVE IMPACTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT, WHEN OIL, GAS OR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS ARE DEVELOPED ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS. DO YOU BELIEVE ENERGY COMPANIES HAVE BEEN MEETING THEIR MITIGATION OBLIGATIONS OR SHOULD THEY BE REQUIRED TO DO MORE?

Energy Dominance is a vital aspect of American economic and national security. In New Mexico, energy keeps the lights on and supports a great deal of jobs. Often the deep state and the bureaucracy attempt to thwart energy development by imposing completely unreasonable demands, empowering themselves with layers of regulation while everyday Americans bear the burden of compliance. Mitigation is a key component of a national energy strategy, and energy companies should do their part to ensure that our public lands and waters stay beautiful. At the same time, we must consider the public interest in affordable energy and not impose an undue burden on energy companies. It is a delicate balance to strike, but I believe that the bureaucracy has metastasized in this area and President Trump's aggressive deregulation of the American energy economy is a good thing for our country, and I stand with him with the Energy to Empower New Mexico.

WHAT, IF ANYTHING, COULD CONGRESS DO TO IMPROVE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITIES AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN NEW MEXICO?

Congress can work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Forest Service to identify how Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars can best facilitate this access. I plan to play an active role in the appropriations process when it comes to management of federal land - I believe we can do a lot better with the money we already take in. The Constitution gave Congress the power of the purse, but Congress has not used this power in a way that has best served the American taxpayer. I will work to change that.

THERE IS A HUGE BACKLOG OF MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORK ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LAND FACILITIES, SUCH AS NATIONAL FORESTS, PARKS AND WILDLIFE REFUGES. WOULD YOU PREFER TO TACKLE THAT BACKLOG THROUGH INCREASED USER FEES OR BY INCREASING THE AGENCY BUDGETS?

I would propose to transfer funds from the bloated federal bureaucracy and instead spend those funds on maintenance and infrastructure. As an example, the Department of the Interior is incredibly inefficient, and we should focus on modernizing the agency first before we ask the taxpayer for more money, either through increased fees or through additional taxes.

DO YOU SEE A NEED TO MODIFY GRAZING PRACTICES ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN THE WEST? IF SO, WHAT WOULD YOU PROPOSE?

I want to increase access for farmers and ranchers. We must force the bureaucracy to be more efficient in processing leases, and we also have to hold it accountable for the inexcusable delays that are part of the system now. I support the MERIT Act for civil service reforms.

WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU SUGGEST FOR THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT?

I would modify the Endangered Species Act so that radical environmentalists cannot use it as a tool to limit recreation opportunities including hunting and fishing or to kill industries such as forestry, energy, or other agriculture. That is not the purpose of the Act - it is supposed to facilitate the recovery of endangered species. I believe the general framework of the Act is beneficial, but we need to evaluate the ways in which environmentalists have abused the law, so we can make the proper fixes and return to the intent of the statute.



2018 NEW MEXICO CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE U.S. HOUSE, DISTRICT 2



CLAYBURN GRIFFIN REPUBLICAN

Lovington native Clayburn Griffin is committed to raising the bar for political discourse and fighting to ensure our electoral system represents the hardworking men and women of our country. He has long been active in politics, working on Representative Steve Pearce's and Senator Pete Domenici's campaigns in the early 2000s and Governor Gary Johnson's two presidential campaigns most recently. Clayburn grew up hunting in New Mexico's wilderness and has deep respect for our natural ecosystem. He'll work hard for regular working Americans and bring power back to the people. For more information go to www.clayburnforcongress.com/

Bio provided by candidate

1. WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES TO NEW MEXICO SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN THAT YOU CAN AFFECT IN THE U.S. HOUSE?

Protecting public lands and working with the Federal and State governments toward effective stewardship of New Mexico's public lands. Also, defending the 2nd Amendment.

WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY TOWARD THE SALE OR TRANSFER OF FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS, INCLUDING THE TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY?

I can understand people's frustrations with the Federal government's oversight of public lands. However, I would not support the complete transfer of management authority. The problem with this is that it's much easier for private interests to take control of State government. Instead we need better State representation in regards to Federal management and require that the Feds manage public lands with local concerns in mind.

DO YOU FEEL THE BUDGETS FOR FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES ARE TOO HIGH, TOO LOW OR ABOUT RIGHT?

These budgets are too low.

THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND AUTHORIZATION EXPIRES THIS YEAR. DO YOU SUPPORT PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION AND FULL AND DEDICATED FUNDING FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND? WHY OR WHY NOT?

I support reauthorization and full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This fund is vital to improving access and increasing public lands across the nation. Their projects are very valuable to regular working people, ensuring everyone has access to beautiful recreation spaces.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT WILDERNESS DESIGNATIONS OR OTHER PROTECTIVE DESIGNATIONS FOR PUBLIC LAND TEND TO IMPROVE OR REDUCE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITY?

It's a fine balance that should take into consideration the needs, and effects, of hunting in all preservation efforts. When predator species are too protected, their numbers grow and have adverse effects on the population of prey species. Generally protective designations improve hunting and fishing opportunities, but we need to have strategic and thoughtful management of these policies.

ENERGY COMPANIES TYPICALLY HAVE THE OBLIGATION TO MITIGATE NEGATIVE IMPACTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT, WHEN OIL, GAS OR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS ARE DEVELOPED ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS. DO YOU BELIEVE ENERGY COMPANIES HAVE BEEN MEETING THEIR MITIGATION OBLIGATIONS OR SHOULD THEY BE REQUIRED TO DO MORE?

I don't want to give them a free pass, but I do think energy companies in New Mexico have been doing a good job of mitigating negative impact on our natural resources. We have to remain vigilant about regulations while remaining an open place for energy companies to do business.

WHAT, IF ANYTHING, COULD CONGRESS DO TO IMPROVE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITIES AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN NEW MEXICO?

At a Federal level, I would like to see updates made to Fair Chase laws. Technology has changed a lot and introduced new advantages for humans to use against their chosen prey. However, I believe hunting should remain sportsmanlike, and having stricter Fair Chase laws will not only keep hunting a noble sport but also make it more difficult. The inherent difficulty of hunting serves as a natural balance to the predator-prey dynamic. If we let technology unfairly tilt that scale too much, wildlife populations will decline from over-hunting.

THERE IS A HUGE BACKLOG OF MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORK ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LAND FACILITIES, SUCH AS NATIONAL FORESTS, PARKS AND WILDLIFE REFUGES. WOULD YOU PREFER TO TACKLE THAT BACKLOG THROUGH INCREASED USER FEES OR BY INCREASING THE AGENCY BUDGETS?

I think there can be opportunity for both approaches. Public lands should be accessible to the general public, but we can find certain strategic ways of raising funds from visitors through premium perks or special events.

DO YOU SEE A NEED TO MODIFY GRAZING PRACTICES ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN THE WEST? IF SO, WHAT WOULD YOU PROPOSE?

I would support a phasing out of grazing on public lands. The public should not be subsidizing private enterprises in this way, particularly and industry that is so harmful to our natural ecosystem.

WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU SUGGEST FOR THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT?

I think we may need to reconsider how we handle certain endangered predators, such as wolves. The Endangered Species Act doesn't necessarily take into consideration the effects a species can have on local populations. When humans are fulfilling some predatory roles, sometimes even more effectively, than other natural predators, those predators become redundant in the ecosystem. While I wouldn't want to see wolves go extinct, I can understand the case for not wanting them in our backyards diminishing game populations and being a threat to our livestock and pets.





2018 NEW MEXICO CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

U.S. HOUSE, DISTRICT 2



MADELINE 'MAD' HILDEBRANDT

DEMOCRAT

Madeline "Mad" Hildebrandt is a college History teacher. She received her Master's Degree at San Francisco State University and her PhD at the University of Maine. Dr. Hildebrandt focused her years of study on Middle Eastern Terrorism, Labor History, and Masculinity as Power. She enlisted in the US Coast Guard, and served as Military Police and as a Radioman. She worked as a volunteer field organizer for the John Kerry Presidential Campaign and was elected as a delegate. Upon her spouse's military retirement, they chose to return to New Mexico, and purchased a home in Socorro, where they have resided since 2013. She likes to say that she didn't choose New Mexico, New Mexico chose her. And now, it's time for her to give back to the state that she loves.

Bio provided by candidate

1. WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES TO NEW MEXICO SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN THAT YOU CAN AFFECT IN THE U.S. HOUSE?

We can fight to protect the Antiquities Act and stop the government from codifying the illegal reductions of our national monuments. We cannot allow the Trump administration to undo the legacy of Theodore Roosevelt. Conservation of public lands and wildlife are core issues for sportsmen and women, and we must make sure they have a voice in the discussion, so they have a reason to continue investing in the good of our public lands. By working together, we can ensure that our lands are well maintained and accessible for future generations.

WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY TOWARD THE SALE OR TRANSFER OF FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS, INCLUDING THE TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY?

Public lands belong to the American people, and selling these lands takes them away from the people. The ultimate goal of transferring federal lands to the states is to expedite the privatization of these lands. While some states take good care of their lands, every state has its own policies, and some of them are more lenient than federal policies. This makes it easier for the public lands to be reduced.

DO YOU FEEL THE BUDGETS FOR FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES ARE TOO HIGH, TOO LOW OR ABOUT RIGHT?

Budgets for the federal public land and wildlife management agencies are too low. If the budgets were about right, then we wouldn't be having discussions about the huge maintenance backlog or the possibility of raising user fees. We must properly fund these agencies so that our public lands stay accessible to all Americans. We cannot allow access to our public lands to become a privilege for the wealthy.

THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND AUTHORIZATION EXPIRES THIS YEAR. DO YOU SUPPORT PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION AND FULL AND DEDICATED FUNDING FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND? WHY OR WHY NOT?

Yes, I support permanent reauthorization and full dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The purpose of the LWCF is to acquire new public lands in exchange for offshore fossil fuel extraction. Water is a limited and precious resource, especially in a desert state like New Mexico. The LWCF helps us make up for the oil spills on our coasts by preserving our local lands and water. We must protect this fund to guarantee compensation for the contamination of our coasts, and we must ensure that the LWCF continues to serve its original purpose of public land and water acquisition.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT WILDERNESS DESIGNATIONS OR OTHER PROTECTIVE DESIGNATIONS FOR PUBLIC LAND TEND TO IMPROVE OR REDUCE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITY?

Protective designations for public lands tend to improve hunting and fishing opportunities by raising visibility and awareness to the public, ensuring accessibility for all Americans, and keeping it pristine for future generations.

ENERGY COMPANIES TYPICALLY HAVE THE OBLIGATION TO MITIGATE NEGATIVE IMPACTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT, WHEN OIL, GAS OR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS ARE DEVELOPED ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS. DO YOU BELIEVE ENERGY COMPANIES HAVE BEEN MEETING THEIR MITIGATION OBLIGATIONS OR SHOULD THEY BE REQUIRED TO DO MORE?

Energy companies must be required to do more. The core objective of corporations is to be as profitable as possible. Protecting our natural lands and resources is often not profitable for them, so the only way to protect our lands is if we set our standards into law, with penalties that outweigh the gains of violating them.

We now have an administration that seeks to reduce, eliminate, and ultimately privatize our protected lands. We have an EPA that works for the corporations instead of the people and is trying to poison our land to line the pockets of millionaires. We must not only reverse this assault on our public lands but do better.

WHAT, IF ANYTHING, COULD CONGRESS DO TO IMPROVE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITIES AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN NEW MEXICO?

We need to make sure we have access, so we are not shut out for areas appropriate for hunting and fishing. We need to adequately fund the land management agencies to reduce the maintenance backlog and make our lands more accessible. We can also work on outreach programs to raise awareness for America's public lands and wildlife.

THERE IS A HUGE BACKLOG OF MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORK ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LAND FACILITIES, SUCH AS NATIONAL FORESTS, PARKS AND WILDLIFE REFUGES. WOULD YOU PREFER TO TACKLE THAT BACKLOG THROUGH INCREASED USER FEES OR BY INCREASING THE AGENCY BUDGETS?

Increasing agency budgets is the best way to address the maintenance and infrastructure backlog. Since the public lands belong to all Americans, we should all contribute to the upkeep of our lands to make them as accessible as possible. The goal of increasing user fees is not really to maintain our public lands, but to fabricate an excuse for eliminating them when people cannot afford to visit our public lands as often. Accessible public lands can improve local economies by stimulating tourism, which boosts the tax revenue used to maintain these lands.

DO YOU SEE A NEED TO MODIFY GRAZING PRACTICES ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN THE WEST? IF SO, WHAT WOULD YOU PROPOSE?

We need to take agriculture in consideration with wildlife so that there is equity between wildlife and livestock when protecting our land. We must make sure that grazing practices are sustainable so that the land is conserved for both future ranchers and hunters. We can help protect our lands by making sure that grazing season length and stocking rates are kept at sustainable levels and have recovery measures in place such as temporary livestock exclusion in cases of degraded rangeland health.

WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU SUGGEST FOR THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT?

The Endangered Species Act is an important law for the conservation of our wildlife, which is a shared resource for all Americans, but there are a couple areas that need improvement. First, we need to make sure that all affected parties are involved in establishing the delisting criteria, and we need to streamline the process so that a species can be delisted when it has recovered to the point that it can thrive without strong interventions from the ESA. Populations should not reach record highs before delisting. Second, since the species management will ultimately be returned to the state level after delisting, we need to make sure that management is done in coordination with state governments as originally intended to help make the delisting process as smooth as possible.





2018 NEW MEXICO CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE U.S. HOUSE, DISTRICT 2



XOCHITL TORRES SMALL DEMOCRAT

Xochitl Torres Small is a water attorney and former staffer for Sen. Tom Udall. After attending college, she returned home to work on then Rep. Tom Udall's successful run for the Senate. Following his victory, she helped to set up his southern New Mexico district office, which was responsible for serving much of the current 2nd Congressional District. As a Field Representative for Sen. Udall, Xochitl worked on issues ranging from water conservation and infrastructure development to education and health care accessibility.

Inspired by her work on water for Sen. Udall, Xochitl left his office to attend law school at the University of New Mexico (UNM), where she specialized in natural resources and conservation. Immediately after completing her degree, she clerked for a New Mexico federal judge with one of the heaviest criminal dockets in the country. Most recently, Xochitl has been practicing law at Kemp Smith focusing mostly on water law.

Bio provided by candidate

1. WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES TO NEW MEXICO SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN THAT YOU CAN AFFECT IN THE U.S. HOUSE?

Over 90% of NM sportsmen and women use public lands. In Congress, I will work to protect access to our federal public lands, ensure high quality habitat through diverse strategies including public land protection, invest in the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and most importantly stop the large-scale transfer or sell off of public lands.

WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY TOWARD THE SALE OR TRANSFER OF FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS, INCLUDING THE TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY?

Special interest led efforts to transfer or sell off our federal public lands are a constant threat to our hunting heritage. Transfer and/or sell off also threatens the recreation opportunities so many fellow New Mexicans depend upon. As a member of Congress, I will vigilantly protect our public lands against efforts made by the administration to sell them to the highest bidder.

DO YOU FEEL THE BUDGETS FOR FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES ARE TOO HIGH, TOO LOW OR ABOUT RIGHT?

With maintenance backlogs threatening user experiences, fire management stifled by lack of resources and time, and habitat improvement projects going unfunded, it's clear federal public land and wildlife management agency budgets are too low. Further, increased staffing and on the ground, projects will enhance recreation experiences and wildlife habitat while also boosting local economies.

THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND AUTHORIZATION EXPIRES THIS YEAR. DO YOU SUPPORT PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION AND FULL AND DEDICATED FUNDING FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND? WHY OR WHY NOT?

I support LWCF—it is one of our most effective public lands access programs, in addition to its value for urban park designation. In fact, my husband and I were married at a facility along the Rio Grande, which was funded in part through the LWCF. Permanent reauthorization and full funding will enhance public land access programs, giving New Mexican families more opportunity while also expanding urban recreation experiences and opportunities.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT WILDERNESS DESIGNATIONS OR OTHER PROTECTIVE DESIGNATIONS FOR PUBLIC LAND TEND TO IMPROVE OR REDUCE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITY?

Local community led protective designations for public lands—like the protection of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument and the Rio Grande del Norte—enhance opportunities for sportsmen and women. Similarly, wilderness designations provide the highest quality protection for certain, pristine resources and help ensure we maintain spaces for quiet recreation for future generations. Appropriate protective designations safeguard high quality habitat and ensure high quality user experiences.

ENERGY COMPANIES TYPICALLY HAVE THE OBLIGATION TO MITIGATE NEGATIVE IMPACTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT, WHEN OIL, GAS OR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS ARE DEVELOPED ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS. DO YOU BELIEVE ENERGY COMPANIES HAVE BEEN MEETING THEIR MITIGATION OBLIGATIONS OR SHOULD THEY BE REQUIRED TO DO MORE?

In New Mexico, the Restore NM program has seen some notable successes. The program began as mitigation for oil and gas development but has since expanded to address watershed restoration efforts in non-oil and gas federal public lands. There are planned mitigations for the Afton Solar Energy Zone south of Las Cruces. Still, with climate change magnifying the effects of habitat fragmentation, there needs to be more mitigation and perhaps off-site habitat enhancement to ensure that high quality wildlife habitat is available

WHAT, IF ANYTHING, COULD CONGRESS DO TO IMPROVE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITIES AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN NEW MEXICO?

Congress can do many things to improve hunting and fishing opportunities and wildlife habitat on federal public lands. Permanent reauthorization and full funding for LWCF is one tool. Congress should be working closely with local communities to expand access to public lands and implementing protective designations that safeguard habitat and enhance recreation opportunities.

THERE IS A HUGE BACKLOG OF MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORK ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LAND FACILITIES, SUCH AS NATIONAL FORESTS, PARKS AND WILDLIFE REFUGES. WOULD YOU PREFER TO TACKLE THAT BACKLOG THROUGH INCREASED USER FEES OR BY INCREASING THE AGENCY BUDGETS?

Growing up, my family didn't have a lot of money. Like so many others, we used nearby public lands for camping, fishing, and hunting. Raising user fees will harm New Mexico families who seek these high-quality recreation experiences. Responsibly increasing agency budgets is the right approach to reduce the maintenance and infrastructure backlog.

DO YOU SEE A NEED TO MODIFY GRAZING PRACTICES ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN THE WEST? IF SO, WHAT WOULD YOU PROPOSE?

Ranching is part of New Mexico's heritage, but grazing practices can be more wildlife friendly. Implementing wildlife friendly fencing, ensuring wildlife friendly water management approaches, and implementing watershed restoration efforts are just some opportunities.

WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU SUGGEST FOR THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT?

Given the current Administration and Congress' attack on wildlife, endangered and not endangered, now is not the time to consider legislative changes to the Endangered Species Act. In the long term, we can do more to support critical habitat designation – an essential tool to protect endangered species by supporting the ecosystems of which they are a part.

