

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 25, 2016

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Jewell:

The Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument is an area of ecological wonder that contains a diverse range of unique geological, biological and aquatic features. The area is the bridge that connects the Siskiyou Mountains and the southern Cascade Range. It is also home to many historical artifacts and archeological sites that provide a glimpse into the lives of Native Americans and early pioneers. In 2000, President Clinton recognized the area's remarkable biological diversity by exercising his authority under the Antiquities Act to designate part of this unique area as a National Monument. In 2009, the bill was signed that established the Soda Mountain Wilderness within the Monuments southern backcountry.

The Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument has protected some of the most pristine landscapes in the United States and benefitted many small towns in the area by creating new economic drivers, such a recreation and tourism. However, the original boundary has left a patch work of vital habitats and watersheds unprotected. The growing effect of climate change and the pressure to develop new areas in Southern Oregon have highlighted the importance of protecting the entirety of the Cascade-Siskiyou region. In order to adequately preserve the region's ecological integrity, a growing number of scientists have concluded the boundary of the national monument should be expanded to better protect the diverse natural characteristics of the area.

The proposal to expand the monument has strong backing around the state by elected officials, citizens, businesses, and conservation organizations. Given this strong level of support, we encourage you to come to Oregon and hold a public meeting and consider expanding the boundaries of the Monument. Given the short amount of time left in the year, we ask you to come as soon as practicable.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and your attention to this issue. We look forward to working with you and local stakeholders on this issue as we move forward.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator