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April 23, 2018

U.S. Forest Service
660 S 12th St, Ste. 108
Elko, NV 89801

To Whom It May Concern:

I am very concerned about the prospect of opening 54,000 acres of U.S. Forest Service land in Nevada's Ruby Mountains for oil and gas leasing. The Ruby Mountains, located in Elko County within the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, are known for their rugged terrain and mule deer, bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse habitat, and is also home to other unique fish and wildlife species. Likewise, I am also concerned that expansive oil and gas drilling will threaten this pristine and sensitive area, which welcomes thousands of annual visitors to utilize its public spaces for hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation.

A large coalition of local business leaders, conservationists, and outdoor enthusiasts have banded together to stand against this effort, including: Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, Patagonia, Nevada Muleys, the Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife, Trout Unlimited, the Nevada Conservation League, the Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada, the Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club's Toiyabe Chapter, the Nevada Chukar Foundation, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, Friends of Nevada Wilderness and Ruby Mountain Fly Fishers. I stand alongside this coalition, as well as the majority of my constituents in the protection of Nevada's natural treasures, and I believe that we must work together to ensure that future generations will have the same opportunity to discover and experience these incredible places.

I take great pride in our state's beautiful landscape and will continue to advocate for its protection. Last August, I had the pleasure of hiking in the Ruby Mountains, and look forward to many more visits in the future. The opportunity to explore our public lands is one of the many joys of living in our beautiful state. I first encountered the wonder of Nevada's public lands at a very young age. When my sister and I were children, my dad took us all over the state hiking, camping, rock-climbing, and fishing. He loved the outdoors and wanted us to discover its magic. Every Nevadan deserves to have that same experience.

Sincerely,



CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
United States Senator

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