

RESOLUTION NO. 91-23

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF A NATIONAL MONUMENT TO PROTECT THE DOLORES RIVER CANYON COUNTRY

WHEREAS, the City of Grand Junction is in the heart of Mesa County, Colorado, and is deeply committed to preserving and protecting the natural beauty, cultural heritage, and historical significance of the region for the benefit of its constituents and future generations; and

WHEREAS, the Dolores River Canyon Country is an extraordinary area, which includes lands in Mesa County, that is home to remarkable public lands, rich biodiversity, a resilient river system, indigenous cultural sites, a storied mining history, and unique geological formations, including breathtaking red rock canyons and mesas in Unaweep Canyon and the Gateway area; and

WHEREAS, the Dolores River Canyon Country is a region of profound ecological significance, supporting diverse flora and fauna, and providing critical habitat for numerous sensitive or imperiled species, making it a priority for conservation efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Dolores River is a vital component of the region's ecosystem, supporting a unique and fragile riparian environment, as well as providing recreational opportunities such as fishing, boating, and wildlife viewing, which contribute to the quality of life of the residents of Grand Junction and Mesa County; and

WHEREAS, the Dolores River Canyon Country boasts a rich cultural heritage with numerous indigenous cultural sites that hold significant historical and spiritual importance; and

WHEREAS, the region's historical mining legacy is an integral part of Colorado's heritage, and the remnants of past mining operations contribute to the area's unique character and cultural value; and

WHEREAS, the geological features of red rock canyons and mesas of the Gateway area and Unaweep Canyon in the Dolores River Canyon Country are of unparalleled beauty and scientific interest, attracting visitors and researchers from across the nation and around the world; and

WHEREAS, efforts to conserve the Dolores River Canyon Country date back to at least the 1969 passage of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act which listed the Dolores River as one of the original study rivers, and current efforts include a complementary proposal in Congress to designate a National Conservation Area for areas of the river in Montezuma, Dolores, and San Miguel counties; and

WHEREAS, designation of the portions of Dolores River Canyon Country in Mesa and Montrose counties as a national monument would enhance its protection, ensuring the preservation of its natural, cultural, recreational, and historical resources for current and future generations; and

WHEREAS, the City of Grand Junction recognizes the importance of working in collaboration with state and federal partners to achieve a permanent designation for the Dolores River Canyon Country;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO, THAT:

1. The City of Grand Junction, Colorado, hereby calls for the designation of a national monument to protect the Dolores River Canyon Country, recognizing the outstanding public lands within Mesa County that are of immense importance to the City's constituents and that offer immense ecological, cultural, historical, and geological value.
2. By and with this resolution the City Council urges Colorado's Senators, Governor, and other elected leaders to take prompt and vigorous action to request the Biden Administration to designate the Dolores River Canyon Country as a national monument, and with this Resolution the City expresses its strong desire to work collaboratively with these leaders and other stakeholders to advance this important initiative.
3. The City Manager is directed to send copies of this Resolution to Colorado's Senators, the Governor, the Secretary of the Interior, the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, and other federal and state officials, determined by the City Manager, to be relevant to the initiative.
4. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

Adopted this 4th day of October 2023.



Anna M. Stout
President of the City Council

ATTEST:



Selestina Sandoval
Deputy City Clerk