

Wayne Allard

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ALLARD INTRODUCES SAND DUNES BILL LEGISLATION WOULD MAKE SAND DUNES IN SAN LUIS VALLEY A NATIONAL PARK

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-CO) today introduced legislation to turn the Great Sand Dunes National Monument located in the San Luis Valley into a national park. The legislation is the culmination of more than four months of work by Allard following a December, 1999 meeting at the Sand Dunes with Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt, Colorado Attorney General Ken Salazar, Colorado U.S. Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell and Third District Representative Scott McInnis.

“This legislation is a major step forward in the protection and preservation of the 750 foot high Sand Dunes and the water that lies beneath them,” Allard said. “It has been an initiative driven by the residents of the San Luis Valley, locally elected officials, the Nature Conservancy and the Rio Grande Water Conservancy District. It is a model of how a public lands bill should be put together.”

U.S. Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell (R-CO) is a co-sponsor of Allard’s bill, which closely parallels legislation introduced earlier this spring by Colorado Third District U.S. Representative Scott McInnis. The bill would create both a national park and national preserve to protect the Sand Dunes, authorize acquisition of the adjoining Baca Ranch and creation of a local advisory council to assist in the management of the area.

“I wanted my bill to closely resemble the legislation introduced by Congressman McInnis in order to improve the chances of passage of the bill this year,” added Allard. “The only area of difference between our two bills is the water language and I do not expect that to be a problem in getting it through the legislative process.”

Allard said he will immediately ask for a hearing on his bill before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

“Our time is short in Congress this year,” Allard said. “I will be asking for a hearing in the Senate Energy Committee. This is an important issue to Coloradans and it is my desire to gain Senate passage of this bill quickly.”

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