



EL PASO COUNTY STATE OF TEXAS

RESOLUTION



WHEREAS, Castner Range encompasses more than 11 square miles—7,081 acres exactly—and runs from the eastern boundary of the Franklin Mountains State Park to the western edge of the US 54 North-South Patriot Freeway and is surrounded on three sides by the City of El Paso; and

WHEREAS, Castner Range is rich in biodiversity, open-air space, dozens of natural canyons, arroyos, and—in particular—alluvial fans which efficiently transport run-off from the Franklin Mountains' heights to the City-owned channels that lead to large retention ponds which effectively store the run-off; and

WHEREAS, the greatest concentration of natural springs in the Franklin Mountains is on Castner Range, and some of the most geologically complex and visually striking parts of the Franklins are found there, and as Castner Range is rich in wildlife, including 62 bird species, 20 types of lizards and 29 types of snakes; and

WHEREAS, Castner Range is home to 27 wildlife or plant species listed as “threatened or endangered” by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, including the ferruginous hawk, the Texas horned lizard, the Franklin Mountains talus snail and the desert night-blooming cereus; and

WHEREAS, as an active artillery range, Castner was a pivotal military training site from 1926-1966 and played a historical role in preparing Fort Bliss soldiers for military service; and

WHEREAS, given that Castner Range abuts the Franklin Mountains State Park, a National Monument designation would provide unique complementary educational and recreational opportunities and quality of life opportunities for Texans, for service members stationed at Fort Bliss, and other residents of southern New Mexico and northern Chihuahua; and

WHEREAS, El Paso benefits by fostering tourism, strengthening the outdoor recreation economy, and preserving the qualities that make this area a desirable location for families, and retirees and businesses would benefit from a national monument designation, as would nationally-recognized recreation and sports/athletic groups; and

WHEREAS, a Castner Range National Monument would protect historic sites including petroglyphs and pictographs dating back 14,000 years to the Paleo-Indian, Archaic and historic Indian eras; and

WHEREAS, the people and the governments of the El Paso area have repeatedly and consistently demonstrated their support for preservation of Castner Range as natural open space.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the El Paso County Judge and Commissioners Court that we are proud to call for the establishment of a Castner Range National Monument in order to preserve this highly-important area within our region of environmental, historic, scientific, and scenic value for current and future generations, and that the County Commissioners Court requests that the President of United States use his authority under the 1906 Antiquities Act to establish a Castner Range National Monument.

SIGNED, this 1st day of March 2021

Commissioner Carlos Leon, Pct. 1

Commissioner David C. Stout, Pct. 2

Commissioner Iliana Holguin, Pct. 3

Commissioner Carl L. Robinson, Pct. 4

Ricardo A. Samaniego, County Judge