



FRIENDS of NEVADA WILDERNESS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Friends of Nevada Wilderness Applauds President Obama's
Declaration of Basin and Range National Monument**

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Las Vegas, NV – Today, President Obama signed the declaration to establish Basin and Range National Monument in southeastern Nevada. By using the Antiquities Act, the President is permanently protecting approximately 700,000 acres of unspoiled valleys that supports critical wildlife habitat, sensitive prehistoric cultural sites, and artist Michael Heizer's monumental sculpture "the City." Friends of Nevada Wilderness, along with the more than 9,000 supporters we represent, want to thank President Obama for acting to protect this significant corner of wild Nevada.

Only a two hour drive from Las Vegas, Nevada's newest National Monument is made up of two basins – Garden Valley and Coal Valley – that are surrounded by a series of mountain ranges, some already protected by wilderness designations. The Grant Range Wilderness, Quinn Canyon Range Wilderness, and the Worthington Mountain Wilderness borders the west, the Seamen Range to the east, and Mount Irish Wilderness flanks the south. Permanently protecting the basins which connect these mountain ranges ensures landscape connectivity for both wildlife corridors and scenic value.

"We are thrilled President Barack Obama has acted to protect Basin and Range as a National Monument," says Shaaron Netherton, Executive Director of Friends of Nevada Wilderness, "We urge the President to continue his great work in protecting Nevada's most treasured landscapes, starting with Gold Butte in Southern Nevada."

The 350,000 acre Gold Butte, northeast of Las Vegas, boasts significant cultural and historical sites like petroglyph panels, prehistoric agave roasting pits, and pioneer mining camps, as well as provides critical habitat for such wildlife as the desert tortoise, bighorn sheep, and the Gila monster. Friends of Nevada Wilderness has sought permanent protection for Gold Butte for the past 15 years and has worked closely with Senator Harry Reid, Representative Dina Titus, and former Representative Stephen Horsford for a National Conservation Area with wilderness. Although Senator Reid introduced legislation into Congress in January of 2015, efforts have been stalled. Friends of Nevada Wilderness now calls on President Obama to act now to permanently protect Gold Butte for its scenic, cultural, and historical value and would welcome a National Monument designation.

To get more information, please contact Shevawn Von Tobel at shevawn@nevadawilderness.org or call the office at (775) 324-7667.

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Founded in 1984, Friends of Nevada Wilderness has helped protect over 3 million acres of Nevada's wild lands by leading efforts in the expansion or designation of all 70 wildernesses in the state, including the recently protected Wovoka and Pine Forest Range Wilderness. Over the past thirty years, Friends of Nevada Wilderness has also grown a nationally recognized and award-winning Wilderness Stewardship Volunteer Program, generating over \$1 million of in-kind services to benefit Nevada's public lands.