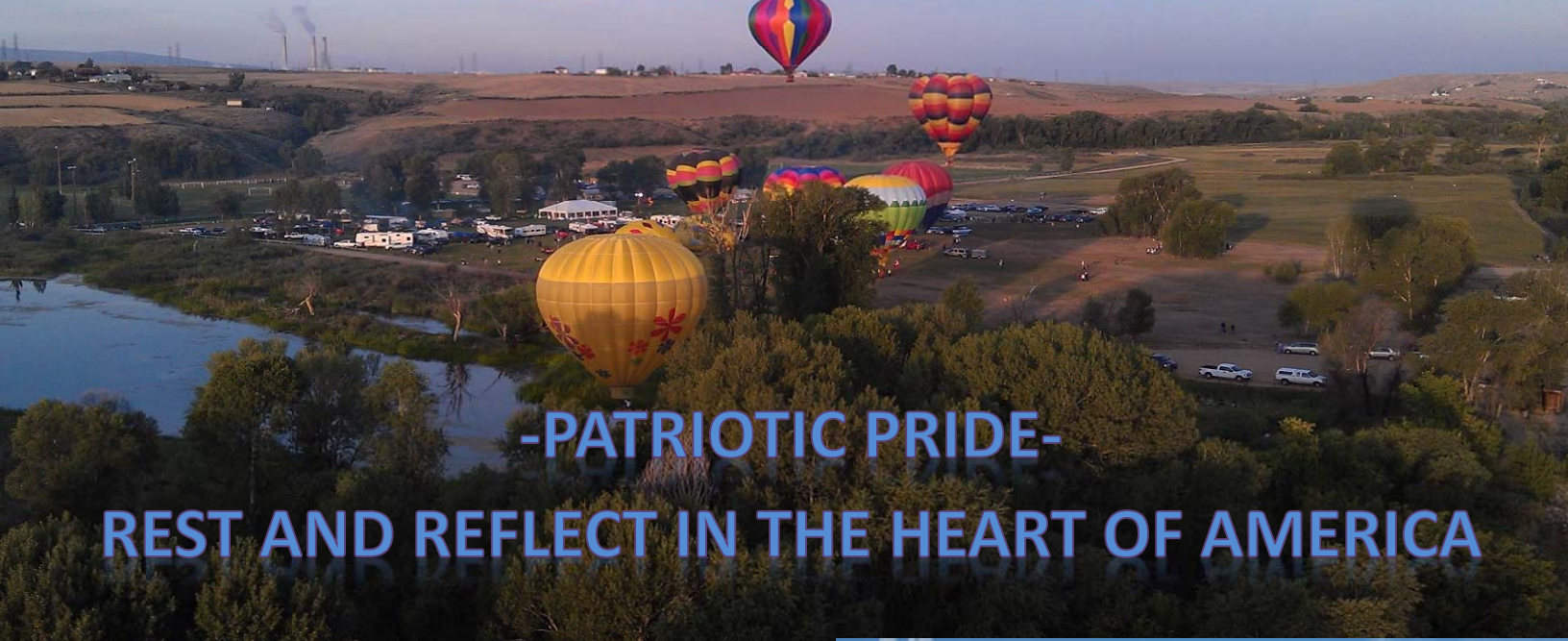




National Garden of American Heroes



-PATRIOTIC PRIDE-

REST AND REFLECT IN THE HEART OF AMERICA





August 27, 2020

Honorable David Bernhardt
Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C St. NW
Washington, DC. 20240

Secretary Bernhardt,

The Moffat County Commissioners are very supportive of, and inspired by the President's July 3, 2020 Executive Order on Building and Rebuilding Monuments to American Heroes. The Moffat County Commissioners would like to nominate Loudy-Simpson Park as a potential site for the National Garden of American Heroes. This new monument would provide an opportunity for Moffat County to honor its existing agriculture, mining, electricity generation, and western frontier heritage, while giving national recognition to American Heroes of all backgrounds. Loudy-Simpson Park is located in Craig, Colorado, is 453 acres in size, and hosts over 2 miles of river frontage on the Yampa River main-stem, including oxbow channels. In addition to Moffat County offering hundreds of acres of scenic land, the Moffat County Commissioners would also like to sponsor a United States flag, flag pole, lighting, and landscaping around a central flag in the National Garden of American Heroes. Loudy-Simpson Park is an acreage of local pride. Just this summer alone, over \$650,000 has been invested in the Park for several improvements including an amphitheater, electrical upgrades, and picnic areas. Partners include contributions from Moffat County, the City of Craig, the local electric association, local power plant and coal mines, and State of Colorado energy impact funding.

Monument Management:

Moffat County has decades of history of working with the Federal Government to manage federal lands regarding everything from endangered species to land and water management. We encourage both you and the President to consider utilizing existing authorities to establish a National Monument that coordinates and partners with local governments and meets the national intent to honor American Heroes.

Justification:

Moffat County is positioned perfectly, both geographically and politically, for the American Heroes Monument. Due to a pervasive national and Statewide effort to eliminate fossil fuels from Colorado's and the Nation's energy portfolio, Moffat County stands to lose 64% of its assessed value and 1/3 of its population in the next 10 years, from unrealistic regulation of coal production and the oil and gas industry. As the Statewide and National desire to shift to renewable energy targets NW Colorado, and specifically Moffat County, The National Garden of American Heroes would be a cornerstone to help NW Colorado honor our existing culture and businesses, while transitioning to a new economy. The tourism economy that the Garden of American Heroes could spur, may offer one of the few opportunities to help mitigate lost tax revenues, jobs, and local business revenues.

Location, Culture, Economics, Marketing:

Moffat County offers the perfect economic, geographic, and cultural location to market the National Garden of American Heroes.

Economic potential:

- 5 minute walk/ 1 minute drive to a national “Opportunity Zone Program” investment for ancillary businesses.
- Colorado Jump Start Zone benefiting ancillary business for property tax, sales tax and employees.
- Moffat County has established a 4% Local Marketing District tax and a 1.9% Tourism Association tax that can focus on promoting the Garden of American Heroes.
- Moffat County is an “Enhanced Rural Enterprise Zone” where ancillary businesses to the Garden of American Heroes can capitalize on Investment tax credits, employee credits, and commercial building investment credits which foster private businesses.

Geographic Proximity and Local Amenities:

No better opportunity exists to share Northwest Colorado with the Nation, than to locate the Garden of American Heroes in rural Colorado, and specifically in a community that is forced to transition its economic base from fossil fuels.

- Located central to the West’s public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, the US Forest Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service.
- Located on the historic coast-to-coast “Victory Highway” US Highway 40
- 2 ½ hours north of the National Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Headquarters
- 20 Minutes from a commercial aviation airport (Steamboat Springs/Hayden Airport)
- 3 minutes from general aviation airport (Craig Municipal Airport)
- 2 hours South of I-80
- 1 ½ hours North of I-70
- 1 hour west of Steamboat Springs and Mount Werner Ski Resort
- 3 ½ hour drive to Denver, Colorado
- 5 hours from Salt Lake City, Utah.
- 2 ½ hour west of Rocky Mountain National Park
- 7 hour drive to Yellowstone National Park
- 1 ½ hour to Dinosaur National Monument
- 5 minute walk to the Proposed Yampa River Corridor Project including a network of walking trails, fishing access, scenic rock outcroppings over the river, and access to one of Colorado’s finest 18 hole golf courses.

Cultural Significance:

- Moffat County encompasses some of the richest historical grounds in the American West. From rich dinosaur deposits, to 13,000 year old native artifacts, to fur trading outposts, to cattle drives and large agricultural ranches, to several of the most famous outlaws, our area is truly situated in the heart of the American story. In fact the strong, proud and independent western heritage still flows through every aspect of our community.
- In the last 50 years, Moffat County has been one of the largest coal producers and electric generation in Colorado. Recent legislative and congressional efforts to support renewable energy programs has resulted in a loss of our best paying jobs, two coal mines and one of Colorado’s largest power plants, to announce shut-down’s in less than 10 years.

Local or National Hero Stature Nominations:

Ferrington (Ferry) Carpenter-Farrington Carpenter was a pivotal figure in moving NW Colorado into the 21st century. He filed for his homestead in 1907 at the age of 21. After building upon the success of one of the most prominent early

ranches in the Hayden area, Carpenter went on to run the federal agency that was the predecessor of the Bureau of Land Management, the US Grazing Service. Carpenter and his good friend Congressman Ed Taylor, of Colorado, initiated the legislation for the Taylor Grazing Act which changed livestock grazing in the West from a frontier free-for-all to a system of managed grazing on public lands.

Edwin C. Johnson – 3 term Colorado Governor (1933-1937, 1955-1957), and 3 term US Senator (1937-1954). Homesteading in Moffat County in 1909, “Big Ed” Johnson was head of the Senate Arms Committee during WWII, instrumental in the creation Interstate Highway system, helped establish the US Airforce academy in Colorado Springs, was a major player in the creation of the Denver Broncos, and was personal friends with Lyndon B. Johnson who referred to Ed as “Mr. Wisdom”.

Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt Jr.-Theodore Roosevelt Jr. was the 26th President of the United States. He was an avid conservationist, naturalist and writer. He established many new National Parks, forests, and monuments intending to preserve the nation’s natural resources.

John Wesley Powell- John Powell was a geologist, U.S. Soldier, explorer of the American West, professor at Illinois Wesleyan University, and director of major scientific and cultural institutions. Powell served as second director of the U.S. Geological Survey and proposed, for development of the arid West, policies that were prescient for his accurate evaluation of conditions. Powell led a series of expeditions into the Rocky Mountains and around the Green and Colorado rivers. He is famous for the 1869 Powell Geographic Expedition, a three-month river trip down the Green and Colorado rivers, including the first official U.S. government-sponsored passage through the Grand Canyon.

David Halliday Moffat- David Moffat was one of Denver, Colorado’s most important financiers and industrialists in late 19th and early 20th century. He had claims to over one hundred Colorado mines and nine railroads and he was viewed by many as ahead of his time. He pioneered several rail routes to the west of Denver across the Continental Divide including the critical route through the Continental Divide, the Moffat Tunnel. David Moffat’s personal rail car (the Marcia Car) is on display in the County named after him, Moffat County, Colorado.

Conclusion:

Secretary Bernhardt, Moffat County would be honored to host the site of the National Garden of American Heroes. We have a prime location along 2 miles of the Yampa River we would be willing to donate to the cause. We propose a new model for successfully integrating newly established National Monuments into existing community customs, cultures, and economies. Moffat County offers a unique opportunity to increase tourism at a scale that would meaningfully mitigate, but not replace, lost energy revenues. In addition, it should be noted the monumental significance of Colorado Governor Jared Polis’ letter to you dated August 19, where he requested “*the task force to connect with...Moffat County officials and other local leaders to further explore the opportunities in this wonderful part of our State.*”

Thank you for considering Moffat County’s nomination for a location of the proposed monument, and statues to be placed in the monument. Please contact any of the three Moffat County Commissioners at the number below, to further discuss our proposal for the National Garden of American Heroes.

Sincerely,



Ray Beck, Chairman
Moffat County Commissioner



Don Cook, District 1
Moffat County Commissioner



Donald Broom, District 3
Moffat County Commissioner



August 19, 2020

The Honorable David Bernhardt
Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C St. NW
Washington, DC, 20240

Dear Secretary Bernhardt:

Thank you for your letter requesting recommendations associated with the proposed 'American Garden of Heroes' set forth in President Trump's Executive Order. As the task force continues their evaluations, I hope they will in particular consider locations that may provide new economic potential for local communities in need of increased economic opportunity, particularly during this distressing time. In addition, as the task force continues their work, I encourage them to ensure that the locations considered do not negatively impact the important natural or recreational values that may currently exist on our prized public lands, which form the foundation of Colorado's vibrant \$62.5 billion outdoor economy.

With respect to potential locations in Colorado, I have been made aware of several locations supported by local leaders that the task force may look to explore further;

Moffat and Mesa Counties have expressed support for the state owned Cameo Complex. With a dedicated off-ramp on Interstate 70 and easy access for interstate visitors, thousands of cars pass this location each day. Adjacent to the Colorado River and surrounded by high canyon walls, the site is breathtakingly beautiful. The Cameo Shooting and Education Complex is currently in phase 1 development and is already a well-known destination. Plentiful property exists for the proposed Memorial Park. The property is currently used by 30,000+ recreationists each year with national and international sportsmen's competitions scheduled and can safely serve significantly increased visitation to American Garden of Heroes. Future development plans already include large banquet and meeting facilities, as well as indoor and outdoor classrooms. A three-mile drive to the west on Interstate 70 brings restaurants, hotels, wineries, and Colorado peaches within easy grasp for visitors. The site is currently more than 1,900 acres owned by Colorado Parks and Wildlife with ongoing discussions to add another +/- 850 adjacent acres.

Mesa County also has noted additional locations near Fruita, Colorado, citing direct access to the major thoroughfare that is Interstate 70, existing infrastructure of hotels and restaurants to easily support traffic flow and proximity to scenic and suitable Bureau of Land Management lands. The area is also close to Grand Junction, a growing population center and the home of the Bureau of Land Management's new headquarters, as well as the Colorado National Monument. The Mesa County Commissioners have expressed support for the Exec. Order and have agreed that the Park would be welcome on available federal or state lands as long as the County bears no financial costs. Moffat County has also noted several potential additional areas as well, and a willingness to provide county land near Craig, Colorado, and potential state owned lands that may provide suitable potential locations. I encourage the task force to connect with Mesa and Moffat County officials and other local leaders to further explore the opportunities in this wonderful part of our state.

El Paso County has also expressed interest in this initiative and boasts the large population center of Colorado Springs, the stunning backdrop of Pikes Peak, and numerous federal land, and military owned

properties like the U.S. Air Force Academy. This initiative would seemingly fit well with the Air Force Academy and other area military complexes, the Firefighters Hall of Fame and U.S. Olympic facilities. I encourage the task force to connect with El Paso County officials and other local leaders to further explore specific potential locations that are numerous but would benefit from direct conversations with the task force.

Dolores County and Archuleta County have also provided several recommendations for this effort that I understand have been directly delivered to your office already. Both counties boast incredible landscapes, wonderful towns and resources and direct proximity to many federal public lands. I hope the task force will connect with officials in these counties and local leaders in key towns to explore the potential of these recommendations and these incredibly beautiful parts of our state.

This is not an exhaustive list of potential locations, and other localities may also have an interest in this effort. The list of 'heroes' from Colorado is long, from astronauts to Olympians to first-responders among many other categories, and I look forward to learning more about how the task force plans to vet and incorporate suggested heroes in the future. As the task force continues to evaluate how to develop a system to vet additional 'heroes' and explore specific locations, close consultation with state and local community leaders will be vitally important. While these suggestions provide a starting point given an initial short turn-around time, I believe further consultation with county and local governments, and a robust vetting process as this effort moves forward is necessary and will yield the best possible outcomes.

Sincerely,



Jared Polis
Governor



Dear Secretary Bernhardt:

August 19, 2020

On behalf of Moffat County and in support of President Donald J. Trump's Executive Order on Building and Rebuilding Monuments to American Heroes, the City of Craig would like to offer our enthusiastic support and endorsement of Moffat County's intent to become one of the locations selected by President Trump. The desire to support Moffat County and be selected is only second to our patriotic devotion to the wonderful history of this nation as expressed by the thankful citizens of Northwest Colorado.

We support Moffat County's application to the Task Force for a proposed location at Loudy Simpson Park adjacent to the Yampa River and next to Craig, Colorado. The proposed new home for this National Garden devoted to our American Heroes, and to the legacy left by their influence, would reside within a beautiful natural setting in northwest Colorado less than one mile from Craig, CO and near the intersection of U.S. Highway 40 and State Highway 13, which connects Interstate 70 and 80 to the north and south.

Northwest Colorado is also the home to Dinosaur National Monument, the confluence of the Yampa & Green River's and next door to the Flat Top Mountains and Steamboat Springs resort. While rural in nature, the regional influence is almost 60,000 people and the traffic through this area for business and recreation exceeds several hundred thousand during the warmer months of the year. The City of Craig is the population center for Moffat County and is adjacent to the proposed location for the National Garden. Our population is approximately 9,000 people. Within 45 minutes of Craig, CO, there are 6 other communities and an area population of approximately 45-50 thousand.

We at the City of Craig believe that it would be a privilege and an honor to support the Commissioners of Moffat County and to be selected to host a location honoring our national history and the contribution made by these significant Americans. The history of the United States has been shaped into the greatest republic the world has ever known with the creation of our exceptional founding documents. This legacy and these honored Patriots have been an inspiration to all of us, especially now as we struggle to protect our freedoms, liberty, and justice for all American Patriots.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Jarrod Ogden', written in a cursive style.

Mayor Jarrod Ogden
Craig, Colorado



August 26, 2020

The Honorable David Bernhardt
Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C St. NW
Washington, DC, 20240

Dear Secretary Bernhardt:

I am writing to encourage your serious consideration of Colorado's Moffat County as the location for the National Garden of American Heroes. In his letter to you dated August 19, 2020, Colorado Governor Jared Polis included Moffat County among the sites he thought were worthy of consideration, and I am pleased to provide additional support for that recommendation.

Others will attest to Moffat County's stunning natural beauty, abundant recreational opportunities and other attributes that make it a great candidate for consideration. But what I find most compelling -- and why I am writing this letter -- is the opportunity to honor the contribution Moffat County and communities like it have made to our nation. Along with a broad range of great Americans, the National Garden gives us an opportunity also to honor communities and workers that helped fuel our prosperity and secure our energy independence.

As market forces, along with health and environmental imperatives, move our nation away from the use of coal, the Colorado General Assembly passed legislation making it a statewide priority to seek a "just transition" for the workers and communities that will be most negatively affected. We take this charge very seriously. And we believe choosing a coal-transition community such as Moffat County as the location for the National Garden would send a clear and powerful message -- both of appreciation and of commitment to the future vitality of these communities.

This is not just a symbolic opportunity. Locating the National Garden in a coal-transition community would provide real and meaningful support where it is needed most. Moffat County is home to two coal mines and one coal-fired power plant that together provide nearly 10 percent of the county's jobs and 44 percent of all property taxes collected by taxing authorities in the county. All three facilities are likely to close within the decade.

For these communities to continue to thrive, they need to find effective ways to replace the jobs and revenues that will be lost when the power plants and coal mines close. Long-term success will require truly diverse and resilient local economies, building on existing assets and consistent with local visions for the future. In Moffat County, it is hard to imagine a more fitting way to help create that new economy



than to become the home to a new national treasure and major attraction -- the National Garden of American Heroes.

Moffat County is not standing still. It -- along with the City of Craig, its county seat -- are working hard to prepare for the coming transition. And they are showing a strong commitment to this specific effort by, among other things, offering an iconic American landscape -- Loudy Simpson Park, located just south of Craig along the wild Yampa River -- as the site for the National Garden.

Again, I strongly urge you to consider the potential for honoring the host community along with the great Americans that will be the focus of the National Garden. Moffat County was all-in for powering our economy and helping the nation achieve energy independence. In return, we should be all-in for its continued economic success. Locating the National Garden of American Heroes there would be a powerful and meaningful way to help accomplish that goal.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Wade Buchanan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Wade Buchanan
Director
Colorado Office of Just Transition
wade.buchanan@state.co.us