

Statement Against the Proposed Land Transfer into Trust for the Sandia Pueblo

The Sandia Heights Homeowners Association opposes the proposed transfer of almost 10,000 acres of National Forest and Wilderness land in the Sandia Mountains into trust for the benefit of the Pueblo of Sandia. The Pueblo has expressed concerns that the Forest Service has not adequately managed or protected this land. We believe, however, that the means to address any such concerns are already in place.

The T'uf Shur Bien Preservation Trust Area Act was adopted by Congress in 2003 to protect the Pueblo's traditional and cultural interests in the land and preserve access for all people in perpetuity. This 2003 Act embodies a hard-earned compromise reached through the efforts of the Pueblo, the US Forest Service, Bernalillo County, the City of Albuquerque, the Sandia Peak Tram Company, the Sandia Mountain Coalition, homeowners, and the public. The land remains primarily under Forest Service management, while the Pueblo has a significant voice in how it is used. The law explicitly provides a process to address any land management concerns.

We recognize the importance of the Sandia Mountains to the Pueblo. The Sandias are also an integral part of Albuquerque's heritage, identity, and quality of life. Statements and maps from the Pueblo governor suggest that under the 2026 proposed transfer, most of the land and trails would be closed to the public. In addition, residents whose properties border or are surrounded by the land could face serious problems related to easements, access, utilities, infrastructure, wildfire mitigation, and emergency response.

We believe that concerns regarding land management should be addressed through the processes already established in the 2003 law, without the need to alter land ownership. Following those processes can ensure that the Pueblo's rights and interests are protected, while allowing the "Land of Many Uses" to continue to be respected and enjoyed by all.

This statement was approved by the Board on September 9, 2026.