

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS  
AGENDA ITEM  
AGENDA SUMMARY FORM**

**DEPARTMENT:** MAYOR AND COUNCIL

**AGENDA DATE:** March 2, 2021

**CONTACT PERSON NAME AND PHONE NUMBER:** REP ALEXSANDRA ANNELLO, 212-0002  
REP JOE MOLINAR, 212-0004  
REP PETER SVARZBEIN, 212-0001

**DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED:** ALL

**STRATEGIC GOAL:** (Goal 4 - Enhance El Paso's Quality of Life through Recreational, Cultural and Educational Environments )

**SUBJECT:**

**APPROVE a resolution / ordinance / lease to do what? OR AUTHORIZE the City Manager to do what? Be descriptive of what we want Council to approve. Include \$ amount if applicable.**

Discussion and action on a resolution that the City of El Paso is proud to support the President of the United States establishing Castner Range National Monument in order to preserve a highly-important area within our region of environmental, historic, scientific, cultural and scenic value for current and future generations.

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:**

**Discussion of the what, why, where, when, and how to enable Council to have reasonably complete description of the contemplated action. This should include attachment of bid tabulation, or ordinance or resolution if appropriate. What are the benefits to the City of this action? What are the citizen concerns?**

This resolution would encourage the establishment of Castner Range as a national monument.

**PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:**

**Has the Council previously considered this item or a closely related one?**

Yes. A prior resolution was supported in 2016.

**AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

**How will this item be funded? Has the item been budgeted? If so, identify funding source by account numbers and description of account. Does it require a budget transfer? N/A**

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\*\*\*\*\*REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION\*\*\*\*\*

## **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 and 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 Franklin Mountains are found there; and

**WHEREAS**, Castner Range is rich in wildlife, including 62 bird species, 20 types of lizards (among them the Chihuahuan spotted whiptail) and 29 types of snakes (e.g., the endangered Texas lyre); and

**WHEREAS**, Castner Range has a combination of unique natural native plant and animal habitats, spectacular scenery and rich cultural features unequaled anywhere else in the Franklins; 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**, one of those plant species is the Mexican Gold Poppy colloquially known as “the poppies”, and is so beloved by the local and regional populace that an annual festival takes place, celebrating their bloom in the spring; and

**WHEREAS**, As an active artillery range from 1926-1966, Castner Range played a pivotal historical role in preparing our soldiers for military service; and

**WHEREAS**, Castner Range lies on TX Loop 375 and is thus easily reached by millions of individuals residing in or visiting the El Paso area and the U.S.-Mexico border region; and

**WHEREAS**, Castner Range abuts the Franklin Mountains State Park and a national 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**, The Castner Range lands could provide unique recreational opportunities and quality of life opportunities for El Paso residents, service members stationed at Fort Bliss, and other residents of far west Texas, 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, retirees and businesses; and

**WHEREAS**, the greater El Paso business community 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**, A Castner Range National Monument recognizes a 21st Century conservation effort centered around justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion and protects frontline communities and other marginalized communities who disproportionately bear the brunt of climate impacts; 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** that the City of El Paso is proud to support the President of the United States establishing Castner Range National Monument in order to preserve a highly-important area within our region of environmental, historic, scientific, cultural and scenic value for current and future generations.

Dated this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

CITY OF EL PASO

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Oscar Leeser  
Mayor

ATTEST:

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Laura D. Prine  
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



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Karla Muñoz  
Assistant City Attorney