RE-2 Employee Post Travel Disclosure of Travel Expenses

Date/Time Stamp
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9/22/26
2026 SEP 22 PM 5:54

Post Travel Filing Instructions: Complete this form within **30 days** of returning from travel. Submit all forms to the Office of Public Records in 144 Hart Building.**This form is a public disclosure. The form and all attachments will be made publicly available.**

Certification:*In compliance with the Regulations Governing Privately Sponsored Travel, Senate Rule 35, and the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007, I certify that I accepted the following gift of privately sponsored travel:*

Private Sponsor(s):
American Lands Project

Travel Dates:
05/27/2026 to 05/30/2026

Name of accompanying family member (if any):

Relationship to Traveler:

Expenses

Transportation Expenses	Lodging Expenses	Meals Expenses	Other Expenses (Amount & Description)
$880.12	$328.00	$195.64	$397.75

I also certify that attached to this form are all required documents for post travel disclosure, including:

- **The final Employee Pre-Travel Authorization** (Form RE-1)
- The final **Private Sponsor Travel Certification Form** with all attachments
- The final invitation
- The final approved itinerary

Finally, I certify that all trip information reflected in the attachments above accurately reflects the travel that I accepted. If there were any changes to the trip after I received approval from the Committee, the changes are described in ATTACHMENT 1.

9/22/26
Date

SAMANTHA HENDRICKS
Printed Name of Traveler

Samantha Hendricks
Signature of Traveler

TO BE COMPLETED BY SUPERVISING MEMBER/OFFICER

I have made a determination that the expenses set out above in connections with travel described in the Employee Pre-Travel Authorization form, are necessary transportation, lodging, and related expenses as defined in Rule 35.

9/22/26
Date

James E Risch
Signature of Supervising Senator/Officer

ATTACHMENT 1 – CHANGES FROM APPROVED PRE-TRAVEL

Note: Material changes to a trip that occur after the Committee has issued an approval letter may invalidate the Committee's approval. Please contact the Committee with any questions regarding changes to an approved trip.

Were there any changes to the pre-approved travel expenses? (Transportation, Meals, Lodging, Other)?

● Yes ○ No

Expense Change	Revised Amount	Explanation
Meals	$195.64	Reflecting Final Meal Costs: 5/27 ($53.77) Lower than estimated. Cost of lunch in Taos, share of group water and snacks, and Far Flung Adventures (FFA) provided dinner. 5/28 ($74.00) Food costs from FFA. 5/29 ($67.87) Lower than estimated. Cost of FFA provided breakfast, lunch and dinner in Taos. 5/30 ($0.00) Lower than estimated. Breakfast was included with the hotel.
Transportation	$880.12	Reflecting Final Transportation Costs: $393.20 - Unchanged. One-way flight from DCA to ABQ $368.20 - Unchanged. One-way flight from ABQ to DCA $118.72 - Lower than estimated. Share of rental van and gas for trip ground transportation.
Misc. Expenses	$389.82	Reflecting Final Cost: Other (Guide Fee) - Lower than estimated. Share of guide service and outfitting charges for time spent in the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument and on the Rio Grande River.

Were there any changes to the pre-approved itinerary?

● Yes ○ No

Explanation: May 27: For the hike originally scheduled from 2:30 pm - 4:30 pm, the time was extended to 5:00 pm. Additionally, the correct title for Cassandra Keyes is (Archeologist & Board Member, Friends of Rio Grande del Norte) instead of (Archeologist, Bureau of Land Management). For the ground transportation and meeting originally scheduled at 4:30 - 5:00 pm and 5:00 - 5:15 pm respectively, the group did not stop at the Far Flung Adventures Office for the meeting and instead drove directly to the campsite from 5:00 - 6:30 pm. For the campsite arrival and set-up originally at 6:00 - 6:30 pm, the arrival and set-up was instead at 6:30 - 7:00 pm. For the dinner originally at 6:30 - 8:30 pm, dinner was actually from 7:00 - 9:00 pm. Additionally, Karina Armijo did not attend this dinner. Far Flung Adventure guides Charles Storrow, Cory Odom, and Adam Tew joined this dinner. All other additional attendees remained the same. May 28: Garrett VeneKlasen did not meet with the travelers for this day's activities. Charles Storrow, Cory Odom, and Adam Tew were the guides from Far Flung Adventure for this day. All other additional attendees remained the same. May 29: For the tour and meeting originally scheduled at 9:00 - 11:30 am, the travelers met with the following members from Taos Pueblo: WarChief Curtis Sandoval Sr. (Taos Pueblo), WarChief Secretary Springbird Samora (Taos Pueblo), Hawk Foster (WarChief Staff, Taos Pueblo), David Marabal (Tribal Councilman, Taos Pueblo), Christopher Lefthand (Tribal Councilman, Taos Pueblo), Carpio Bernal (Tribal Councilman, Taos Pueblo), Nelson Cordoba (Tribal Councilman, Taos Pueblo), Gilbert Suazo Sr. (Tribal Councilman, Taos Pueblo), Richard Archulta (Tribal Councilman, Taos Pueblo), Ernesto Luhun (Tribal Cacique, Taos Pueblo), Shawn Duran (Chief Operations Officer, Taos Pueblo), Mikey Martinez (Director of Division of Natural Resources, Taos Pueblo), Miguel Vigil (Taos Pueblo Environmental Program Manager), Ilona Spruce (Tribal Member and Tour Guide, Taos Pueblo). For the meeting originally scheduled from 2:30 - 4:00 pm, the meeting was extended from 2:30 - 4:15 pm. Additionally, Arnold Lopez (Las Trampas Land Grant) met with the travelers, along with JR Logan, for this meeting. For the ground transportation originally scheduled at 4:00 - 5:00 pm, the transportation was instead from 4:15 - 5:30 pm. For the hotel check-in originally scheduled at 5:00 - 6:00 pm, the time was instead at 5:30 - 6:30 pm. For the ground transportation originally scheduled at 6:00 - 6:15 pm, the transportation was instead 6:30 - 6:45 pm. For the dinner originally scheduled for 6:15 - 7:45 pm, the dinner was instead at 6:45 - 8:45 pm.

Were there any additional changes to the pre-approved trip?

○ Yes ● No

Explanation: There were no additional changes to the pre-approved trip.

RE-1 Employee Pre-Travel Authorization

Date/Time Stamp
4/24/26

Pre-Travel Filing Instructions: Complete and submit this form at least 30 days prior to the travel departure date to the **Select Committee on Ethics in SH-220.** Incomplete and late travel submissions will **not** be considered or approved.

Name of Traveler:
Samantha Hendricks

Employing Office/Committee:
RISCH, JAMES E.

Private Sponsor(s):
American Lands Project

Destination(s):
Taos, New Mexico Taos, New Mexico

Travel Dates:
05/27/2026 to 05/30/2026
NOTE: If you plan to extend the trip for any reason you **must** notify the Committee.

Explain how this trip is specifically connected to the traveler's official or representational duties.

I manage our office's natural resources and environment portfolio. My work directly impacts many of the places and programs we will visit and discuss on this trip.

Do you have an accompanying family member or spouse on this trip?
No

Name and Relationship to Traveler:
N/A

I certify that the information contained in this form is true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge.

4/24/26
Date

Signature of Employee

TO BE COMPLETED BY SUPERVISING MEMBER/OFFICER
(President of the Senate, Secretary of the Senate, Sergeant at Arms, Secretary for the Majority, Secretary for the Minority, and Chaplain)

I Senator Jim Risch
(Print Senator's/Officer's Name)

hereby authorize Samantha Hendricks
(Print Traveler's Name)

an employee under my direct supervision, to accept payment or reimbursement for necessary transportation, lodging, and related expenses for travel to the event described above. I have determined that this travel is in connection with his or her duties as a Senate employee or an officeholder, and will not create the appearance that he or she is using public office for private gain.

I have also determined that the attendance of the employee's spouse or child is appropriate to assist in the representation of the Senate.

☐ (signify "yes" by checking box)

4/24/26
Date

Signature of Supervising Senator/Officer

AMERICAN LANDS PROJECT

Samantha Hendricks
Senior Legislative Assistant
Sen. Jim Risch
483 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Sam,

The American Lands Project (ALP) appreciates your interest in a trip to the Río Grande del Norte National Monument. The Río Grande del Norte National Monument is an exceptional and unique landscape that consists of extensive plains, extinct volcanic cones, and an 800-foot-deep gorge carved by the Río Grande River. Indigenous people have been stewards of these lands for centuries, and the monument helps preserve this ancient history through numerous petroglyphs and archaeological sites. Today, these lands continue to provide important economic and cultural benefits to the local community and the Taos Pueblo Tribe. This landscape supports a variety of outdoor recreation activities – including hunting, fishing, rafting, camping, and hiking – that are vital to the Taos Pueblo Tribe and local community.

The Río Grande National Monument and the Río Grande River also provide critical habitat and wintering grounds for wildlife, including big horn sheep, elk and a variety of bird and fish species. However, the region is facing increasing impacts of wildfire and drought. Partnerships between the federal government, local communities, and Tribal leaders are imperative to address issues across the region.

A fact-finding trip to the Río Grande del Norte National Monument offers a valuable on-the-ground experience and an opportunity to meet those who depend on and use the area's public lands and waters, including local community leaders, outdoor recreation business representatives, archeologists, sportsmen, Tribal officials and policy experts.

We would like to invite you to join ALP for a trip to the Río Grande del Norte National Monument from May 27th to May 30th, 2026. The trip will be fully sponsored by ALP, including all travel, lodging, and meals. We will follow-up with the formal 2026 trip itinerary and will assist with the required documentation for submission to the Senate Committee on Ethics.

Thank you for your consideration. As with all trip guests, we would like to schedule a virtual meeting with you to share additional details about the trip, provide recommendations for preparation, and answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Natalie Smink
Education & Trips Coordinator

American Lands Project: May 27-30 New Mexico (RGDNNM) Fact-Finding Trip

SAMANTHA HENDRICKS

Title:
None

Employing Office/Committee:
RISCH, JAMES E.

Duty Station:
WASHINGTON,DC

Destination(s):

Taos, New Mexico
Taos, New Mexico

Explain how this trip is specifically connected to the traveler's official or representational duties:

I manage our office's natural resources and environment portfolio. My work directly impacts many of the places and programs we will visit and discuss on this trip.

Name of accompanying family member (if any):
Not Entered

Name and Relationship to Traveler:
None

Organization Information

Organization Name
American Lands Project

Is your organization classified as a §501(c)(3)?
(●) Yes ( ) No

§501(c)(3) Organization Type
Public Charity

Address
1904 3rd Ave

Address 2 (Optional)
Suite 406

City, State Zip
Seattle, Washington 98101 United States

Phone Number
(720) 951-4327

Organization URL

History of Congressional Travel

American Lands Project (ALP) has organized a variety of sponsored travel opportunities for Senate and House members and staff over the last few years to locations such as Southeast Alaska, America's Arctic, and the Owyhee Canyonlands. In 2023, ALP hosted three trips to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for House Members and Senate staff, and two trips to the Tongass National Forest for a Senate Member and Senate and House Staff. In 2024, ALP hosted five trips to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for a Senate Member, a House Member, Senate staff, and House Staff; and one trip to the Tongass National Forest for House staff. In 2025, ALP hosted four trips to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for two House Members, Senate staff, and House staff; and two trips to the Tongass National Forest for two House members, Senate staff, and House staff.

Educational Activities

ALP conducts educational briefings for decision-makers in Washington, DC, and works in coalition with diverse organizations engaged with policies surrounding the use and management of America's public lands and waters. ALP also provides educational trips for non-congressional organizations.

Lobbyist and Foreign Agent Registration Information

Lobbyist Registration Status: *I certify that the sponsor is not a federally registered lobbyist and does not retain or employ a federally registered lobbyists.*

Foreign Agent Registration Status: *I certify that the sponsor is not an agent of a foreign principal and do not retain or employ an agent of a foreign principal.*

Foreign Government Involvement

Foreign Agent Registration Status:

- ✓ I certify that the sponsor is not a foreign government.
- ✓ I certify that the sponsor is not an entity that is owned or operated by a foreign government.
- ✓ I certify that the sponsor does not receive funding from a foreign government.

Comments

Signature Page

The signature page is below.

Purpose and Details

Provide a brief description of the trip.

A fact-finding trip to visit Northern New Mexico and explore the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument to learn about its role in the regional economy, Tribal communities, ancient human history, wildlife and habitat, landscape ecology and watershed health, and understand the role of public lands more broadly. Guests will have the opportunity to visit remote areas of the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument firsthand to better understand the discussion topics and meet with local and Tribal stakeholders in Taos and Taos Pueblo to learn more about local issues, such as the impacts of wildfire and drought, and Tribal initiatives.

Explain how the purpose of the trip relates to your organization's mission.

ALP seeks to inform discussions regarding important public lands in our nation, in part through facilitating fact-finding travel centered around place-based education. This trip will provide history, context, and understanding for the attendees in support of their offices' responsibilities related to public lands in the United States, New Mexico, and the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument.

Is your organization the only sponsor for this trip?

☑ Yes ○ No

Grantmaking Organizations (Optional)

There are no grantmaking organizations.

With or Without Regard for Congressional Participation

The trip is arranged or organized specifically with regard to congressional participation.

Lobbyist/Foreign Agent Involvement in Planning, Organizing, Requesting or Arranging

☑ The trip will not in any part be planned, organized, requested, or arranged by a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal, other than de minimis involvement.

Lobbyist/Foreign Agent Financing

☑ The trip will not be financed in any part by a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal.

☑ No funds or in-kind contributions were earmarked directly or indirectly for the purpose of financing this specific trip from a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal or from a private entity that retains or employs one or more registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal.

Lobbyist/Foreign Agent Accompaniment

Complete if all sponsors are §501(c)(3) organizations

☑ The trip is limited to three days (for trips inside the continental United States) or seven days (for trips outside the continental United States), and no lobbyist or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee at any point throughout the trip

○ The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **one** overnight stay) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip

○ The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **two** overnight stays) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip

Complete if any of the sponsors is not a §501(c)(3) organizations.

○ The trip is limited to three days (for trips inside the continental United States) or seven days (for trips outside the continental United States), and no lobbyist or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee at any point throughout the trip

○ The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **one** overnight stay) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip

○ The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **two** overnight stays) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip

Certification of No Recreational Activity and No Alcohol

- Travel expenses paid for will not include expenditures for recreational activities.
- Travel expenses paid for will not include expenditures for alcohol, except as permitted by the Regulations Governing Privately Sponsored Travel.

Invitees

Members and staff from the House of Representatives **will not** receive invitations.

The list of invitees is below.

Travel Details

Trip Start Date/Time:
05/27/2026 @ 06:59 AM

Trip End Date/Time:
05/30/2026 @ 07:55 PM

Will the traveler be accompanied by a family member for whom the sponsor will pay travel expenses?

○ Yes ● No

Itinerary

The itinerary is below.

Transportation (Per Member/Officer/Employee: $966.84 | Accompanying Family Member: $0.00)

Transportation Type	Class	Amount
Airfare	Coach	$393.20
Note One-way flight from DCA to ABQ.		
Airfare	Coach	$368.20
Note One-way flight from ABQ to DCA.		
Ground Transportation	N/A	$205.44
Note Share of rental van and gas for trip ground transportation.		

Lodging (Per Member/Officer/Employee: $328.00)

Check-In	Check-Out	Facility	City	State	Country	Nights	Cost/Night	Cost Exceed Per Diem
05/27/2026	05/29/2026	Tent Basecamp in Rio Grande del Norte National Monument	Taos	New Mexico	United States	2	$100.00	No
05/29/2026	05/30/2026	Hampton Inn Taos	Taos	New Mexico	United States	1	$128.00	No

Meals (Per Member/Officer/Employee: $228.00)

Date	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Incidentals	Total	City	State	Country	Cost Exceeds Per Diem
05/27/2026	$0.00	$25.00	$30.00	$0.00	**$55.00**	Taos	New Mexico	United States	No
05/28/2026	$18.00	$25.00	$31.00	$0.00	**$74.00**	Taos	New Mexico	United States	No
05/29/2026	$16.00	$27.00	$31.00	$0.00	**$74.00**	Taos	New Mexico	United States	No
05/30/2026	$25.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	**$25.00**	Taos	New Mexico	United States	No

Reasonable Miscellaneous Expenses (Per Member/Officer/Employee: $397.75)

Expense Type	Amount	Notes
Other (Guide Fees)	$397.75	Share of guide service and outfitting charges for time spent in the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument and on the Rio Grande River.

Additional Attachments

Document Name

There are no additional attachments.

PRIVATELY SPONSORED TRAVEL

SPONSOR SIGNATURE PAGE

I hereby certify that the information submitted in connection with the trip listed below is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Trip Name: May 27-30 New Mexico (RGDNNM) Fact-Finding Trip

Travel Date(s): 05/27/2026 - 05/30/2026

Travel Destination(s): See attached

Sponsor: American Lands Project

Thomas D. Campion
(printed name of sponsor representative)

Board President
(title)

Tom campion
Tom campion (Apr 22, 2026 08:37:07 PDT)
(signature of sponsor representative)

04/22/2026
(date)

Travel Destinations:

- Albuquerque, NM
- Rio Grande del Norte National Monument, NM
- Taos, NM
- Taos Pueblo, NM

New Mexico_sponsor-signature-page

Final Audit Report 2026-04-22

Created:	2026-04-22
By:	Natailie Smink (Natalie@americanlandsproject.org)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAA7cPJJzeZK0_JIlodhGSmtAHlWfSK06Dg

"New Mexico_sponsor-signature-page" History

Document created by Natailie Smink (Natalie@americanlandsproject.org)
2026-04-22 - 3:13:18 PM GMT

Document emailed to tomcampion@zumiez.com for signature
2026-04-22 - 3:15:30 PM GMT

Email viewed by tomcampion@zumiez.com
2026-04-22 - 3:15:34 PM GMT

Signer tomcampion@zumiez.com entered name at signing as Tom campion
2026-04-22 - 3:37:05 PM GMT

Document e-signed by Tom campion (tomcampion@zumiez.com)
Signature Date: 2026-04-22 - 3:37:07 PM GMT - Time Source: server

Agreement completed.
2026-04-22 - 3:37:07 PM GMT

AMERICAN LANDS PROJECT

May 27-30 New Mexico (RGDNNM) Fact-Finding Trip

Senate Invite List:

- Benjamin Easter - Legislative Assistant, Senator Ted Budd's Office
- Harrison Walker - Senior Policy Advisory, Senator Thom Tillis' Office
- Jacob Egler - Natural Resources and Judiciary Counsel, Senator Ron Wyden's Office
- Malcolm McGeary - Senior Policy Advisor, Senator Michael Bennet's Office
- Rachel Lentz - Professional Staff Member, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
- Samantha Hendricks - Senior Legislative Assistant, Senator Jim Risch's Office

American Lands Project
Rio Grande del Norte National Monument, NM
2026 Fact-Finding Trip Itinerary
Wednesday, May 27 - Saturday, May 30

Wednesday, May 27, 2026

- Travel from Washington, DC to Albuquerque, NM
  - **6:59 a.m.** Depart DCA, UA 1450, **8:13 a.m.** arrive at IAH
  - **10:00 a.m.** Depart IAH, UA 3982, **11:25 a.m.** arrive at ABQ

- **12:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.** Ground Transportation from Albuquerque Sunport to La Vista Verde Trailhead; Carson, NM 87517
  - During the drive, discuss the itinerary and logistics for the trip. Share a broad overview of the Taos region and the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument (RGDN), use maps to help orient where the monument is located in New Mexico and where we will be visiting in the monument. Introduce the important roles that these landscapes serve for the communities that interact with them.

    Discuss the ecological, economic and cultural value of our public lands across the country and the importance of public lands access to Americans. Review the different land management agencies (Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, National Park Service, and Fish and Wildlife Service), the various land uses allowed across different land designations, and the balanced approach to management. Using maps, look at how various areas of public land are managed across New Mexico.
    - *Attendees: Benjamin Easter (Legislative Assistant, Sen. Ted Budd), Harrison Walker (Senior Policy Advisor, Sen. Thom Tillis), Jacob Egler (Natural Resources and Judiciary Counsel, Sen. Ron Wyden), Malcolm McGeary (Senior Policy Advisor, Sen. Michael Bennet), Samantha Hendricks (Senior Legislative Assistant, Sen. Jim Risch), Rachel Lentz (Professional Staff Member, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee), Natalie Smink (Trips & Education Coordinator, American Lands Project), Heather Urban (Consultant, American Lands Project)*

- **2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.** Guided Hike along the La Vista Verde trail to observe the Rio Grande and learn about the ancient history of the area with a local archeologist. Visit ancient petroglyph sites along the trail.
  - *Additional Attendees: Cassandra Keyes (Archeologist, Bureau of Land Management), Darien Fernandez (Board Member, Friends of Rio Grande*

del Norte), Garrett VeneKlasen (Board President, Friends of Rio Grande del Norte)

- **4:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.** Ground Transport to Far Flung Adventures Office; 15 NM-522, El Prado, NM 87529

- **5:00 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.** Meet with Far Flung Adventures Owner and Guide, Will Blackstock.

- **5:15 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.** Ground Transport to campsite - Wild Rivers Recreation Area; 1120 NM-378 Questa New Mexico 87556.
    - While driving, discuss broad issues facing the Rio Grande River area, the national monument, and surrounding public lands, such as drought, wildfire and restoration. Talk about the importance of federal land management agencies partnering with local communities and Tribes to help manage these issues. Explain the reasons why the local community and Tribe, Taos Pueblo, supported the Rio Grande del Norte national monument designation.

- **6:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m** Arrive at the campsite and get settled. Camp outfitting, food, and guide service provided by Far Flung Adventures.

- **6:30 pm - 8:30 p.m.** Working Dinner at Wild Rivers campsite. Discussion about the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program. Since created by Congress in 1964, LWCF has been one of the most important programs to conserve lands and improve outdoor recreation opportunities across the nation. The program works in coordination with federal, state and local efforts. All 50 states have benefitted from LWCF grants and projects. Learn from locals about LWCF programs in the Rio Grande del Norte area and across New Mexico.
    - *Additional Attendees: Will Blackstock (Guide and Owner; Far Flung Adventures); Karina Armijo (Director; New Mexico Office of Outdoor Recreation); Darien Fernandez, Garrett VeneKlasen*

Thursday, May 28, 2026

Attendees: Benjamin Easter, Harrison Walker, Jacob Egler, Malcolm McGeary, Samantha Hendricks, Rachel Lentz, Natalie Smink, Heather Urban, Garrett VeneKlasen, Cassandra Keyes, Aaron Garlick (Taos Local and Fly Fishing Guide), Bard Edrington (New Mexico Habitat Stewardship Coordinator, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers), Will Blackstock, Additional Far Flung Adventures Guides (to be assigned)

- **7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.** Breakfast.

- **8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.** Guided hike to confluence of Red River and Rio Grande. During the hike, talk about the importance of watershed health and its impact on local communities, Tribes, and wildlife habitat. Discuss the ways that partners are working together to restore and improve water quality and watershed conditions. The Rio Grande River is the lifeblood of the Southwest and the third longest river in the continental United States. Like rivers across the country, millions of people rely on the Rio Grande River and its tributaries, such as the Red River, for drinking water, fishing, agriculture, outdoor recreation and more. Discuss issues surrounding increased drought conditions in the West and ways partners are working to address the issues that affect communities and Tribes.

- **9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.** Guided float down the Rio Grande River. Access via boat is the only way to access some of the most remote and ecologically and culturally significant areas of the monument. While on the water, learn from local experts about the reasons for the creation of the monument, the ecological and culturally important assets and the local engagement process.

  Discuss the role of outdoor recreation in the Taos economy. Outdoor recreation is an increasing economic driver for local communities in the West and across the country, particularly in rural areas. In northern New Mexico, the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument (RGDN) boasts some of New Mexico's most prized recreational opportunities, including rafting, hiking, camping and more. The RGDN has had a huge economic impact on the Taos region. In just one year after being established, the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument saw a 40 percent increase in visitors, resulting in a 21 percent increase in Town of Taos lodgers' tax revenue.

- **11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.** Working Lunch: Discuss the broad support Americans have for public lands across the country and keeping those lands available to the public. Also, discuss the importance of public land access for a variety of reasons and multiple uses, including hunting, fishing, and grazing in addition to the recreational uses previously discussed.

- **12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.** Guided Hike to a petroglyph site in the Middle Box section of the monument, which can only be reached via raft. The RGDN monument protects culturally, archeologically and geographically valuable areas. The monument features numerous ancient petroglyphs carved into volcanic basalt cliffs, primarily created by Ancestral Puebloan peoples between 900 and 1400 CE. On the hike, learn *from a local Archeologist* about the use of the lands back to prehistoric times; the *cultural, spiritual and historical significance of the petroglyphs to the Pueblos*

peoples; and BLM's efforts to protect these sensitive cultural resources.

- **1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.** Continue the guided float down the Rio Grande River and discuss the types of wildlife and ecological aspects of the monument – wintering grounds for species, hunting and fishing activities, stressors on wildlife, and habitat and efforts to maintain habitat and wildlife corridors – and the role the federal government plays in wildlife and ecological management.

- **3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.** Discuss the importance of maintaining our public lands, including maintenance and planning needs. Discuss the federal resources needed to ensure Americans have access to lands and waters, provide quality and safe visitor experiences, upgrade infrastructure, and other activities to achieve management agencies' mandates.

- **4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.** Ground transportation to campsite

- **5:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.** Break

- **6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.** Dinner at campsite

Friday, May 29, 2026
Attendees: Benjamin Easter, Harrison Walker, Jacob Egler, Malcolm McGeary, Samantha Hendricks, Rachel Lentz, Natalie Smink, Heather Urban, Garrett VeneKlasen

- **7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.** Breakfast at campsite

- **8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.** Ground transportation to Taos Pueblo; 501 Paseo Del Pueblo Norte, Taos, NM 87571

- **9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.** Tour Taos Pueblo and meet with representatives from the Taos Pueblo Tribe to learn the historical/cultural importance of the area. Taos Pueblo is a sovereign, federally recognized Native American tribe in northern New Mexico, famous for its 1,000-year-old, multi-story adobe dwellings, making it one of the oldest continuously inhabited communities in the United States.
    - *Additional Attendees: Taos Pueblo Tour Guide (to be assigned)*

- **11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.** Ground transportation to lunch at Guadalajara Grill; 1384 Paseo Del Pueblo Sur, Taos, NM 87571.

- **12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.** Working Lunch with Taos County Commissioners. Discuss

benefits of federal public lands for the community, such as the increase in tax revenue, tourism and ancillary business benefits, and quality of life.
    - *Additional Attendees: AnJanette Brush (Taos County Commissioner - District 4); Darlene Vigil (Taos County Commissioner - District 3)*

- **1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.** Ground Transport to Mayordomo USFS Fuels Reduction Project - Las Trampas Historic District; 2381-2377, NM-76, Chamisal, NM 87521.

- **2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.** Visit to the Mayordomo USFS Fuels Reduction Project. Meet with JR Logan, the director of the Mayordomo Project, and tour the project site. Learn about the collaboration between the USFS and local communities to manage the Carson National Forest against forest fires through these projects. Increasing wildfire frequency and intensity as well as longer wildfire seasons have put communities and landscapes across the West at risk. Federal, state and local forest managers continue to seek ways to mitigate and reduce risk. Federal funding and projects, such as Mayordomo Project, focused on fuels reduction are increasingly essential.
    - *Additional Attendees: JR Logan (Director of Mayordomo Project); additional workers on the project (to be assigned)*

- **4:00 - 5:00 p.m.** Ground Transportation to Hampton Inn Taos; 1515 Paseo Del Pueblo Sur, Taos, NM 87571

- **5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.**
    - Check-into a hotel and have time to settle before dinner.

- **6:00 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.** Ground transportation to dinner at Taos Mesa Brewing; 201 Paseo Sur, Taos NM 87571

- **6:15 - 7:45 pm**: Working Dinner at Taos Mesa Brewing. Synthesis discussion and reflection of the trip and key takeaways from the experiences.

Saturday, May 30, 2026

- **6:45 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.**
    - Ground transportation to Albuquerque Sunport

- Travel from Albuquerque, NM to Washington, DC
    - **10:45 a.m.** Depart ABQ, WN 1085, **1:50 p.m.** arrive at HOU
    - **3:55 p.m.** Depart HOU, WN 3862, **7:55 p.m.** arrive at DCA

0000000010292 RECEIVED BY: SECRETARY OF THE SENATE Date: September 22, 2026

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United States Senate

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

May 19, 2026

Samantha Hendricks
Office of Senator James E. Risch
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Ms. Hendricks:

This responds to your recent correspondence requesting approval from the Select Committee on Ethics (the Committee) to accept an invitation you received to travel on a fact-finding trip to Taos, New Mexico, on May 27–30, 2026, sponsored by American Lands Project (ALP). Provided that you adhere to the guidance set forth below, it is permissible for you to accept necessary expenses from ALP for this trip.

Background

Based on your communication with the Committee, the background in this matter is as follows.[1] You are employed as a Senior Legislative Assistant in the Office of Senator James E. Risch. ALP invited you to travel on a fact-finding trip to Taos, New Mexico, on May 27–30, 2026. ALP certified to the Committee that it will pay the necessary expenses related to the travel,[2] and ALP is not a lobbyist, lobbying firm, agent of a foreign principal, or otherwise acting as a representative or agent of a foreign government. ALP also certified that it does not retain or employ a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal and that no registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal will accompany you at any point throughout your trip.[3]

Discussion

Privately sponsored travel includes any gift of travel and travel-related expenses for travel outside the Senate duty station, including transportation, lodging, food and refreshments, and conference fees and materials, whether paid for directly, reimbursed, or provided directly, from a private individual or entity, in connection with a Member's, officer's, or employee's official Senate duties. Incorporating reforms from the Honest Leadership and Open Government

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[1] If this letter does not correctly recite the facts, contact the Committee immediately.

[2] The term "necessary expenses" has a specific definition. *See Select Committee on Ethics Regulations and Guidelines for Privately Sponsored Travel* at 10-13.

[3] The term "any point throughout your trip" has a specific definition. *See Select Committee on Ethics Regulations and Guidelines for Privately Sponsored Travel* at 15.

Act of 2007 (HLOGA), Pub. L. 110–81 (2007), Senate Rule 35.2 permits Members, officers, and employees to accept privately sponsored travel only with the prior written approval of the Committee.

The Committee's approval process is governed by the *Regulations and Guidelines for Privately Sponsored Travel* (*Travel Regulations*). The *Travel Regulations* contain detailed requirements regarding who may sponsor travel; time limits for trips; and the type and amount of expenses that can be reimbursed.

Entities that do not retain or employ a lobbyist or foreign agent and all non-profit organizations designated as tax-exempt organizations under § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, regardless of whether they retain or employ a lobbyist or foreign agent, may sponsor domestic trips for up to three days. The three-day limitation means three 24-hour periods, calculated from the time of arrival in the trip location to the time of departure from the trip location. With very limited exception, lobbyists and foreign agents are prohibited from accompanying a Senate invitee at any point throughout the trip.[4] This means that neither lobbyists nor foreign agents may accompany Senate invitees at any point to and from the event, at the event itself, or at the location being visited.[5]

Under Senate Rule 35, Senate staff must receive advance authorization signed by the Member or officer under whose direct supervision the individual works in order to accept payment or reimbursement for necessary expenses related to fact-finding travel. Further, such authorization and expenses must be disclosed to the Secretary of the Senate by filing the completed *Employee Pre-Travel Authorization* and the *Employee Post-Travel Disclosure of Travel Expenses* (Form RE-1 and Form RE-2), along with a copy of the *Private Sponsor Travel Certification Form,* and all relevant attachments (e.g., the private sponsor's invitation and itinerary) **within 30 days of the conclusion of Privately Sponsored Travel.**

Consistent with these standards and Committee precedent, and ALP's factual representations, it is permissible for you to accept necessary expenses from ALP in connection with this trip, provided that the actual travel and travel-related expenses conform to the information you provided, and the travel and all required documents are disclosed to the Secretary of the Senate (Office of Public Records).

Finally, federal law and Senate Rule 34 require a reporting individual,[6] on their financial disclosure report, to make an annual disclosure of the receipt of payments or reimbursements under Senate Rule 35 from a private sponsor for officially-related travel expenses where, in the

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[4] The term "*de minimis*" has a specific definition. *See Select Committee on Ethics Regulations and Guidelines for Privately Sponsored Travel* at 6-8 for a discussion on the de minimis contact exception.

[5] *See Select Committee on Ethics Regulations and Guidelines for Privately Sponsored Travel* at 6-10 for a discussion on the de minimis contact exception .

[6] A reporting individual is someone whose salary equals or exceeds 120% of the basic rate of pay for GS-15 ($151,661 for CY 2026) or is a political fund designee and is required to file financial disclosure reports.

aggregate, travel expenses exceed $525 from that sponsor during a calendar year. However, if a Member, officer, or employee properly reports the receipt of necessary expenses for such travel to the Secretary of the Senate within 30 days of the travel, as discussed above, the travel expenses need not be disclosed a second time on their financial disclosure report.

I hope you find this information helpful. If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Committee.

Sincerely,

Shannon Hamilton Kopplin
Chief Counsel and Staff Director

Enclosure: Employee Privately Sponsored Travel Checklist