

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:51 a.m., October 16, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on October 17.

Statement on Signing the Rio Grande Natural Area Act

October 12, 2006

Today, I have signed into law S. 56, the “Rio Grande Natural Area Act.” The Act establishes the Rio Grande Natural Area in Colorado to help protect natural resources on Federal and non-Federal lands.

The Act establishes a commission to perform specified functions relating to the Natural Area. The Commission consists of nine individuals appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, of whom one must represent the Colorado State Director of the Bureau of Land Management, one must be a specified Federal employee, three must be appointed on the recommendation of the Governor of Colorado to represent various Colorado governmental entities, and four must be knowledgeable, experienced local citizens to represent the general public. Thus, the Act limits the qualifications of the pool of persons from whom the Secretary may select appointees to the Commission in a manner that rules out a large portion of those persons best qualified by experience and knowledge to fill the positions, which the Appointments Clause of the Constitution does not permit if the appointees exercise significant governmental authority. To faithfully execute the Act to the maximum extent consistent with the Appointments Clause, the executive branch shall construe the provisions of the Act specifying functions for the Commission as specifying functions that are advisory only.

George W. Bush

The White House,
October 12, 2006.

NOTE: This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 13. S. 56, approved October 12, was assigned Public Law No. 109–337.

Statement on Signing the National Heritage Areas Act of 2006

October 12, 2006

Today, I have signed into law S. 203, the “National Heritage Areas Act of 2006.” The Act establishes national heritage areas and reduces the royalty rate on certain minerals.

A number of provisions of the Act purport to give to management entities or local coordinating entities, composed of individuals who are not officers of the United States appointed in accordance with the Appointments Clause of the Constitution, significant governmental authority, such as authority to make grants from Federal appropriated funds to implement management plans for heritage areas. As is consistent with the Appointments Clause and with requirements in the Act concerning approval by the Secretary of the Interior of the management plans, the executive branch shall construe the provisions to require exercise by the Secretary of the Interior of the significant governmental authority given by the provisions, specifically including the exercise by the Secretary of final authority over any disbursement of Federal appropriated funds by a management entity or local coordinating entity.

George W. Bush

The White House,
October 12, 2006.

NOTE: This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 13. S. 203, approved October 12, was assigned Public Law No. 109–338.

Remarks on Signing the SAFE Port Act

October 13, 2006

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you, and welcome. I’m pleased to have you here as I sign a bill that will help protect the American people and our ports. The SAFE Port Act will make this Nation more