

# Conversation Contents

Fwd: Draft Press Release on Bears Ears Meeting -- Still Time for Quote

**Laura Rigas** <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov>

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**From:** Laura Rigas <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Mon May 08 2017 19:49:51 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** daniel\_jorjani@ios.doi.gov, douglas\_domenech@ios.doi.gov, megan\_bloomgren@ios.doi.gov, james\_cason@ios.doi.gov, scott\_hommel@ios.doi.gov, micah\_chambers@ios.doi.gov, timothy\_williams@ios.doi.gov  
**CC:** heather\_swift@ios.doi.gov, downey\_magallanes@ios.doi.gov  
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Hi all--

Short fuse on this. If anyone is still awake and wants to weigh in, please let me know.

I've been in conversation with Jackson from the Navajo DC office after the Secretary's meeting with the Tribal Coalition yesterday. I'd like to include a quote from the Secretary in this release (below), which they plan to send out (shortly) tonight.

Any issues?

DRAFT quote:

(b) (5)

Please let me know by 10pm eastern.

Many thanks,

L

Laura Keehner Rigas  
Communications Director  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
(202) 897-7022 cell  
@Interior

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Jackson Brossy <[jbrossy@nnwo.org](mailto:jbrossy@nnwo.org)>  
**Date:** May 8, 2017 at 7:23:49 PM MDT  
**To:** Laura Rigas <[laura\\_rigas@ios.doi.gov](mailto:laura_rigas@ios.doi.gov)>, Heather Swift <[heather\\_swift@ios.doi.gov](mailto:heather_swift@ios.doi.gov)>  
**Cc:** "Ricky D. Abasta" <[rickyabasta@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:rickyabasta@navajo-nsn.gov)>  
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Vice President Jonathan Nez was in attendance to advocate for the Navajo Nation's position on the Bears Ears National Monument.

Other tribal leaders in attendance included Navajo Nation Council Delegate Davis Filfred (Aneth, Mexican Water, Red Mesa, Teec Nos Pos, To'likan), Navajo Nation Attorney General Ethel Branch, Ute Tribal Chairman Shaun Chapoose, Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Chairman Harold Cuthair, and Ute Tribal Legal Counsel Leland Begay. [Carleton Bowekaty, Pueblo of Zuni Councilman and Co-Chair of the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition, joined by phone.](#)

Secretary Zinke was joined by staff from the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

Vice President Nez said tribes are united in protecting the Bears Ears region -- especially tribal cultural resources and the right for tribes to gather ceremonial herbs and medicines on the land.

Ensuring that the Navajo people have access and are able to perform traditional Navajo ceremonies on the land is another primary concern, he added.

"We look forward to working with Secretary Zinke to find a path forward for this very important sacred area," Vice President Nez said. "I appreciate the tribal leaders being here as well. We all supported, [and continue to support](#), the national monument designation."

Chairman Cuthair agreed with Vice President Nez and said tribes like the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe have ancestral ties to the Bears Ears, which must be protected.

"We'd like to preserve it, protect it, manage it. There's a lot (of cultural resources) out there. This land is sacred," Cuthair said.

Chairman Chapoose said the Bears Ears National Monument was the first instance for tribal nations to engage in the national monument designation process.

"Do we continue in this advisory role? Our knowledge is passed down generation to generation through the oral tradition," Chapoose said.

"Our people have [used](#) that land for millennia," said Branch. "We are protecting our cultures and beliefs. We need specific access for ceremonies.

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Jackson S. Brossy  
Executive Director  
**Navajo Nation Washington Office**  
750 1st Street Northeast, Ste. 1010  
Washington, DC 20002  
202.682.7390

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**Scott Hommel <[scott\\_hommel@ios.doi.gov](mailto:scott_hommel@ios.doi.gov)>**

**From:** Scott Hommel <scott\_hommel@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Mon May 08 2017 20:14:20 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Laura Rigas <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov>  
"daniel\_jorjani@ios.doi.gov" <daniel\_jorjani@ios.doi.gov>,  
"douglas\_domenech@ios.doi.gov"  
<douglas\_domenech@ios.doi.gov>,  
"megan\_bloomgren@ios.doi.gov"  
**CC:** <megan\_bloomgren@ios.doi.gov>, "james\_cason@ios.doi.gov"  
<james\_cason@ios.doi.gov>, "micah\_chambers@ios.doi.gov"  
<micah\_chambers@ios.doi.gov>, "timothy\_williams@ios.doi.gov"  
<timothy\_williams@ios.doi.gov>, "heather\_swift@ios.doi.gov"  
<heather\_swift@ios.doi.gov>, "downey\_magallanes@ios.doi.gov"  
<downey\_magallanes@ios.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Draft Press Release on Bears Ears Meeting -- Still Time for Quote

Looks good.

Scott C. Hommel  
Chief of Staff (acting)  
Department of the Interior

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**Micah Chambers <[micah\\_chambers@ios.doi.gov](mailto:micah_chambers@ios.doi.gov)>**

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**From:** Micah Chambers <[micah\\_chambers@ios.doi.gov](mailto:micah_chambers@ios.doi.gov)>  
**Sent:** Mon May 08 2017 20:56:25 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Scott Hommel <[scott\\_hommel@ios.doi.gov](mailto:scott_hommel@ios.doi.gov)>  
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**CC:** <[megan\\_bloomgren@ios.doi.gov](mailto:megan_bloomgren@ios.doi.gov)>, "james\_cason@ios.doi.gov" <[james\\_cason@ios.doi.gov](mailto:james_cason@ios.doi.gov)>, "timothy\_williams@ios.doi.gov" <[timothy\\_williams@ios.doi.gov](mailto:timothy_williams@ios.doi.gov)>, "heather\_swift@ios.doi.gov" <[heather\\_swift@ios.doi.gov](mailto:heather_swift@ios.doi.gov)>, "downey\_magallanes@ios.doi.gov" <[downey\\_magallanes@ios.doi.gov](mailto:downey_magallanes@ios.doi.gov)>  
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I'm good with it

Sent from my iPhone

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