

**To:** Michael Richardson[mjrichardson@blm.gov]  
**From:** Ashcroft, Tyler  
**Sent:** 2017-05-03T11:55:30-04:00  
**Importance:** Normal  
**Subject:** FAQs  
**Received:** 2017-05-03T11:55:41-04:00  
[LAND USES - MAY 1.docx](#)  
[MONUMENT DESIGNATION - MAY 1.docx](#)  
[In Progress- Visitor Info BEC Review 042117.docx](#)

This is the three FAQ documents.

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## **Bears Ears National Monument**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Visitor Information**

*Located in southeast Utah's canyon country, Bears Ears National Monument offers unparalleled recreation opportunities. The area is one of the most significant cultural landscapes in the United States, with thousands of archaeological sites and important areas of spiritual significance to American Indian tribes.*

### **WELCOME**

#### **What is there to see and do in the national monument?**

The monument offers a unique opportunity to visit ancestral Puebloan cultural sites, including spectacular rock art sites and the remains of prehistoric family dwellings, granaries, kivas, towers, and large villages. These sites are fragile and irreplaceable and need to be treated with care. Some sites are accessible by motorized vehicle, while others are accessible only by foot.

Outstanding scenery also awaits visitors to the monument's deep sandstone canyons, desert mesas, and mountaintops. Some of the monument's most notable geologic features are Indian Creek, Comb Ridge, White Canyon, Dark Canyon, Valley of the Gods, the San Juan River, and the Cedar Mesa canyons.

Camping, hiking, riding off-highway vehicles, backpacking, canyoneering, rock climbing, and floating the San Juan River are popular ways to experience the monument. Be aware that there are few, if any, amenities. More information on preparing for an enjoyable visit is available on the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Bears Ears National Monument website at:  
<https://www.blm.gov/programs/national-conservation-lands/utah/bears-ears-national-monument>.

*Know Before You Go:* The national monument contains many rugged areas, and road conditions are variable. Even sites that are accessible by vehicle may require a high-clearance vehicle. Some of these roads may be impassable after rain.

#### **How do I get to the national monument?**

The nearest communities are Monticello, Blanding, Bluff, Mexican Hat, and Monument Valley, Utah. Highways 191, 211, 95, 261, and 163 all provide access to portions of the monument. Major commercial airlines serve Salt Lake City and St. George, Utah; Grand Junction, Colorado; and Las Vegas, Nevada. Commercial airlines also serve Moab, Utah, and Cortez, Colorado.

#### **What time does the national monument close?**

Bears Ears National Monument does not have any entrance stations or entrance gates. Visitors

may enter and leave the monument at any time.

## **FEES AND PERMITS**

### **Is there a fee for visiting?**

There is no entrance fee to Bears Ears National Monument. Day use and overnight permits, however (\$2–5 per person) are required for certain activities and to access many of the Cedar Mesa canyons, including Grand Gulch. Please bring cash or checks to pay for permits. Fee boxes and self-registration information are available at Kane Gulch Ranger Station and most trailheads. Permits are also required to float the San Juan River, which is partially within the national monument. Additional information on permits is available at:

<https://www.blm.gov/programs/national-conservation-lands/utah/bears-ears-national-monument>.

*Know Before You Go:* The America the Beautiful Pass is not accepted for access to the Cedar Mesa area. Site-specific permits are required.

### **Do I need a permit to recreate in national monument?**

Access to Cedar Mesa Canyons: Many canyons, including Grand Gulch, require day use or overnight permits. This area is managed for a more primitive type of recreation. Call the BLM Monticello Field Office at (435) 587-1510, or visit the Kane Gulch Ranger Station.

Camping: (see additional information below)

Car Camping (camping in non-designated campsites along roads): No permit is required.

Camping in Designated BLM Campsites: There is a camping fee (\$5.00-\$10.00) at designated BLM campsites. The fee may be paid by placing either cash or check in an envelope at self-pay fee stations located at each campground.

Backcountry Camping: A permit is required for overnight camping in the Cedar Mesa canyons.

Floating the San Juan River: Permits are required and are lottery-based. Visit [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov).

Horse/Stock Use: Commercial and private stock use requires advance reservation permits; walk-in overnight permits are not available. Call more than 3 weeks in advance of intended trip dates. See additional information below.

Group Permits: A permit may be required for large groups, and limitations on group size exist in some locations. Large groups (generally 12 or more persons) should call the BLM Monticello Field Office at (435) 587-1510 before visiting.

Commercial Guides: A Special Recreation Permit is required. For more information, see: <https://www.blm.gov/programs/recreation/permits-and-passes/special-recreation-permits>.

Rock Climbing: No permit is required. See additional information below.

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Unless otherwise noted, permits are available through the BLM Monticello Field Office, phone: (435) 587-1510.

## **MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR VISIT**

### **How do I get to some of the most popular sites?**

The most frequently visited and accessible sites are identified on the 2016 Monticello Field Office Recreation Map, for sale at the BLM Monticello Field Office. Some of these sites are described briefly below:

*Bears Ears Buttes* – The Bears Ears Buttes are two prominent land formations that hold important cultural significance for American Indians. The Bears Ears are located in the central portion of the national monument. They are visible from many locations on Cedar Mesa, including the Kane Gulch Ranger Station. The closest place to view the Bears Ears Buttes is from Elk Ridge Road, which passes between the buttes; however, this road may require a high-clearance or four-wheel drive vehicle. The Bears Ears area is managed by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS).

*Needles Overlook/Anticline Overlook* – The Needles Overlook and Anticline Overlook provide excellent views of portions of national monument, including Indian Creek and the Abajo Mountains. You can also see portions of Canyonlands National Park and Dead Horse Point State Park. A marked road (Road 133) off Highway 191, about 32 miles south of Moab, leads to both viewpoints. The road to the Needles Overlook (22 miles) is paved. The road to the Anticline overlook (32 miles) is paved and gravel surfaced.

*Indian Creek/Newspaper Rock* – Indian Creek Special Recreation Management Area is accessed by Highway 211. This scenic area is a world-renowned destination for rock climbing. There are also several sites with petroglyph panels. Newspaper Rock is the most accessible panel and offers an abundance of rock art representing a variety of cultures. Indian Creek is also the gateway to the Needles District of Canyonlands National Park.

*Sand Island Petroglyph Panel/River House Ruin* – The Sand Island petroglyph panel is located in the BLM's Sand Island Recreation Area, just 3 miles west of Bluff, Utah. The River House Ruin, a cliff dwelling along the San Juan River, is accessible by river or in a high-clearance vehicle.

*Highway 95* – There are several day hikes off of Highway 95 that provide access to ruins within Arch Canyon, Butler Wash, and Mule Canyon. Highway 95 also crosses Comb Ridge, which is a 120-mile long monocline (a steep, step-like uplift in rock strata) that was designated as a National Natural Landmark in 1976. Further west is Salvation Knoll, which describes the Hole-in-the-Rock expedition. White Canyon, which runs through Natural Bridges National Monument, is a popular canyoneering destination. Additional information on day hikes from Highway 95 is available at: <https://www.blm.gov/sites/blm.gov/files/uploads/Cedar%20Mesa-Grand%20Gulch%20Trip%20Planner.pdf>.

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*Kane Gulch* – At the Kane Gulch Ranger Station (located on Highway 261), visitors can view the Cedar Mesa rock art exhibit, which explores different types of rock art in the area. From the ranger station visitors may also hike down the Kane Gulch Trail and into Grand Gulch. It is 4 miles one way to the junction of Kane Gulch and Grand Gulch, and the trail drops approximately 600 feet. At this intersection is a cliff dwelling called Junction Ruin. Turkey Pen Ruin and Stimper Arch are located in the next mile. Kane Gulch Ranger Station to Stimper Arch is approximately 10 miles roundtrip (a full days' hike for most people).

*Valley of the Gods* – The Valley of the Gods contains beautiful Cedar Mesa sandstone monoliths, pinnacles, and other geological features. The 17-mile loop through the Valley of the Gods is a graded gravel and clay surface road. This road can be accessed from either Highway 261 or Highway 163. Driving time is 1–2 hours.

**Can I ride my ATV or motorcycle?**

Bears Ears National Monument provides outstanding opportunities for motorized recreation. All roads and trails that were open before the monument designation (approximately 1,800 miles) continue to be open to motorized vehicle use.

Maps showing routes that are open to motorized vehicle use are available at:

<https://www.blm.gov/programs/national-conservation-lands/utah/bears-ears-national-monument> and [https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/fseprd513812.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd513812.pdf).

Printed USFS maps may also be obtained from the ranger districts in Moab and Monticello.

As part of the management planning process, the travel management plan for the area will be updated. This could result in some changes in motorized vehicle use. Any changes to the travel management plan will include public involvement.

**Can I ride my mountain bike?**

Mountain biking is allowed on all designated motorized vehicle routes in Bears Ears National Monument.

**Can I ride my horse or use pack stock?**

Stock use is allowed in most areas of Bears Ears National Monument, although it is limited in many of the Cedar Mesa canyons. Commercial and private stock use requires a permit.

Additional information on where permits are required is available at:

<https://www.blm.gov/sites/blm.gov/files/uploads/Cedar%20Mesa-Grand%20Gulch%20Trip%20Planner.pdf>

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Advanced reservation permits for overnight use must be obtained from the BLM Monticello Field Office (phone: (435) 587-1510) at least 3 weeks in advance for private parties and by July of the previous year for commercial trips. Walk-in overnight permits are not available.

**Can I bring my pet?**

Pets are allowed in Bears Ears National Monument except for some of the Cedar Mesa canyons. (Pets are prohibited in Grand Gulch and its tributaries; Slickhorn Canyon and Point Lookout Canyon and their tributaries; and in the McLoyd Canyon/Moonhouse Ruin Recreation Management Zone). In areas where pets are allowed, they must be collared and leashed and kept away from cultural resources, such as rock art sites and ruins.

Additional information about how to protect pets and resources within the national monument is available at: <https://www.blm.gov/sites/blm.gov/files/uploads/Cedar%20Mesa-Grand%20Gulch%20Trip%20Planner.pdf>.

To view a short video on visiting archeological sites with pets, see: <https://www.friendsofcedarmesa.org/visit-with-respect-video-series/>.

**Can I rock climb?**

Climbing is allowed in Bears Ears National Monument and is a popular activity in the Indian Creek area. However, climbing or rappelling gear may not be used to gain access to archeological sites. Bolting a rock climbing route is prohibited within Wilderness Study Areas.

## **STAYING IN AND AROUND THE MONUMENT**

### **Where can I stay in national monument?**

Hotels and other accommodations are available in the nearby communities of Monument Valley, Mexican Hat, Bluff, Blanding, and Monticello. There are no restaurants, supplies, gas stations, lodging, or similar services in Bears Ears National Monument. Camping opportunities are described below.

### **Are there campgrounds in Bears Ears National Monument?**

A limited number of designated campgrounds are located in and near Bears Ears National Monument. Most are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Some, however, may be reserved through [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov).

*Know Before You Go:* Visitors should plan to carry all needed drinking water, as most sites offer none. Most campgrounds will also require that visitors pack out their trash.

For more information, contact the following organizations:

#### **BLM Monticello Field Office**

The only designated BLM campgrounds in Bears Ears National Monument are located in the Indian Creek area (at the northern end of the monument) and at Sand Island (at the southern end). Dispersed car camping, however, is allowed in many locations throughout the national monument. See additional information below.

<https://www.blm.gov/programs/national-conservation-lands/utah/bears-ears-national-monument>

#### **Manti – La Sal National Forest**

Designated USFS campgrounds are located only outside of the national monument, in the Abajo Mountains, east of the monument boundary.

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/activity/mantilasal/recreation/camping-cabins/?recid=72816&actid=29>

#### **Canyonlands National Park, The Needles District**

<https://www.nps.gov/cany/planyourvisit/camping.htm>

#### **Natural Bridges National Monument**

<https://www.nps.gov/nabr/planyourvisit/eatingsleeping.htm>

#### **Goosenecks State Park**

<https://stateparks.utah.gov/parks/goosenecks/>

### **Does Bears Ears Monument allow camping outside of designated campgrounds?**

Dispersed car camping (camping in a non-designated camping area) on BLM lands is allowed in most areas of Bears Ears National Monument and is free. Where allowed, it is restricted to previously disturbed areas within 150 feet of designated routes. No new campsites may be created. Dispersed camping is restricted in some high-use areas. Backcountry camping in the Cedar Mesa canyons requires a permit. Additional camping information will be available soon at: <https://www.blm.gov/programs/national-conservation-lands/utah/bears-ears-national-monument>.



## **OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

### **Who manages Bears Ears National Monument?**

The boundaries of the monument encompass approximately 1.06 million acres managed by the BLM, and nearly 290,000 acres of the Manti – La Sal National Forest managed by the USFS. The total acreage under federal management is approximately 1.35 million acres. The monument's western boundary is generally formed by Canyonlands National Park and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. Natural Bridges National Monument is wholly contained within the Bears Ears National Monument, but is managed by the National Park Service. The National Park Service does not manage Bears Ears National Monument.

To reflect tribal expertise and traditional and historical knowledge, the monument proclamation established a Bears Ears Commission. The Commission is comprised of one elected officer from the Hopi Nation, Navajo Nation, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah Ouray and Zuni Tribe. The proclamation requires the BLM and USFS to “meaningfully engage the Commission in the development of the management plan and to inform subsequent management of the monument.” The BLM and USFS are looking forward to working together with the newly established Bears Ears Commission to implement the proclamation.

### **What additional rules apply to visitors?**

Desert environments are fragile places, and seemingly small impacts can last for years. A single piece of garbage may be preserved for decades in the arid environment. When planning a visit to the monument, visitors should be prepared to follow these rules:

- In the Indian Creek Corridor (Highway 211) there is a strict pack-in/pack-out policy. Where restrooms are not available, use of a human waste bag system or portable toilet is required. Use of cat holes (small pits dug to dispose of human waste) is prohibited, as is leaving or burying toilet paper. All garbage and human waste must be packed out.
- On Cedar Mesa, personal sanitation and disposal of human waste is not permitted within 200 feet of a water source, trail, or campsite. Human waste must be deposited in a cat hole (6 inches deep) and covered with soil. Used toilet paper, and all other trash, must be carried out (not burned).
- Campfires and firewood collection are allowed in most of the national monument; however, some restrictions have been established in some areas high-use, resource sensitive areas. Additional information on these restrictions will be available soon at: <https://www.blm.gov/programs/national-conservation-lands/utah/bears-ears-national-monument>

These limitations were established in the Monticello Resource Management Plan, completed in 2008, to protect some high use, resource sensitive areas such as Indian Creek and Cedar Mesa. They will remain in place until a new land use plan is completed for the national monument. During the land use planning process the BLM will re evaluate these limitations. Development of the land use plan will involve interested members of the public as well as state, local, and tribal governments.

Visitors to the national monument should practice Leave No Trace™ principles. Learn more here: <https://lnt.org/learn/seven-principles-overview>.

### **Where can I get more information?**

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Additional information about Bears Ears National Monument is available at:  
<https://www.blm.gov/programs/national-conservation-lands/utah/bears-ears-national-monument>  
and <https://www.fs.fed.us/visit/bears-ears-national-monument>. Visitor information, including maps for sale, can also be obtained by visiting or contacting these offices:

**Bureau of Land Management**

Monticello Field Office  
365 North Main Street  
Monticello, UT 84535  
(435) 587-1500  
Kane Gulch Ranger Station  
Open March 1 through June 15 and September 1 through October 31  
Guaranteed hours are daily, 8 a.m. –12 p.m.  
Located on Highway 261, 4 miles south of Highway 95

Canyon Country District Office  
82 Dogwood Avenue  
Moab, UT 84532  
(435) 259-2100

Utah State Office  
Public Room, Suite 500  
440 West 200 South  
Salt Lake City, UT 84101  
(801) 539-4000

**U.S. Forest Service**

Manti – La Sal National Forest  
Supervisor's Office  
599 West Price River Drive  
Price, UT 84501  
(435) 637-2817

Moab Ranger District  
62 East 100 North  
P.O. Box 386  
Moab, UT 84352  
(435) 259-7155

Monticello Ranger District  
496 East Central  
P.O. Box 820  
Monticello, UT 84535  
(435) 587-2041

**In an emergency, limited assistance may be available at Kane Gulch Ranger Station**

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**(on Highway 261) when it is open. Cell phones usually do not work in the canyon and on many mesa tops. If possible, contact the San Juan County Sheriff at (435) 587-2237.**

## **Bears Ears National Monument**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Land Uses**

*On December 28, 2016, President Barack Obama issued a proclamation designating approximately 1.35 million acres of public lands in Utah as the Bears Ears National Monument. The proclamation provides for the care and management of prehistoric, historic, and scientific resources within the monument. The two agencies responsible for land management at the monument are the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The proclamation formally recognizes the area's cultural importance to American Indian tribes and provides for federal land managers to consider integrating tribal knowledge and expertise into management plans. Finally, the proclamation addresses the designation's effect on existing and future land use rights.*

#### **Will American Indian tribes have access for ceremonial and other traditional uses?**

Yes. Tribes will continue to be able to collect plants, firewood, and other traditional materials for noncommercial uses within the national monument. American Indians who are collecting products on BLM-administered lands for ceremonial or other traditional uses can obtain a free use permit from the BLM Monticello Field Office, 365 North Main Street, Monticello, UT 84535 (435) 587-1500.

#### **Is livestock grazing still allowed?**

Yes. Livestock grazing will continue to be managed under existing laws, regulations, and policies followed by the BLM and the USFS.

#### **Does the national monument designation affect water rights?**

Valid existing water rights are unaffected by the national monument designation.

#### **Can I stake a new mining claim or nominate an area for oil and gas leasing?**

Under the monument proclamation, federal lands in the national monument are withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry including mineral leasing. The BLM and the USFS will, however, recognize valid existing rights. Before designation, many areas within the national monument were already closed to leasing or withdrawn from mineral entry. There are no active mining operations or producing oil and gas wells in the national monument. Approximately 2 percent of the national monument is currently leased for oil and gas development.

#### **Does the national monument designation affect fire management?**

The national monument designation will not change fire management activities. All future

management will continue to focus first on public and firefighter safety while taking actions to protect valuable resources. Fuel reduction projects may be used in the national monument to address the risk of wildfire, insect infestation, or disease that would imperil public safety or endanger the objects or resources protected by the national monument designation. Fire management restrictions in Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas will continue.

**Does the national monument designation impact rights-of-way?**

Nothing in the monument proclamation interferes with continued operation or maintenance of rights-of-way, such as existing powerlines and pipelines. If a new right-of-way is proposed on BLM-managed lands, the agency will evaluate whether the proposal is consistent with the proclamation, the existing land use plan, and BLM policies. As part of the management planning process, the BLM will evaluate where placement of new rights-of-way is appropriate.

**How does designation of the national monument affect existing special management areas?**

Approximately 57 percent of the federal lands that are now in the national monument were previously managed to protect important resources prior to monument designation. In general, these areas will continue to be managed the same as they were before designation. When the BLM and the USFS prepare a monument management plan, they will evaluate whether changes in management are needed in some of these areas. Any changes to the special management areas will include public involvement. Some of the special management areas are described below.

***Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas***

Approximately 32 percent of the Bears Ears National Monument is managed as Wilderness or Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs). The USFS administers the 46,000-acre Dark Canyon Wilderness, which is just north of the Bears Ears formation. In addition, the BLM manages more than 380,000 acres of the national monument as WSAs. WSAs are roadless areas with wilderness characteristics. The BLM is required to manage these areas to preserve their suitability for designation as wilderness until Congress makes a final determination on whether these areas should be included in the National Wilderness Preservation System. There will be no changes in management of these areas.

***Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and Research Natural Areas***

Approximately 29,000 acres of BLM-administered lands in the monument are managed as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs). ACECs are managed for the protection of their outstanding cultural, natural, and scenic values. The national monument also includes the Cliff Dwellers Pasture Research Natural Area, which is located on USFS lands.

***Special Recreation Management Areas***

Approximately 42 percent of the lands within the national monument are managed by the BLM as Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs). SRMAs are areas that are managed to

protect special recreational opportunities.

### **Can I ride my ATV or motorcycle?**

Bears Ears National Monument provides outstanding opportunities for motorized recreation. All roads and trails that were open before the monument designation (approximately 1,800 miles) continue to be open to motorized vehicle use. As part of the management planning process, the travel management plan for the area will be updated. This could result in some changes in motorized vehicle use. Any changes to the travel management plan will include public involvement. Maps showing routes that are open to motorized vehicle use are available at:

<https://www.blm.gov/programs/national-conservation-lands/utah/bears-ears-national-monument>  
[https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/fseprd513812.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd513812.pdf)

### **Can I ride my mountain bike?**

Mountain biking is allowed on all designated motorized vehicle routes in the Bears Ears National Monument.

### **Do I need camping permits or climbing permits?**

Under current management, no permits are required for car camping on BLM-administered lands, unless there are more than 15 vehicles or more than 50 people. Backcountry camping permits are required for many of the Cedar Mesa canyons. No permits are required for rock climbing. All commercial guiding and activities, however, require a permit.

### **Can I still hunt in the national monument?**

Hunting will continue to be managed by the State of Utah under the same regulations as before designation.

### **Can I gather firewood?**

Yes. The national monument designation will not change how permits are issued for collection of firewood. The proclamation states that the BLM and the USFS must provide access to American Indian tribes for traditional and customary uses, including collection of medicines, berries, other vegetation, forest products, and firewood for personal, noncommercial use. With respect to private and commercial wood collection, the BLM will continue to issue permits based on the availability of woodland products and protection of other resource values. In some areas, commercial and private collection of firewood is not allowed. The existing Monticello Field Office Resource Management Plan identifies areas that are open for firewood collection.

For more information about firewood collection on BLM-managed lands, see:

<https://www.blm.gov/programs/national-conservation-lands/utah/bears-ears-national-monument>

For information about firewood collection on USFS-managed lands, see:  
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/mantillasal/passes-permits/forestproducts>.

**Can I still get a permit that allows me to outfit or guide others in the national monument?**

Outfitting and guiding will continue to be managed under the same regulations as before designation. Contact the BLM Monticello Field Office about permitting questions at (435) 587-1510.

## **Bears Ears National Monument**

### **Frequently Asked Questions Monument Designation**

#### **How will a national monument designation protect the Bears Ears region?**

The proclamation that designated certain public lands as the Bears Ears National Monument identifies historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, paleontological resources, and other objects of historic or scientific interest contained within the monument's boundaries. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) are required by law to properly care for and manage those objects. The BLM and USFS will manage the objects and ensure that activities occurring on public lands in the national monument are consistent with the purposes and objectives outlined in the proclamation.

#### **Who manages the national monument?**

The BLM and the USFS jointly manage the monument. Only federal lands are subject to the terms of the proclamation. Goosenecks State Park and Natural Bridges National Monument are within the Bears Ears National Monument boundary; however, these areas will continue to be managed by Utah State Parks and the National Park Service, respectively. No reservation lands are included in Bears Ears National Monument.

#### **What role will American Indian tribes play in management of the national monument?**

To reflect tribal expertise and traditional and historical knowledge, the proclamation established a Bears Ears Commission. The commission is composed of one elected officer from the Hopi Nation, Navajo Nation, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah Ouray, and Zuni Tribe. The proclamation requires the BLM and the USFS to "meaningfully engage the Commission...in the development of the management plan and to inform subsequent management of the monument." The BLM and the USFS are looking forward to working together with the newly established Bears Ears Commission to implement the proclamation.

In addition to working with the Bears Ears Commission, the BLM and the USFS will continue to engage in government-to-government consultation with the tribes that have cultural affiliation with the area.

#### **Do American Indians support the national monument?**

A group of five tribes (listed below) joined together and submitted a national monument proposal to former President Barack Obama. These tribes, all of which have cultural ties to the area, are part of the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition: the Hopi Tribe, Navajo Nation, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah Ouray, and the Zuni Tribe. These tribes received recognition in the national monument proclamation to form the Bears Ears Commission. In



addition, 30 American Indian tribes with ancestral, historical, and contemporary ties to the Bears Ears region have expressed their support for the national monument.

**Have the BLM and USFS started to develop a monument management plan?**

Under the proclamation, the BLM and the USFS must jointly prepare a management plan for the monument. A starting date for the plan has not been determined. Before beginning development of a management plan, the BLM and the USFS must establish a Monument Advisory Committee and coordinate with the Bears Ears Commission.

When the agencies begin to develop the plan, there will be many opportunities for public involvement. During land use planning, the agencies will also collaborate with state, local, and tribal governments. The management plan will be used to guide future management decisions and ensure protection of natural and cultural resources.

**How can I submit a nomination for the Monument Advisory Committee?**

The advisory committee will consist of local citizens and representatives with a variety of backgrounds, who will advise the BLM and the USFS on developing a monument management plan and on key issues. The BLM will publish a call for nominations in the Federal Register to recruit members for the new Monument Advisory Committee. Under federal law (Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App.) the BLM cannot accept nominations outside of this process. The BLM will issue a news release with the Federal Register Notice and include additional information on when and how to submit nominations.

**Will interim measures be taken to protect objects outlined in the proclamation while the planning process proceeds?**

There are no specific interim measures planned. The BLM and the USFS, however, can take steps if needed to protect the objects identified in the proclamation. Even before the national monument was created, the BLM and the USFS were investing considerable funding, time, and effort into stabilizing and protecting cultural sites, improving visitor experiences, and creating partnerships to help care for these lands.

**Was the national monument designation unexpected?**

The idea of a national monument in this area is not a new one. Calls for protection of the Bears Ears area began more than 80 years ago. Tribes with ties to the area began working on a proposal to protect this area 6 years before its designation as a national monument. The boundary of the national monument is similar to what was considered in the Utah Public Lands Initiative (H.R. 5780), which was introduced by congressional representatives Rob Bishop and Jason Chaffetz after extensive consultations with stakeholders and with the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture.

### **What are the similarities between the Bears Ears National Monument and the Utah Public Lands Initiative?**

The monument proclamation is similar to the Utah Public Lands Initiative (PLI) in many ways. For example, the acreage of the designated national monument is similar in size to the PLI's Bears Ears and Indian Creek national conservation areas and proposed Mancos Mesa Wilderness. The sections below discuss some of the other similarities.

- *Management Plans*: The PLI and the proclamation both require the development of management plans with extensive public involvement, including consultation with state, local, and tribal governments.
- *Tribal Commission*: The PLI and the proclamation both establish tribal commissions to allow for the integration of tribal expertise and traditional knowledge into management activities.
- *Advisory Council*: The PLI and the proclamation both call for advisory committees or councils composed of a variety of interested local stakeholders to assist in developing and implementing management plans for national conservation areas and the monument, respectively.
- *Mineral Withdrawal*: Neither the PLI nor the proclamation affect valid existing oil, gas, and mining operations. Both the PLI and the proclamation prohibit new mineral leases, mining claims, prospecting or exploration activities, and oil, gas, and geothermal leases.
- *Livestock Grazing*: The PLI and the proclamation both allow livestock grazing to continue. The PLI includes additional management guidelines, such as prohibiting managers from reducing grazing below certain levels from the date of the enactment of the PLI bill. Under the proclamation, the BLM and the USFS continue to grant grazing permits and leases under existing laws and regulations.
- *Off-Highway Vehicle Use*: The PLI and the proclamation both require travel management plans, and restrict off-highway vehicles to designated routes. The proclamation requires roads and trails to be consistent with the care and management of the objects the monument protects; new roads or trails for motorized vehicle use must be for the purposes of public safety or protection of monument objects (that is, resources specifically outlined in the proclamation).
- *Hunting and Fishing*: Neither the PLI nor the proclamation affect the jurisdiction of the State of Utah with respect to fish and wildlife management, including hunting and fishing.

### **Have looting and vandalism increased since the national monument designation?**

Looting and vandalism of cultural sites have long been problems in the area that is now the Bears Ears National Monument. Illegal activities that result in the desecration or destruction of archaeological resources show disrespect for American Indians and make it harder for archaeologists to understand the past. The national monument designation recognizes the cultural significance of the area and protects valued sites and artifacts. The BLM and the USFS are

committed to working with the public to ensure the protection of the irreplaceable cultural resources in the monument. Designation of the national monument has provided these agencies with an opportunity to strengthen and develop partnerships and distribute information on how to respect and protect cultural resources. For more information on the “Respect and Protect” campaign to eliminate looting and vandalism in Utah, please see:

<https://www.treadlightly.org/programs/respect-and-protect/>.