

Selected Monument Review Comments

68844

Please do not rescind or decrease the size of the existing Bear Ears national monument.

Public Land solutions has an excellent white paper titled 'Economic Development Planning for Cultural Tourism in Bears Ears National Monument' available at <http://publiclandsolutions.org/paper/> This paper details a renewable option for recreational and tourism jobs to increase the economic viability of the surrounding area of Bear Ears.

A master's in tourism has shown me the impact that tourism can have in an area especially when the trickle-down economic impact is considered. Tourism, recreation and the outdoor industry can have a significant impact on the area economy. These industries can be sustained while extraction-based jobs can not once the resource is depleted or becomes less profitable. Amenity migration is a real by-product of tourism and recreation that can sustain an economy for the long-term.

69735

I'm not a native-born Utahn, but it's been home for 40 years. For a decade I was a park ranger at Arches National Park and for the last 30 years, I have published 'The Canyon Country Zephyr.' My home faces the Bears Ears, 30 miles to the West. That landscape is priceless to me.

I was once a strong supporter of groups like the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, and had I not lived here all these decades but simply viewed the recent debate over the Bears Ears from afar, I'd probably be an enthusiastic supporter of its recent designation as a national monument.

But the preservation of the Bears Ears is far more complicated than monument proponents will admit. I believe there is a better way to protect the Bears Ears than its new designation, and a more honest way to empower the Native Americans who deserve an integral role in protecting this landscape's future.

Proponents claim that only monument status, via the 1906 Antiquities Act, can protect the Bears Ears. But that is untrue. ALL federal lands are already safeguarded by the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, which specifically addresses inadequacies in the original Antiquities Act legislation.

Environmentalists also warned that energy development was imminent and inevitable without monument designation. Yet BLM studies note a low potential for commercially recoverable oil beneath the monument. Even the Grand Canyon Trust concedes that, "The uranium mining boom in southeast Utah has long since passed, and oil and gas are not resources that exist in high quality or great quantity in Bears Ears."

Also, environmentalists insist that "the proclamation elevates the voices of the Native

Americans." Leaders of Din Bikeyah had expected that that they "would actively co-manage these lands side-by-side with federal agencies." But the proclamation reveals otherwise and instead created a Commission that "will provide guidance and recommendations." The government added, "The Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service will retain ultimate authority over the monument."

Finally, the unspoken threat to the monument is the impact caused by massive tourism and recreation. Utah environmental organizations haven't dealt with these impacts in two decades, although in 1998, the Grand Canyon Trust's executive director Bill Hedden warned, "Everywhere we looked... industrial-strength recreation holds more potential to disrupt natural processes on a broad scale than just about anything else."

Runaway tourism was once a serious concern to environmentalists, but the issue was dropped to pursue mutually beneficial and lucrative alliances with the recreation industry. The tourism nightmare that now defines Moab is ignored by Utah environmentalists. Last year, when overflow crowds lined the highway and forced Arches National Park to close its entrance station, most green groups failed to comment.

Worst of all is the fact that while "progressive environmentalists" tout tourism as a clean, non-polluting economy for the 'New West,' they fail to acknowledge that it also creates an economy driven by low wage jobs and exorbitant home prices--the working poor can't even afford a decent place to live. Moab, just 55 miles south of Monticello is a perfect example...

Still the question remains---do southeast Utah's wildlands deserve protection? Yes, absolutely. Are there other options to do the job besides the creation of a national monument? Consider these:

1. Strictly enforce the archaeological protection law. Instead of building extravagant visitor centers and costly "improvements," create an "ARPA Protection Unit" of trained rangers from the Inter-Tribal Coalition, Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service. The new rangers could target the areas most vulnerable to vandalism and protect Native American practices and rituals.
2. Seek honest and enforceable ways by binding congressional action to empower Native Americans. Toothless advisory panels are an insult.
3. Withdraw all oil and gas leases that are commercially marginal within the monument boundaries. End a pointless argument.
4. Demand that Utah environmentalists acknowledge and explain their own self-serving ties to the relentless recreation economy. An irresponsible and out of control tourist/recreation economy can be as devastating as reckless energy development, and the impacts from both must be dealt with.

At the end of the day, we have to askdo the remaining wildlands of southeast Utah deserve protection and care? YES. But will national monument designation provide those protections? And, if the Monument is rescinded, could we find other ways to protect the archeological

resources of the area, reduce the threat from energy development, empower Native Americans to protect the Bears Ears region, and spare the region from the devastating effects of Industrial Strength Recreation? I believe we can.

55972

I am writing you today concerning Bears Ears National Monument.

The requirements and original objectives of the Act, including the Act's requirement that reservations of land not exceed "the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the objects to be protected"; i. Enactment of the Antiquities Act required 25 years of work by individuals and organizations concerned about the preservation of American archeological sites. It obligates federal agencies that manage the public lands to preserve for present and future generations the historic, scientific, commemorative, and cultural values of the archaeological and historic sites and structures on these lands (USDI NPS 2016). The boundary of the monument is largely based on the Utah Public Lands Initiative (PLI) (H.R. 5780). Bears Ears National Monument is currently nearly 600,000 acres smaller than originally proposed. Yet, Bears Ears still provides protection to the sensitive archaeological resources and Native American Traditional Cultural Properties.

Whether designated lands are appropriately classified under the Act as "historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, [or] other objects of historic or scientific interest"; ii. The Bears Ears area has been called the "Sistine Chapel" of the West for its ancient carving sites (petroglyphs) and paintings sites (pictographs), and over 100,000 known archaeological sites. The effects of a designation on the available uses of designated Federal lands, including consideration of the multiple-use policy of section 102(a)(7) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (43 U.S.C. 1701(a)(7)), as well as the effects on the available uses of Federal lands beyond the monument boundaries; iii. The Monument would not affect valid existing oil, gas, and mining leases or operations. However, the National Monument would prohibit new mineral leases, mining claims, prospecting or exploration activities, and oil, gas, and geothermal leases. All public uses, including livestock grazing would continue.

The effects of a designation on the use and enjoyment of non-Federal lands within or beyond monument boundaries; iv. Tourism to the National Monument is expected to increase, regardless of the final decision on the National Monument. Bears Ears would require the development of management plans, with robust public involvement, including consultation with state, local, and tribal governments. All traditional cultural uses as well as the modern uses are planned to continue.

Concerns of State, tribal, and local governments affected by a designation, including the economic development and fiscal condition of affected States, tribes, and localities; v. The boundary of the Natl Monument is largely based on the Utah Public Lands Initiative (H.R. 5780), which was introduced by Reps. Bishop and Chaffetz after extensive consultations with stakeholders and the Interior Department and USDA. Congressional Representatives Rob Bishop and Jason Chaffetz of Utah, who have also proposed to protect this area. Their Utah PLI (H.R. 5780), which Governor Herbert also supported, proposed to conserve roughly the same area as the Bears Ears National Monument by designating two new National Conservation

Areas and a Wilderness (USDI BLM 2016). The Bears Ears region has been central to the culture and religion of the Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, Ute Indian tribes, as well as the Ute Mountain Ute people. There are concerns that the Monument designation will hurt the funding for Utah's public schools provided by state-owned lands. However, the land exchange following Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument designation generated more than \$310 million for Utah schools and counties. The Grand Staircase-Escalante exchange benefited not only Utah's school system, it benefited counties in which state trust lands were both traded and acquired.

The availability of Federal resources to properly manage designated areas vi. A study by Headwaters Economics in 2011 and 2014 concluded that national monuments are consistent with economic growth. San Juan County's labor market was practically at a standstill in the fourth quarter of 2016. Other economic indicators experienced contraction; taxable sales showed a year-to-date loss. Losses in mining and construction were mostly offset by increases in leisure/hospitality and government (Department of Workforce Service, State of Utah 2017). Fed funding of the National Monument will/should come as a result of the public interest in the area.

Such other factors as the Secretary deems appropriate. 82 FR 20429-20430 (May 1, 2017); vii. The Natl Monument calls for the establishment of a Tribal Commission to provide information and recommendations to allow for the integration of tribal expertise into management. The Natl Monument also calls for an Advisory Council made up of a variety of interested local stakeholders to develop management plans for the Monument.

25125

As an archaeologist, I am deeply concerned about the review of certain national monuments established since 1996. Sites like Bear Ears contain as many as 100,000 important cultural and archaeological sites. My concerns for archaeological sites are not alone. 99% of respondents in a US survey on archaeology said that archaeological sites "have educational and scientific value" (see more information here: <http://www.saa.org/portals/0/SAA/pubedu/nrptdraft4.pdf>). Please, do not allow others to destroy these sites or the natural environment they occupy.

Best,

Anne Austin

1415

As an anthropologist -- a social scientist that studies humanity from its origins to its contemporary interactions and the components of symbolic and material culture that help define humanity (like our monuments and the evidence our ancestors left etched in caves, on the ground, in the forests), and human beings' relationship with the natural world -- it is my expert opinion that:

1) The monuments listed here have been appropriately and adequately designated and maintained and that, 2) Further review of these monuments is unnecessary, aside from

consideration for expansion of funding necessary to continue to maintain them and/or conduct scientific research on or within these monuments and historic sites to the benefit of all. 3) These landmarks, sacred sites, monuments, and testaments to our collective history and heritage are of paramount importance and are not only appropriate but requisite use of these federal lands. To change their designation in any way other than expansion and further protection and funding would be irresponsible and damaging not only to our cultural heritage, but also to the environments and local ecologies of which these monuments and designated lands are a part, and would negatively contribute to already alarming global environmental trends. 4) These monuments, are not only reminders of our origins and heritage, many of them are sacred sites, including Bears Ears, which must absolutely be maintained and protected as a significant site. All of these monuments are important natural spaces, not only for the people who live near them, but for every member of this country.

Review of any of these monuments for the purposes of the sale or lease of lands for natural resource extraction by private interests - including pipelines, dams, or other energy interests - is particularly ill-advised as this not only obviates the original purpose of protecting and designating these lands, but also doubly exacerbates the environmental crises we are already experiencing first, by reducing or eliminating natural lands (important to ecological balance, production of oxygen, reduction of greenhouse gases, etc.), and second by adding insult to injury and further destroying these spaces via wasteful, damaging, dangerous, and poorly regulated processes (see the dozen or more pipeline leaks or complete spills in the last 6 months alone) (for coverage and details about these incidents see Scientific American; Washington Post; US News & World Report; The Guardian; Denver Post; Duluth News Tribune; Bloomberg; MarketWatch).

In short, I support the maintenance and continued funding of all 27 of the monuments listed for potential review. Please continue to protect our public lands, these important monuments and testaments to our cultural and material human heritage, these magnificent wonders of nature - The Grand Canyon, Giant Steps, Bears Ears, the Giant Sequoia, Gold Butte, the Mojave Trails! It is simply unthinkable that any of the monuments on this list - the Marianas Trench, Rose Atoll! - could or should be reviewed, moved, or have their designations changed in any way that isn't an expansion and celebration of their import to the United States of America.

Thank you for your consideration,

Laura S. Jung Anthropologist Washington, DC

3703

I would like to comment on the proposed review of national monuments initiated by President Trump, specifically those in the state of Utah. Over a century ago, this nation, in a moment of great wisdom, passed the National Antiquities Act of 1906 to help preserve the treasures of the land for future generations of Americans to enjoy. By putting these lands into public trust, the act ensured that private interests would not be able to exploit the American people's heritage for short-term gain. This incredible act of democratic spirit is now under attack.

I encourage our government not to be swayed by the monied interests who speak of chimerical jobs and the economy as excuses to devastate the land. The people of Utah have seen through their empty promises. Where these industries go the land is closed off by chainlink fences topped with barbed wire. The land becomes a pit for them to deposit their refuse and then leave when it is convenient, forcing the people to pay for restoring their own heritage, which they can never truly do.

Every Utahn has grown up with pride in our unique landscape. Nowhere else in the world are so many treasures to be found so compacted together. The Grand Staircase Escalante Monument is a wonder to behold for any resident to hike. You will find there geographic oddities like the moqui balls and the brilliant swirls of the multicolored cliffs. To go there is to wonder at the grandeur and possibility of our country. Who would say that such a place could be improved by oil derricks?

Bears Ears National Monument, as well as having unique geographic splendor, is also a sacred place to Native Americans whose ancestors invested the land with hundreds of thousands of precious archeological sites. Who would say to the five tribes who advocated for the creation of the monument that their sacred sites would be improved by the addition of an open-pit mine? Whose interests are truly served by such a sentiment?

The idea that the state of Utah would be better suited to protect the people's interests is also without merit. The state of Utah simply does not have the resources to manage the land effectively. Access to the land would be put into jeopardy by higher entrance fees and the growing prospect of privatization. When natural disasters strike, the state of Utah would have to turn to the federal government for funds to restore the land. If these funds were not forthcoming, then the land would simply become inaccessible.

Finally, the removal of protections from these monuments would also harm Utah's vibrant outdoor industry. We have already seen some of the blowback from the departure of the Outdoor Retailers Show, a convention that brought \$45 million annually to the Utah economy. Loss of tourist dollars for local economies whose outdoor shops, restaurants, and hotels often depend upon people visiting these treasures, would have a devastating effect. The outdoor industry, unlike the fickle gas and mining industries, are a long-term revenue stream for these communities. I encourage you not to jeopardize this important part of the Utah economy.

Please show wisdom and courage in standing up for our country's heritage.

4182

I need to say first that this review is outrageous. These monuments (lands) belong to the people of the U.S.A. and are part of our national treasures. That said:

1. Bear's Ears National Monument. I live in Wyoming and have spent a lot of time in this area. Several winters ago I rent a room in Blanding for six weeks and explored Cedar Mesa, hiking every day to ruins and viewing petroglyphs. I invited a friend to join me for 2 weeks and she too rented a room in Blanding. Last spring I spent 3 weeks in the area hiking and backpacking in the Cedar Mesa area with my sister. Here I point out two things. First this area is a high tourist area

bringing in a lot of dollars to local businesses. 2. The area was occupied for thousands of years, and houses thousands of ruins and petroglyphs. If ever there was a national treasure that houses part of the history of America, this is one of the main places. At one time over 15,000 indigenous peoples lived in this area and their evidence is everywhere. Beautiful petroglyphs and ruins are visible even within the towns of Bluff and Blanding without even hiking. Most all of the Bear's Ears National Monument was public lands already before President Obama designated it a monument, must of these sensitive ruins managed by the BLM. The job was too massive, with too little federal assistance to protect it from looting. Just last year the Cedar Mesa BLM area was looted. In 2009 there was a massive federal bust in the Blanding area of people who were looting and selling archeological treasures on the world market. Without the protection of a Monument, the looting of our American heritage will continue. As a Monument, these lands can have more federal assistance. 3. Bear's Ears National Monument is to be co-managed by several tribes along with the federal government. This is a very exciting and future thinking arrangement. Indigenous peoples have lived here for thousands of years and should have a strong say in how these lands are managed, protected, and used for sacred ceremony. With this new model, the tribes will have the opportunity to strengthen and demonstrate a new model that MUST be used in other parks and monuments. "Devil's Tower" is a perfect example of where tribes should also be co-managing--an extremely sacred site to many tribes and whites have given it the wrong name---Bear's Lodge is the correct name for this powerful site. With co-management of Bear's Ears, a new model will be created that can translate to other appropriate federal lands. 4. The Bear's Ears Monument was conceived by several tribes over the course of several years. They recognized that these lands, which not only contain sacred sites to them, but also have been their homelands before other Americans were even on this continent, needed protection, from looting and oil/gas destruction. They have a right to protect their homelands and their ancestral grounds. Just as Christians in this country would not want the federal government to tear down a church and build an oil well, these lands are their 'church'. These peoples are land based and sacred sites for them are land based. Obama did the right thing to protect these lands for all Americans and for the Tribes. **DO NOT TAKE THESE LANDS AWAY** because you want to drill. If you have any soul, all you have to do is look at some of the nearby pit mines, mountain top mining, the profanity of oil/gas wells across the viewscape. I,, for one, will protest this travesty with all my might, and that includes camping on these lands until it is clear that Bear's Ears will not be given away to private interests. My time in the Bear's Ears area was special and sacred to me. I want that for my children and grandchildren forever.