

**From:** Chambers, Micah  
**To:** [Magallanes, Downey](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Western Caucus Encourages Trump to Think Big and Act Big-League in Monuments Review  
**Date:** Thursday, November 09, 2017 6:32:08 PM

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FYI

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**From:** **Hanson, Tanner** <[Tanner.Hanson@mail.house.gov](mailto:Tanner.Hanson@mail.house.gov)>

**Date:** Thu, Nov 9, 2017 at 5:27 PM

**Subject:** Western Caucus Encourages Trump to Think Big and Act Big-League in Monuments Review

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**For Immediate Release**  
Contact: Tanner Hanson

**Date:** November 9, 2017  
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## Western Caucus Encourages Trump to Think Big and Act Big-League in Monuments Review



**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Today, Congressional Western Caucus Chairman **Paul A. Gosar D.D.S. (AZ-04)**, Western Caucus Members **Andy Biggs (AZ-05)** and **Doug LaMalfa (CA-01)**, and **Congressman Daniel Webster (FL-11)** issued the following statements after 24 Members of Congress sent a letter to President Trump applauding his monument review and offering recommendations for monuments:

“By issuing his Executive Order to review recent monument designations, President Trump showed he was committed to making sure our land policies make sense and work in the national economic interest,” said **Congressman Gosar**. “More than that, though, his action is demonstrative of his Administration’s commitment to the United States being a nation ruled by the laws, executed faithfully - not by one man doing as he pleases. There is overwhelming reason to believe the previous Administration did not share any of these goals, as evidenced by President Obama’s frenzied use of the Antiquities Act. Today, we are grateful to President Trump for

considering these recommendations as we continue working to right past wrongs on the path to American energy dominance and economic prosperity.”

**Congressman Biggs** stated, “The Western Caucus is working closely with the Trump administration to provide comments and recommendations on the twenty-seven monuments under review. These efforts are a good first step to overturn some of President Obama’s unconstitutional land grabs. Moving forward, our Caucus will be working together to reform the outdated 1906 Antiquities Act. It is time to bring more jobs and economic freedom to the West, and I am confident that President Trump and Secretary Zinke share our affinity to see this happen.”

“The original intent of the Antiquities Act was to set aside the smallest area of land possible in order to protect sites of historical or other significance, however, those parameters have been largely ignored in recent years,” said **Congressman LaMalfa**. “Under previous Presidents, most notably the Obama Administration, this abuse of Executive power has truly gotten out of hand. In the case of the Cascade-Siskiyou monument that now bleeds into California’s 1<sup>st</sup> district, unaccountable expansion now limits the public’s access to the land and limits the federal government’s ability to properly manage it. I’m happy to see the President is serious about reviewing and reforming this antiquated law, and I hope this recommendation to accept local input is considered thoroughly.”

“President Obama’s administration abused the powers of the Antiquities Act with unprecedented monument designations that removed millions of acres of land from productive economic use and local control. Hundreds of millions of these acres included marine monuments in the Pacific; a similar future monument designation in the Gulf could destroy Florida’s tourist and fishing economy. I am encouraged that President Trump and Secretary Zinke are reviewing these Obama-era actions and urge them to take appropriate action to rescind or reduce many of these monument designations. We must work with the Trump administration to reform the Antiquities Act to prevent future abuse. I am confident we can find solutions that preserve and protect archeological sites, which is the purpose of the Antiquities Act, without harming our growing economy,” said **Congressman Webster**.

### **Background:**

Today, Congressional Western Caucus Chairman Gosar (AZ-04) and Western Caucus Member Andy Biggs (AZ-05) led a letter signed by 24 Members of Congress encouraging President Trump “to think big and act bigger” in his monuments review resulting from [Executive Order 13792](#) issued on April 26, 2017.

The 24 signers of the letter include: Representatives Mark Amodei (NV-02), Brian Babin (TX-36), Andy Biggs (AZ-05), Dave Bratt (VA-07), Paul Cook (CA-08), Kevin Cramer (ND-At Large), Jeff Duncan (SC-03), John Duncan (TN-02), Blake Farenthold (TX-27), Trent Franks (AZ-08), Paul Gosar (AZ-04), Walter Jones (NC-03), Steve King (IA-04), Doug LaMalfa (CA-01), Doug Lamborn (CO-05), Tom McClintock (CA-04), Steve Pearce (NM-02), Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen (AS-At Large), Pete Sessions (TX-32), Randy Weber (TX-14), Daniel Webster (FL-11), Ted Yoho (FL-03) and Don Young (AK-At Large).

The letter was endorsed by: the American Farm Bureau Federation, Americans for Responsible Recreation Access, the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association and the Public Lands Council.

To read the full letter and recommendations click [HERE](#).

Based on the parameters of President Trump’s April 2017 Executive Order Secretary Zinke announced in the [Federal Register](#) that his review would include 27 different land and marine monuments.

The letter sent today is consistent with the Executive Order and recommends the revision, and in some cases, rescission of national monuments unilaterally designated by presidents in the last 20 years that are larger than 100,000 acres and/or that lacked public outreach and coordination with relevant stakeholders.

By going back to the drawing board and coordinating with state and local stakeholders, President Trump has an excellent opportunity to ensure communities are not harmed by the executive overreach of previous presidents and that these designations follow the spirit and letter of the law.

This letter emphasizes the extent to which the signer's consensus on monuments is that they must be statutorily compliant – i.e. in keeping with the “smallest area compatible with proper care and management of the objects” clause of the Antiquities Act, and that they must be of demonstrated scientific or historic interest. As such, the parameters forming this consensus necessarily demand the shrinking or rescission of a majority of the monuments under review.

The president's authority to set aside land for monuments and national parks is derived from the outdated Antiquities Act of 1906, which was intended by Congress to be used to protect prehistoric Indian ruins and artifacts on federal lands in the West. More than one hundred years later, the original intent of this law, which included language to limit these designations to “the smallest area compatible with proper care and management of the objects,” has been misused to the point of abuse. Compared to early application of the Antiquities Act, where the average size of a national monument was merely 422 acres, in recent years it became commonplace for a monument to exceed a million acres in size.

President Obama exceeded the intent of the Antiquities Act more than any other president in the history of the United States. With designations including the 1.35 million acre Bears Ears National Monument in Utah and the 300,000 acre Gold Butte National Monument in Nevada, President Obama designated or expanded 34 national monuments, more than any other president in history. These unilateral declarations locked-up 553,555,000 million acres of land and water.

National monument designations under the Antiquities Act typically have significant consequences that negatively affect grazing rights, water rights, wildfire prevention and other land management activities. These declarations also result in some of the most restrictive land-use regulations possible and also greatly impact hunting, fishing, OHV and other recreational activities.

Unilateral designations that circumvent Congress typically result in devastating consequences for rural America and our future economic prosperity. For every new acre claimed for the federal government, there is an acre of private, economically-productive land lost. Such actions exacerbate challenges for local communities to fund public necessities like education and infrastructure, since lands added to the federal rolls can no longer be taxed.

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