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news release



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## **WTAS: President Trump and Secretary Zinke Praised for National Monument Report**

*What They Are Saying About Secretary Zinke's final report to President Trump on the National Monument Review*

**Wall Street Journal:** "Over the past few days, thousands have marched in Salt Lake to oppose the decision. The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance denounced the order as "the single most harmful attack any president has ever launched on public lands." The group claims the Trump Administration acted "at the behest of ideological extremists and dirty energy barons," adding that the decision is "an insult to the tribes that advocated to protect Bears Ears." Calm down, guys. Most of the two million newly undesignated acres are still public lands, subject to rigorous federal and state protections. The Trump Administration increased Native American representation on the advisory Bears Ears Commission... In other words, the Trump Administration's order not only ends federal overreach but restores power to local people. That's a monumental and welcome change."(editorial: "The Right Move on Monuments" [Wall Street Journal](#), 12-5-17)

**Deseret News (Utah):** Advocates for shrinking the monument lands, including Utah's all-Republican congressional delegation, heralded Trump's decision as the right fit for Utah. Rep. John Curtis said, "Now that the president has created two new monuments in my congressional district, the time has come for Congress to ensure that these sites are managed the right way. In the coming days, I look forward to introducing legislation to ensure we are just doing that." Rep. Chris Stewart said the Grand Staircase monument has been a burden on his constituents in the area. "President Trump had the courage that no other president had. He listened to local voices that had been left out of the decision-making process for too long," Stewart said. Rep. Rob Bishop, chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources, called Trump's proclamations "a first step" toward protecting precious areas while respecting the people who live there."The next steps will be to move beyond symbolic gestures of protection and create substantive protections and enforcement and codify in law a meaningful management role for local governments, tribes and other stakeholders," Bishop said. ("Native American tribe coalition to sue Trump for shrinking Bears Ears," [Deseret News \(Utah\)](#), 12-4-17)

[Deseret News \(Utah\) - Opinion](#): “I am sure President Donald Trump didn’t realize it, but today, in his shrinking of the two designations made by President Barack Obama and President Bill Clinton, he actually created a more important monument — a monument to the way Utah gets things done. The President listened to the combined voices of individual citizens, tribal members, small communities and elected officials from the county, state and federal levels. He responded to their calls and drastically reduced the size of both the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante monuments. It’s an important moment in Utah history...The changes brought about by the president’s actions were truly the culmination of countless, and often thankless, hours of effort by an army of individuals and groups. Our federal delegation, including Chairman Rob Bishop, Sen. Mike Lee and Sen. Orrin Hatch, Rep. Mia Love, Rep. Chris Stewart and former Rep. Jason Chaffetz, all deserve praise and thanks. Their dedicated staffs in Washington and in Utah did much of the hard work and heavy lifting to drive this decision. Gov. Gary Herbert and members of the Utah Legislature worked tirelessly to make today a reality. Committee staff in Washington, along with Secretary Ryan Zinke and his entire team at the Department of Interior, should also receive high praise. The president’s desire to make a difference for the hardworking, and often forgotten, Utahns in our rural counties also played a critical part.” (editorial: “There is no ‘I’ in Utah,” [Deseret News \(Utah\)](#), 12-4-17)

[Americans for Tax Reform](#): Americans for Tax Reform President Grover Norquist had this to say: “President Trump and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke should be applauded for working to correct past executive overreach by Presidents Obama and Clinton. This is a fight about the use and enjoyment of public lands by the public. The reality is that American outdoorsmen and women have a vested interest in conservation. Compare them to the federal government, which is a frequent abuser of America’s natural beauty, whether it’s polluting the San Juan River in Colorado or extorting the organizers of Burning Man for unnecessary fees in the desert of Nevada. The Trump and Zinke effort to rein in the abuse of the Antiquities Act is extremely important in the fight against radical special interests and bureaucrats. From Presidents Kennedy to Coolidge, Wilson, and Eisenhower, Presidents have scaled back federal monuments 18 times in the past. This is a great first step in the march towards restoring property and land use rights of the West.” [Americans for Tax Reform](#), 12-4-17)

[National Cattlemen's Beef Association](#): The National Cattlemen’s Beef Association and Public Lands Council applauded the White House’s announcement that Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments will be reduced in size. Dave Eliason, president of the Public Lands Council said, “Previous administrations abused the power of the Antiquities Act, designating huge swaths of land as national monuments without any public input or review. Rural communities in Utah and across the West have paid the price. Sweeping designations locked up millions of acres of land with the stroke of a pen, undermining local knowledge and decimating rural economies.” Craig Uden, president of the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association said, “We are grateful that today’s action will allow ranchers to resume their role as responsible stewards of the land and drivers of rural economies. Going forward, it is critical that we reform the Antiquities Act to ensure that those whose livelihoods and communities depend on the land have a voice in federal land management decisions.” (Cattlemen Respond to National Monument Reductions: “Egregious Example of Federal Overreach Corrected in Win for Rural Communities”, [National Cattlemen's Beef Association](#), 12-4-17)

[Washington Post](#): Trump’s move to shrink the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante national monuments by more than 1.1 million acres and more than 800,000 acres, respectively, immediately sparked an outpouring of praise from conservative lawmakers. Gov. Gary R.

Herbert of Utah characterized the action as “an opportunity to push a reset button on these areas” and derided as myth “this idea that somehow there will be some wholesale development” on lands removed from the designation. “There is a lot of scaremongering” about future oil derricks and natural gas wells, he said, but “the only thing that smacks of energy is the uranium” that will now become available near Bears Ears and coal near Grand Staircase-Escalante. (“Trump shrinks two huge national monuments in Utah, drawing praise and protests”, [Washington Post](#), 12-4-17)

## **OTHER TOP QUOTES**

**Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT):** “President Trump did the people of Utah a great favor today by rolling back harmful land use restrictions in southern Utah,” Sen. Lee said. “The president has done his part and now it is time for Congress to act to protect the people of Utah from federal overreach in the future. That is why I will be introducing legislation later this week that would give Utah similar protections from Antiquities Act abuse that the states of Wyoming and Alaska currently enjoy.”

**Rep. Chris Stewart (R-Utah):** “The Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument resides in my district. I have seen firsthand the damage that the monument has caused to the local economy. My constituents have been in a desperate need of change, and today President Trump delivered. President Trump had the courage that no other president had. He listened to local voices that had been left out of the decision-making process for too long. On behalf of the county commissioners, the state legislators who represent the area, and the entire federal delegation, we say thank you, Mr. President.”

**Rep. John Curtis (UT-3):** “I am grateful to President for coming to Utah to help us resolve this important issue. Now that the President has created two new monuments in my congressional district, the time has come for congress to ensure that these sites are managed the right way. In the coming days, I look forward to introducing legislation to ensure we are just doing that.”

**San Juan County Commissioner Rebecca Benally (D):** “Thank you Secretary Zinke, for coming to San Juan, Kane, and Garfield counties and listening to the local grassroots people. Your boots on the ground approach was unexpected, but well received and appreciated. Thank you Senator Hatch. You and your staff have been champions for us. Thank you for never giving up. For believing we could rectify a wrong and for being a fighter for San Juan County and our people. Thank you President Trump. Thank you for not being a typical politician and passing us over. Thank you for caring about San Juan County. We may be only 15,000 strong, but we matter. We appreciate you willing to take the backlash from the special interest groups as you stand for the people and the economy of San Juan County.”

**Rep. Paul Gosar (AZ-4):** “Today's announcement by President Trump shows that he and Secretary Zinke are committed to smart, restrained and proper application of the Antiquities Act. His decision takes power from unaccountable Washington bureaucrats doing the dirty work of special-interest groups and gives it back to the people where it belongs. By shrinking the national monument footprint in Utah by more than two million acres, President Trump is correcting past overreach by previous presidents, supporting the multiple-use doctrine for public lands required by federal law and giving local communities a voice by restoring traditional uses. And unlike past Presidents, President Trump heard the people, listened closely to their ideas, and acted. Thank you, President Trump, for keeping another promise and taking action to ensure past presidents abuse of a more than one hundred-year-old law

doesn't lock-up the West."

**Rep. Andy Biggs (AZ-5):** President Trump's reductions of the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante Monuments in Utah are a welcome relief to western landowners. The west has been negatively affected for decades, and government has not constrained its unlawful acquisition of these lands. Earlier this year, I led a letter with Chairman Gosar to Secretary Zinke to recommend the total rescission of these two monuments. I am glad that the two monuments will be significantly reduced, and I trust that the Trump administration will continue to relinquish the federal government's grasp on these lands.

**Rep. Raúl Labrador (ID-1):** "I support President Trump's decision to correct his predecessors' overreach and scale back the monument designations to reflect local concerns and respect the right of ordinary Americans to make a living. Radical environmentalists will howl, but the fact remains that the Antiquities Act has been abused by presidents of both parties. Now we need to move forward on a permanent legislative solution to restrain abuse of presidential power over our public lands."

**Rep. Doug Lamborn (CO-5):** "I support the President's decision. This rolls back harmful overreach by the previous administration. Instead of using the law to protect antiquities, it's been wrongfully used to restrict development. It's also made it more difficult to take care of our national lands."

**Utah Attorney General Sean Reyes:** "Today, with the designation of five new monument units, President Trump has taken a historic step to correct the hubris of past administrations. The new designations are much closer in scope to the 'smallest areas compatible with proper care and management' of protected objects, as required by the Antiquities Act. These corrections were made after extensive input from local citizens and interests, including tribal members, conservationists, ranchers, hunters, business owners and elected representatives. President Trump and Secretary Zinke have found a balance that considers the needs of our local communities and still protects the singular, stunning, and sacred lands of our state for future generations. Over the history of the Antiquities Act, national monuments have been reviewed and modified by subsequent presidents. It is no surprise, given the disproportionate original designations, that President Trump would reduce these monuments to be more consistent with the intent of the Antiquities Act. Such remedial measures would not be necessary if Congress would clarify the limits of initial monument designations. I echo the statement of Secretary Zinke that executive power under the Act is no substitute for congressional action. We are hopeful that our elected representatives in Washington, D.C. will pass legislation that makes political games with Utah's public lands less likely in the future. The Utah Attorney General's Office will continue to monitor the process with interest and will continue to protect Utah, its people, and its lands, from federal overreach."

**National Rifle Association:** "The NRA applauds President Trump and Secretary Zinke's decision to restore access to public lands in Utah. Under the Trump Administration, decisions regarding national public lands are transparent and being made with the input of America's sportsmen and women. Hunters and sportsmen serve as the backbone of modern natural resource management in the United States. It's refreshing that the Trump Administration values their input," said Chris W. Cox, NRA-ILA executive director. "Our nation's remarkable resource management successes over the last century have only been possible because of traditional uses, such as hunting and recreational shooting. President Trump and Secretary Zinke have ushered in a new era for hunters and sportsmen ensuring that they remain an important partner in preserving and utilizing America's public lands."

**Americans for Prosperity Vice President of External Affairs, Chrissy Harbin released the following statement:** “Previous administrations abused their power under the Antiquities Act in order to keep land off limits. President Trump and Secretary Zinke’s actions in reviewing and resizing past administration’s monument designations is a welcome step in reducing government overreach. We will continue to work with lawmakers in Congress and the Department of Interior to prioritize conservation efforts, encourage sustainable economic development, and empower the voice of local communities.”

**Americans for Prosperity-Utah’s State Director, Evelyn Everton released the following statement:** “President Trump’s decision to resize these national monuments after historic federal land seizures is a huge victory for the state of Utah. With over \$18 billion of maintenance work needed on federal lands managed by federal agencies, the federal government has proven to be a poor caretaker of federal lands. We applaud the Trump administration’s actions in ensuring local economies that depend on the land’s resources will not be harmed and important historic objects and sites at national monuments will be protected. This will increase economic competitiveness, especially in rural parts of the state.”

**Competitive Enterprise Institute’s Myron Ebell Comments on Trump’s Proclamations Downsizing two Utah National Monuments:** “CEI applauds President Trump’s proclamations today that significantly reduce the size of Grand Staircase-Escalante and Bears Ears National Monuments in Utah. This is great news for the people of rural Utah who have been locked out of using and enjoying millions of acres of federal lands. And it is a great first step in redressing the multiple abuses of the Antiquities Act of 1906 by Presidents Obama, George W. Bush, and Clinton. Now that President Trump has redressed some of the wrongs done to the people of rural Utah, we hope he will next rescind or reduce similarly outrageous National Monument designations in Maine, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, and California.

**FreedomWorks Foundation Applauds Trump’s Shrinking Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante:** “Today we applaud President Trump, Interior Secretary Zinke, and their teams for arriving at a reasonable approach to these national monuments. We agree that priceless historic and natural wonders should be protected for future generations to enjoy. However, we find it despicable that the previous administration preyed on this nonpartisan sentiment in order to achieve political objectives that included expanding the power of the federal government over the states and obstructing industries they didn’t like. Unilaterally declaring national monuments larger than some states is ridiculous on its face. We know our activists in Utah and across the country appreciate the Trump administration’s more humble approach to the power of his pen and phone.”

**Sutherland Institute applauds reduction of two monuments, calls for reform of Antiquities Act:** “The administration should be commended for listening to the voices of San Juan, Kane and Garfield county locals whose lives and livelihoods are connected to the public land they love. When a president of either political party, with the stroke of a pen, can set aside hundreds of thousands – if not millions – of acres, local voices are drowned out by big, and well-funded, outside interests.”

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