

From: Swift, Heather
To: [Benjamin Cassidy](#); [Russell Newell](#); [Laura Rigas](#); [Magallanes Downey](#)
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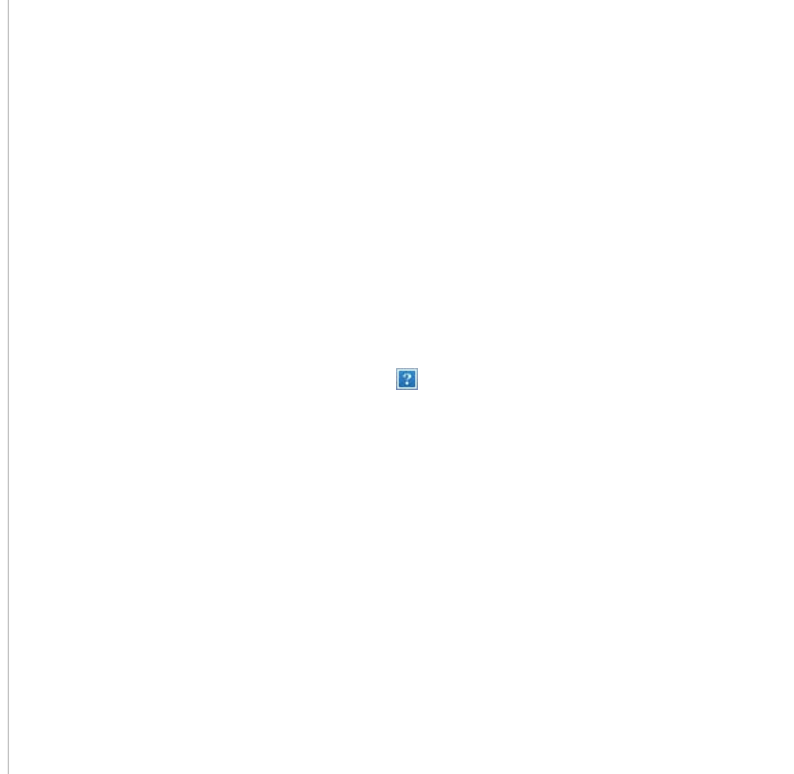
NATIONAL MONUMENTS

Groups want 4 designations rescinded

Kellie Lunney, E&E News reporter

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Katahdin Woods and Waters in Maine. photo credit: Interior Department/Flickr



Heather Swift

Department of the Interior

@DOIPressSec

Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov |

Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

Free-market groups and trade associations asked President Trump to rescind several national monument designations, including Katahdin Woods and Waters in Maine. Interior Department/Flickr

Dozens of trade associations and free-market groups are urging President Trump to rescind the designations of four land and water monuments under review, going further in their recommendations than Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke did.

The groups, which include the Competitive Enterprise Institute and the American Land Rights Association, want the Trump administration to "make a dramatic break with the past" and reverse "injustices" that occurred under the 1906 Antiquities Act by revoking the status of Utah's Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante national monuments, Maine's Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, and the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts National Marine Monument.

"In keeping with President Trump's campaign pledge to undo the harm massive national monument designations have inflicted on rural areas in the West and Maine, as well as fishing communities along the Northeast coast, the White House needs to take bold action," National Center for Public Policy Research Senior Fellow Bonner Cohen said in a statement. "Just trimming around the edges, as Secretary Zinke has proposed, won't do."

Zinke in August submitted a draft report of his 27-monument [review](#) to Trump, recommending shrinking the boundaries of as many as six monuments but not advocating the elimination of any monument ([Greenwire](#), Sept. 18). The report was leaked publicly in September. Trump has not announced yet what he plans to do.

The National Center for Public Policy Research led 36 other signatories, including two former Interior officials from the Reagan and George H.W. Bush administrations, in sending a [letter](#) today to Trump to outline their concerns about how the Antiquities Act has been implemented. G. Ray Arnett was assistant Interior secretary for fish and wildlife and parks under President Reagan, and George Rasley was assistant director of the National Park Service under President George H.W. Bush.

"The Antiquities Act calls for monuments to be limited to the 'smallest area compatible with protecting a given site or object,' the letter said. "In what is a complete distortion of the Antiquities Act's original intent, monument designations — whether on land or at sea — frequently involve thousands of square miles that are permanently off-limits to almost all economic activity."

Bears Ears is 1.35 million acres, while Grand Staircase, designated by President Clinton in 1996, is 1.7 million acres. Katahdin Woods and Waters, created on land that was previously privately owned, is roughly 88,000 acres. The Northeast Canyons and Seamounts National Marine Monument in the Atlantic Ocean spans 4,931 square miles.

In addition to rescinding the four monuments, the letter recommended that "no other national monument [sic] receive further scrutiny in recognition of the limited time Secretary Zinke had to review these designations."

The signers also said it is ultimately "incumbent on Congress to address the problems that have allowed previous administrations to abuse this law."

House Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop (R-Utah) recently introduced a bill ([H.R. 3990](#)), which the committee approved last week, that would overhaul the Antiquities Act for the first time since its enactment more than a century ago, approving reforms that would sharply reduce the size of future monuments and create a formal process for reductions ([E&E Daily](#), Oct. 12).