

Thank you for this opportunity to share my written comments with you on **BEARS EARS NATIONAL MONUMENT**, established by proclamation under The Antiquities Act of 1906, and currently under review as directed by Executive Order 13792.

As a Four Corners resident and frequent visitor to Bears Ears, I support Bears Ears National Monument as it stands, and respond to your request for comments in the order suggested by your point-by-point outline included in your announcement of May 5, 2017, starting with point (i).

The Antiquities Acts of 1906 requires that reservations of land not exceed “the smallest area compatible with the proper care....” The Native American proposal for Bears Ears encompassed 1.91 million acres of land; the PLI proposal encompassed 1.28 million acres. The final designation of 1.35 million acres is much closer to the PLI proposal than the Native American proposal. Even the most conservative elements must acknowledge the national monument boundaries as established by proclamation represent the smallest area possible.

With over 100,000 archaeological sites within its boundaries, Bears Ears is one of the richest deposits of archaeological evidence in the country. Sections of Bears Ears number among some of the last places in the United States to be mapped, a wilderness of tremendous scientific interest. There is nothing else quite like it anywhere; but if we destroy it, it’s gone forever.

Bears Ears has been established on existing Federal lands, many sections of which were already designated as archaeological areas, wilderness study areas, etc. By reducing the footprint of Bears Ears by over 500,000 acres from the 2016 Native American proposal, a significant area of Federal land remains available for other uses, while protecting the most vulnerable areas.

Bears Ears is located in an area of the country already attractive for tourism. Utah enjoys an \$8 billion influx from tourism and recreation. Revenues generated from the renewable resource of preservation, rather than through depletion of available natural resources by mining, drilling wells, logging, etc. is a lucrative option to promote the economy in that part of the state.

Tribal support for Bears Ears is profound, and a wide spectrum of environmental and education organizations also support the monument. Public input on Bears Ears has been ongoing for some eight decades now; everything that needs to be said has been said multiple times; and even the most conservative elements have long agreed that it was not a question if Bears Ears should be protected, but how and when. The 2016 proclamation, empowered by a 110-year-old law upheld through multiple administrations, and rendered with thoughtful and mindful consideration to balance as many interests as possible, at long last answers that question.

As the area is already administered by BLM and USFS agencies, basic resources to manage the area are in place, and going forward, in an unprecedented collaboration, tribal and US governmental entities are pledged to cooperatively administer Bears Ears.

Bears Ears National Monument is an area of unique and stunning natural beauty, containing within its boundaries a rich archaeological history of the First People of this country. The ecosystems are fragile and vulnerable, and the archaeological evidence easily looted and destroyed.

I beg of you, do not leave my children and my children's children to wonder why we lost this precious treasure due to partisan bickering; do not exploit and despoil the timeless history and natural wonders in the search for short-term gain. To question the legality of the Antiquities Act, after 110 years of its implementation by presidents from both parties, through the vehicle of a presidential executive order rather than legislative initiative or judicial challenge, seems to me ill-advised – to say nothing of ironic – in the extreme.

I stand with Bears Ears. I urge you, Secretary Zinke, to stand with Bears Ears too.

Thank you for allowing me to express my thoughts on this issue.