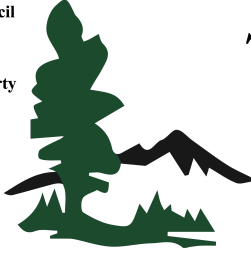


Executive Council
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The Coalition To Protect America's National Parks

Voices of Experience

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION – NO HARD COPY TO FOLLOW

February 10, 2017

Governor Gary Herbert
State of Utah, Office of Governor
350 North State Street, Suite 200
PO Box 142220
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-2220

RE: Objection to the State of Utah's Concurrent Resolutions HCR 11 (regarding Bears Ears National Monument) and HCR 12 (Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument)

Dear Governor Herbert:

On behalf all who value America's heritage, the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks is writing to respectfully express our objection to the State of Utah's approval of Concurrent Resolutions HCR 11 (requesting the President of the United States take the unprecedented act of rescinding the newly designated Bears Ears National Monument), and HCR 12 (requesting Congress diminish and reduce the size of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. We believe both of these actions are wrong for Utah and wrong for America.

As you know, Bears Ears National Monument contains one of the most beautiful and well-preserved red-rock desert canyon ecosystems remaining in the United States. It includes hundreds of thousands of Native American cultural sites, world-renowned scenic views, unique and diverse natural resources, and superb opportunities for recreation, scientific study and exploration.

The spectacular cliffs and terraces and river canyons preserved within Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument's provide extraordinary opportunities for hiking, climbing, off highway vehicle exploration, cycling, research and more. These magnificent sites provide an ever-increasing source of income for nearby and regional tourism as more visitors discover and come to visit them.

Both of these National Monuments are undoubtedly one of a kind in America, and the world. Therefore, we are in agreement with a majority of American citizens from across the political spectrum that support conservation of these monuments under the Antiquities Act as justified and appropriate. Since Republican President Theodore Roosevelt signed the Antiquities Act into law on June 8, 1906, Presidents from both major parties have used it to honor and safeguard our country's

national heritage. In the Act's 100-plus year history the United State Supreme Court has repeatedly upheld presidential proclamations under the Antiquities Act, ruling each time that the Act gives the president substantial and important discretion as to the nature of the special places and objects to be protected.

As you may know, four of the five National Parks in Utah were first designated as national monuments under the authority of the Antiquities Act. Arches, Bryce Canyon, Capital Reef, and Zion National Parks are all now a source of tremendous pride for Utahans; they generate millions of dollars for Utah's economy, and they greatly enhance the quality of life for Utahans and all Americans.

We believe that it is in Utah's best long-term interest to support Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments. Research shows that at least 82% of Utahans participate in some form of outdoor recreation each year. Further, the outdoor recreation economy in Utah currently generates \$12 billion per year in consumer spending and it supports 122,000 jobs. The conservation of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante will allow and promote these lands to be used for outdoor recreation, leading to the related economic benefits having a strong potential to grow year after year. Therefore, we strongly object to HCR 11 and HCR 12 and believe if these resolutions are implemented there will be irreparable harm to these important landscapes, that public access to the regions will be greatly diminished, and that there will be significant loss for the outdoor recreation businesses that depend on them.

Opening these areas to industrial development and extractive industries – like oil and gas withdrawal or coal mining – may have short-term economic benefits, but they will not sustain Utah in the long run. Without doubt, industrializing the Bears Ears and the Grand Staircase-Escalante landscape will damage the state's standing as a world-renowned outdoor recreation destination. In addition, the harm HCR 11 and HCR 12 will cause to the Antiquities Act poses a real threat to our nation's other national treasures.

On behalf of our more than 1,100 members and millions of national park enthusiasts across the nation, the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks appreciates your attention to our concerns regarding Utah's Concurrent Resolutions HCR 11 and HCR 12. If you have any questions concerning our comments please contact the Coalition's Executive Director, Amy Gilbert at amy_gilbert@protectnps.org.

Sincerely,



Maureen Finnerty, Chair
Coalition to Protect America's National Parks
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Web: www.protectnps.org

Cc: Ryan Zinke, Secretary – Department of the Interior