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## Latest Polling Shows Overwhelming Support for Bears Ears

(SALT LAKE CITY)— Sixty-four percent of registered voters in Utah believe protections should remain in place for Bears Ears National Monument, compared to just thirty percent who say that they “probably” or “definitely” oppose the monument, according to a poll conducted in the wake of Interior Secretary Zinke’s visit to Utah earlier this month. The public opinion poll shows that Bears Ears National Monument continues to garner widespread support from Utah voters, despite efforts by opponents to turn public opinion against the monument.

Native American-led group Utah Diné Bikéyah (UDB) commissioned the poll, which was conducted by Public Opinion Strategies, a leading public opinion research firm. Public Opinion Strategies has offices in Virginia and Colorado, and is known for its long history of working on Republican campaigns and its extensive experience with conservation issues in the West. The poll measured opinions of a representative sample of 500 registered voters in Utah during the week of May 13<sup>th</sup> and produced a margin of error of 4.4 +/-.

Willie Grayeyes, Board Chair of UDB, noted, “The Bears Ears are deeply important to Utahns. For some, it’s a place to hunt, fish, hike, and camp. For the Tribes, it’s also a place to practice our culture and pass on traditional knowledge that have been handed down for thousands of years. These results confirm that Utahns of all backgrounds believe the Bears Ears are too precious not to protect.”

Members of Utah’s congressional delegation have been vocal opponents of the monument and have urged Secretary Zinke to recommend repealing monument protections. Gavin Noyes, Executive Director of Utah Diné Bikéyah, noted: “The numbers make one thing clear: Utah’s delegates aren’t trying to strip protections from Bears Ears on behalf of their constituents—it’s a personal agenda that requires suppressing an important voice, that of Native American Tribes. It’s time to quit arguing and start listening to each other.”

The results indicate that the opinions of the Utah delegation don’t match those of their voters when it comes to beliefs about the impact of Bears Ears National Monument on the state’s overall wellbeing. When asked their opinion on the impact of Bears Ears National Monument, 53% of respondents said they thought the designation was “a good thing” for Utah.

Other notable results from the poll include:

- After respondents listened to common arguments for and against the monument, 64% of respondents still sided with supporters.
- Respondents indicate frequent use of national public lands, with 22% reporting they had visited national public lands more than ten times in the last year and 89% having visited a national park, forest, monument, or wildlife refuge at least once in the past year. Further, 43% of those surveyed had purchased a hunting or fishing license recently.

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- When asked about their opinions on the groups supporting and opposing Bears Ears protections, 59% of respondents said they would be more likely to side with supporting groups, including conservation organizations, outdoor recreation businesses, and five Native American tribes.
- Protecting Native American cultural and archaeological sites ranked as the top “extremely important” reason for protecting the Bears Ears.

Bears Ears National Monument contains thousands of sacred sites and Native American artifacts, in addition to being a prime destination for outdoor recreationists and sportsman. Existing national monument protections are intended to provide additional resources for preventing looting of Native American artifacts and proactive land management. Over the past 9 days, more than 50,000 people have uploaded comments to the Department of Interior that are approximately 100 to 1 in favor of keeping Bears Ears National Monument intact. Utah Diné Bikéyah urges supporters to submit comments to the Department of the Interior prior to the May 26<sup>th</sup> deadline at: [www.utahdinebikeyah.org/public-comment](http://www.utahdinebikeyah.org/public-comment)

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*Utah Diné Bikéyah (pronounced di-NAY bi-KAY-uh) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that works toward healing of people and the Earth by supporting indigenous communities in protecting their culturally significant, ancestral lands. UDB provides critical tools, training, and technical support to the five Tribes—Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, Ute Mountain Ute, & Uintah Ouray Ute—who led the call to protect the Bears Ears cultural landscape as a national monument.*