



Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council

711 Central Avenue, Suite 220, Billings, Montana 59102
Ph: (406) 252-2550 Fax: (406) 254-6355



August 17, 2017

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke
222 North 32 Street, Suite 900
Billings, MT 59101

Dear Secretary Zinke,

We again thank you for your years of service in Montana. You continue to show a respect for our concerns as Native American people and you continue to have our respect and confidence.

For a second time, Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council (RMTLC) writes to pronounce our support for the Bears Ears National Monument in Utah. As stated in our letter dated February 17, 2017, the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council (RMTLC) exists to provide its member Tribes with a unified voice and a collective organization to address issues of concern to the Tribes and Indian people. The member tribes of RMTLC respectfully ask you to carefully consider tribal sovereignty in your final recommendation on national monuments this week, particularly as it pertains to Bears Ears National Monument. Tribal sovereignty is a central component to what this Monument is about and we ask that you honor the historic agreement of our federal government to the tribes of the Bears Ears region by recommending that Bears Ears National Monument boundaries remain as established. Our understanding is that the original boundary proposal was based on data that only tribes possess through their tribal elders. Honoring tribal sovereignty includes honoring such data that only tribes possess. It is our hope that your recommendation will protect this historic monument with its established boundaries.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

William F. Snell, Jr.
Executive Director
Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council

file

WHEREAS, the Fort Peck Tribal Executive Board is the duly elected body representing the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation and is empowered to act on behalf of the Tribes. All actions shall be adherent to provisions set forth in the 1960 Constitution and By-Laws, and

WHEREAS, the Bears Ears region holds vast cultural, historical, and paleontological resources and is world renowned for its integrity and abundance of its archeological resources. This living landscape continues to nurture, strengthen and sustain tribal people as it holds spiritual and cultural significance; and

WHEREAS, the Bears Ears National Monument was established on December 28, 2016, by Presidential Proclamation; and

WHEREAS, the Bears Ears National Monument designation was the culmination of an intertribal collaboration and our collective desire to realize protection and recognition of ancestral lands, cultural resources, religious access and practical purposes; and

WHEREAS, the established boundaries of the Bears Ears National Monument are much smaller than what the local communities and the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition proposed to honor Tribes today; and

WHEREAS, the Bears Ears Commission was created by the Bears Ears National Monument Proclamation to provide guidance and recommendations on the development and implementation of management plans and on the management of the monument utilizing the traditional knowledge of indigenous people; and

WHEREAS, the Bears Ears National Monument has every opportunity to serve as a beacon of hope and will leave a legacy of conservation for all Americans for future generations;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes emphasizes the importance of the Bears Ears region to our community members;

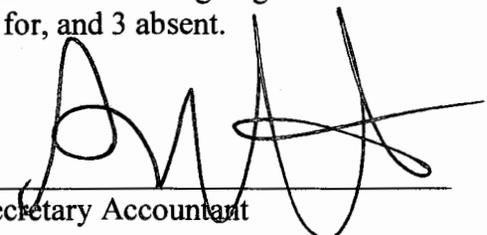
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes affirms our support of the Bears Ears National Monument, with its established boundaries;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes affirms its support of the established Bears Ears Commission with its established purpose;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes urges all to recognize and respect tribal sovereignty, which is a key component to properly honoring the Bears Ears region.

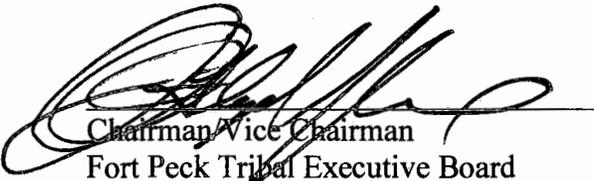
CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned Secretary/Accountant of the Tribal Executive Board of the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Indian Reservation, hereby certify that the Tribal Executive Board is composed of 12 voting members of whom 10 constituting a quorum were present at a Special Board meeting duly convened this 14th day of August, 2017 and that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted at such meeting by the affirmative vote of 9 for, and 3 absent.

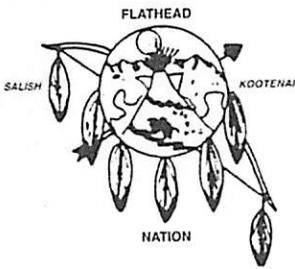


Secretary Accountant

APPROVED:



Chairman/Vice Chairman
Fort Peck Tribal Executive Board



THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES
OF THE FLATHEAD NATION

P.O. BOX 278
Pablo, Montana 59855
(406) 275-2700
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A People of Vision

A Confederation of the Salish,
Pend d' Oreille
and Kootenai Tribes

TRIBAL COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Vernon S. Finley - Chairman
Len Twoteeth - Vice Chair
Troy Felsman - Secretary
Anita Matt - Treasurer
Ronald Trahan
Shelly R. Fyant
Leonard W. Gray
Carole Lankford
Dennis Clairmont
Patty Stevens

Dear Secretary Zinke,

We want to congratulate you on your nomination and confirmation to be the 52nd Secretary of the Interior. As overseer of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Land Management, this new role will help define relationships with tribes and our natural resources. We look forward to working with you and the federal agencies in this capacity in the future.

We are writing to state our support for the Bears Ears National Monument in Utah. This monument was created in response to the five Tribes of the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition including Hopi Tribe, Navajo Nation, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Pueblo of Zuni, and the Ute Tribe of the Uinta Ouray Reservation. It is the first time in history that Native American Tribes have called for and succeeded in protecting their sacred ancestral homelands through a National Monument designation by a President of the United States of America.

When asked about the Bears Ears National Monument during the recent confirmation hearings for this position, you stated that if you are confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, you will travel to Utah to talk to people on the ground and make a recommendation to President Donald Trump. We understand that this could lead to a recommendation that the monument be repealed, modified or reduced in size.

We respectfully request that you meet with the Tribes that supported the effort to create the Bears Ears National Monument on your trip to Utah, including the Navaho Nation Council who recently passed a tribal resolution in support of the Bears Ears National Monument proclamation and in opposition to any congressional or administrative action to reverse the proclamation. We believe this will provide you with perspective on what these ancestral lands mean to these Tribes. We also urge you to respect the historic significance of this monument for Native Americans in this country and that your recommendation to President Trump is to leave protections for the monument in place.

We appreciate your cooperation with our Tribes during your time in Congress and look forward to working with you as Secretary of the Interior.

Respectfully,


CSKT Tribal Council Chairman



LUMMI INDIAN BUSINESS COUNCIL

2665 KWINA ROAD BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON 98226 (360) 312-2000

DEPARTMENT _____ DIRECT NO. _____

June 8, 2017

To the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition:

On behalf of the Lummi Nation, I write to urge retaining the National Monument designation for Bears Ears. This is a matter of importance to all peoples who wish to honor the past and leave a lasting legacy for future generations.

The modern day Bears Ears region is within the ancestral landscape of tribes who support this designation. Their felt-association and cultural affiliation with this region is beyond dispute. It traces back thousands of years and is commemorated in tribal oral history and many ethnographic accounts. It is a centerpiece of identity for Native peoples.

The Lummi people understand the struggle to protect these sacred landscapes. We also find ourselves in a time in this country when the many—alive and yet unborn—must pay the price for the benefit of the few. We recently turned back a coal port that would have denatured our traditional fishing grounds and desecrated a historic site that dates back over 9,500 years. It would have resulted in a short-term benefit for a few companies and corporations at a very high, long-term cost to our people and other communities in the Pacific Northwest.

We made the point then, and we can make it for Bears Ears as well, that there is a double standard operating in America, today. No one would seriously consider removing existing protections for Arlington National Cemetery, from the Gettysburg battlefield, or from the sacred site of the Battle of Greasy Grass.

In truth the protections offered for Bears Ears as a National Monument are the very least it should be afforded. It is a place where Native peoples lived, created their histories, and left a lasting legacy. It is not so difficult for opponents of the National Monument to understand. It is really a matter of their priorities. Those who oppose the Monument likely want to accelerate either the extraction of resources, remove federal ownership—or both. We believe arguing for removal of the designation is a misrepresentation of a greater public good is a scandalous subterfuge, and an intentional deception brought about by a handful of local interest, lobbyists and their lawyers.

As the Hopi Tribe mentioned in their November 29, 2016 letter to the President stating their support for the designation, the “deep and timeless connections to the Bears ears is the basis for reasserting our request” for the designation. It is in our view unconscionable to attempt to remove this designation.

Please understand that we stand with you in this struggle.

Respectfully yours,

Timothy Ballew II
Chairman
Lummi Indian Business Council



CONFEDERATED TRIBES
of the
GOSHUTE RESERVATION

P.O. BOX 6104
IBAPAH, UTAH 84034
PHONE (435) 234-1138
FAX (435) 234-1162

**RESOLUTION OF THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES
OF THE GOSHUTE RESERVATION**

BEARS EARS RESOLUTION

17-G-___

WHEREAS, the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation (CTGR) is an Indian tribe organized pursuant to the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934 as amended, operating in accordance with terms and conditions of the Tribal Constitution and By-Laws, approved November 25, 1940 as amended; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to CTGR's inherent sovereignty as an Indian Tribe, and pursuant to the CTGR's Constitution, Article IV, Section 1, the governing body of CTGR is the Business Council; and

WHEREAS, the CTGR Business Council has the authority, pursuant to its Constitution and inherent sovereignty as an Indian tribe, to make decisions that serve the best interests of the health, safety, and general welfare of its tribal members, including but not limited to, protecting historic, cultural, spiritual, and sacred places within Indian Country; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the "Supreme Law of the Land", as contained in the Treaty Clause of the U.S. Constitution, Article 1 Section 8, and the trust responsibility, the U.S. Government has legal and moral obligations to protect Indian Tribal resources. States do not have similar mandatory requirements; and

WHEREAS, Bears Ears National Monument is a historic, cultural, spiritual, and sacred region located in southeastern Utah, consisting of 1,351,849 acres (289,000 acres of Forest Service lands and 1.06 million acres of Bureau of Land Management lands). The Bears Ears National Monument is the 12th national monument managed by the Forest Service; it is the fifth to be managed jointly by the Forest Service and BLM. Monuments generally preserve current uses of the land, including tribal access for traditional plant and firewood

gathering and for ceremonial purposes, off-highway recreation on existing routes, grazing, hunting and fishing and water and utility infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the Bears Ears region is a place of extreme historical, cultural, and archeological significance. “It is a place to connect, a place to heal, and a place where Native American Traditional Knowledge can be explored and nurtured so that it continues to inform and illuminate contemporary life; and

WHEREAS, since time immemorial, indigenous people have lived in the Bears Ears region in its deep sandstone canyons, desert mesas, and meadow mountaintops. This region is known as:

. . . one of the densest and most significant cultural landscapes in the United States. [It contains] [a]bundant rock art, ancient cliff dwellings, ceremonial sites, and countless other artifacts provide an extraordinary archaeological and cultural record that is important to us all, but most notably the land is profoundly sacred to many Native American tribes, including the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Navajo Nation, Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah Ouray, Hopi Nation, and Zuni Tribe. “The area’s cultural importance to Native American tribes continues to this day. As they have for generations, these tribes and their members come here for ceremonies and to visit sacred sites. . . . Traditions of hunting, fishing, gathering, and wood cutting are still practiced by tribal members, as is collection of medicinal and ceremonial plants, edible herbs, and materials for crafting items like baskets and footwear;

WHEREAS, the Bears Ears region is also a place of abundant deposits of uranium, potash, oil and gas, a place that surrounding state, congressional and local government decision-makers sought to designate as an energy development zone; and

WHEREAS, the Bears Ears region was recently named one of the “11 Most Endangered Historic Places” by the National Trust for Historic Preservation due to the risk of degradation from mineral exploration and extraction, recreational abuse, and cultural resource vandalism and looting. Uranium mining, gravel quarrying, and tar sands development threaten to degrade lands within the Bears Ears region, while threats of oil, gas, and potash development also exist to the eastern lands just beyond the national monument; and

WHEREAS, Utah lawmakers are pursuing legislation targeting Bears Ears National Monument proposing the State of Utah take over and manage these archaeologically rich lands in San Juan County, Utah. Rep. Mike Noel's HCR24 calls on the state to acquire the "public land that is occupied by" the new monument using the Recreation and Public Purposes Act. The bill acknowledges the monument holds land and objects of great cultural, scientific and historical interest and are "profoundly sacred" to the five tribes that successfully petitioned the Obama administration to designate the monument; and

WHEREAS, the CTGR Business Council opposes the State of Utah taking over and managing the Bears Ears Region, as such actions will place all of the authority to determine and

protect Indian Tribal interests and resources within the purview of the State of Utah, which is in direct contradiction with the trust responsibility and rights that Indian Tribes possess pursuant to the United States Constitution. The trust responsibility exists under federal law and Indian Tribal rights are protected by the United States Government, which is why the President of the United States made Bears Ears a National Monument. In other words, if the State of Utah proceeds, Indian Tribes will have no assurances that their interests will be protected in the Bears Ears region.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation Business Council hereby calls upon Governor Gary R. Herbert, the Utah State Legislature, and all other relevant staff, to immediately halt the process of attempting to destroy the National Monument designation of the Bears Ears region.

C-E-R-T-I-F-I-C-A-T-I-O-N

I, the undersigned, as Chairperson, of the Business Council for the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation, hereby certify that the Business Council is composed of five (5) members of whom five (4), constituting a quorum, were present at a meeting called and held on the **3rd day of March, 2017**, and that the foregoing resolution was adopted and approved by an affirmative vote of **4 FOR; 0 AGAINST; 0 ABSTAINED** pursuant to the authority contained under Article VII, Section 1(a) of the Tribal Constitution and By-Laws, approved November 25, 1940.

Virgil Johnson Chairman
CTGR Business Council

ATTEST:

Phyllis Naranjo, Secretary
CTGR Business Council