

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 30, 2014

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear President Obama:

As Canyonlands National Park celebrates its 50th Anniversary this September, we write to encourage you to consider using your authority under the Antiquities Act to declare Greater Canyonlands a national monument. This designation would be a meaningful part of your conservation legacy.

Although Canyonlands National Park is the heart of the area, we support the opportunity to protect Greater Canyonlands, a 1.8 million acre area of land that encompasses the Park. Greater Canyonlands is one of our nation's most stunning, wild, and unique landscapes. It should be protected permanently for the benefit and education of future generations.

As the ancestral home to several tribes of Native Americans, Greater Canyonlands is a good candidate for Antiquities Act protection. It includes thousands of cultural and archeological sites, a hunting site that dates back 12,000 years, and more recently built granaries nested in canyon walls. Descendants of the Ancestral Puebloans who created these places still revere them.

In addition to its rich cultural resources, Greater Canyonlands is an ecological cornerstone of the American West, providing habitat for seven threatened and endangered species. Four rivers flow there—the Colorado, the Green, the San Rafael and the Dirty Devil. This watershed serves wildlife as well as 30 million Americans in seven states. It is a lifeline in the increasingly arid West. Protecting this landscape and watershed on a holistic basis would help ensure all life in the West can better adapt to the realities of a changing climate.

Finally, the economic value of protected landscapes in the West, and especially in Utah, is significant and growing. The outdoor recreation economy is a sustainable one, worth more than \$5 billion annually in Utah and more than \$646 billion nationwide. American public lands that receive protection help drive economic growth.

The beauty and merit of Greater Canyonlands has long been recognized. President Teddy Roosevelt first protected a small piece of it as Natural Bridges National Monument. In the 1930s, Interior Secretary Harold Ickes suggested most of Southern Utah be preserved as national monument. Fifty years ago, Secretary Stewart Udall proposed what is now Canyonlands National Park, the core of Greater Canyonlands. Udall's original vision was more than three times the size of the park that received protection, however. Today, the wild places that were not included in the Park face numerous threats.

The promise of Greater Canyonlands remains unfulfilled. As Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell has noted, "there are some places that are too special to develop." Greater Canyonlands is certainly one of those. We urge you to consider using your authority under the Antiquities Act to write the final chapter for this national treasure and declare Greater Canyonlands a national monument.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



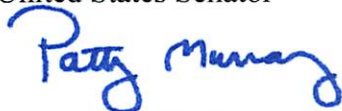
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



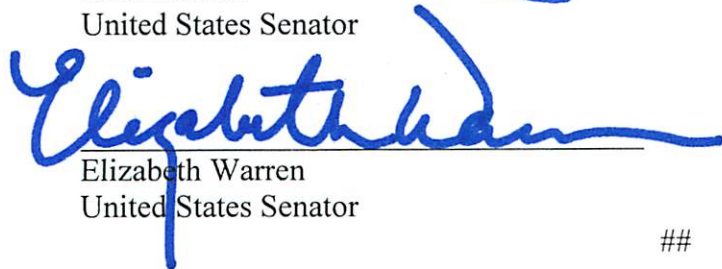
Ed Markey
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



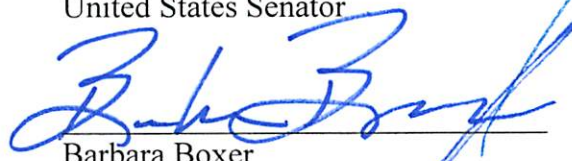
Brian Schatz
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



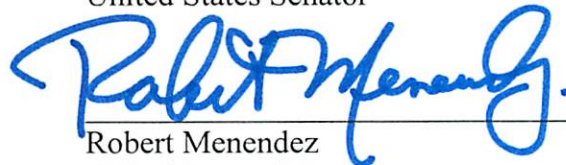
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Barbara Boxer
United States Senator



Tom Harkin
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Bernie Sanders
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

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The promise of Greater Opportunities remains unfulfilled. As Secretary of the Interior Kelly Jewel has noted, "there are some places that are too special to develop." Greater Opportunities is certainly not of those. We urge you to consider using your authority under the Antiquities Act to create the first chapter for this national treasure and the last chapter of a national monument.

Sincerely,



Tom Udall
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Tom Harkin
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Bernie Sanders
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
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Richard Blumenthal
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