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Howard Daughenbaugh

ELECTIONS

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It was a brief but encouraging moment in President Obama's recent state of the union address when he said, "I'll use my authority to protect more of our pristine federal lands for future generations." It was a refreshing commitment.

Our country's natural heritage and its special places are in dwindling supply.

Once they are gone, they can't come back.

We must recapture our sense of heritage and history or we will lose touch with who we are as a people. We have crucial traditions to preserve.

We also have special land to protect, not exploit.

I encourage President Obama to lend substance to his words by taking the concrete action he can take as president.

In the past he has demonstrated such courage. I trust he will do so again.

There is no better place to start than with the Greater Canyonlands region in southern Utah — a landscape of unsurpassed beauty with deep gorges, towering mesas, and a maze of canyons where archaeological artifacts abound.

Utter silence and the most brilliant of night skies reign.

Its value can be measured not only by economics (tourism and recreation) but also by what it does for the well-being of our spirits and bodies as we traverse the trails.

President Obama can leave a legacy for the benefit of all.

These national treasures were sacred to many in the past and continue to inspire and draw visitors from around America and the world. They deserve protection.

I hope the president will use his authority to provide it.

Howard Daughenbaugh

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