



**RESOLUTION OF THE
NAVAJO UTAH COMMISSION
OF THE NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL**

NUCAUG-011-26

**SUPPORTING AMERICA'S RED ROCK WILDERNESS ACT TO PROVIDE
PERMANENT PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF THE BEARS
EARS NATIONAL MONUMENT AND GRAND STAIRCASE-ESCALANTE
NATIONAL MONUMENT, AND OPPOSING JULY 13, 2026
PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATIONS DOWNSIZING THESE MONUMENTS**

Whereas:

- 1, The Navajo Utah Commission (NUC) is a governmental subdivision of the Navajo Nation and is subject to oversight of the Navajo Nation Council- Naabik'iyati' Committee pursuant to resolution no. NABIAP-21-15; and
2. The Navajo Utah Commission was created by the Navajo Nation Council in 1992 pursuant to resolution IGRJN-134-92, and serves seven Utah chapters, including Teec Nos Pos, Aneth, Red Mesa, and Mexican Water in the Northern Navajo Agency and Oljato, Dennehotso, and Naatsis'Aan in the Western Navajo Agency; and
3. The Navajo Nation has a government-to-government relationship with the United States of America. Treaty of 1868, Aug. 12 1868, 15 Stat. 667; and
4. The Navajo Nation Council is the governing body of the Navajo Nation with the responsibility and authority to promulgate policies of the Navajo Nation. 2 N. N.C. §§ 102(A) and 164(A); and
5. Statements of policy, enactment of positive law, intergovernmental agreements, budget resolutions, and reallocations, must be reviewed and approved by resolution the appropriate standing committee(s) and the Navajo Nation Council except as otherwise provided herein. 2 N.N.C. § 164 (A); and

6. The Navajo Nation established the Naabik'iyati' Committee as a Navajo Nation Council standing committee and as such empowered Naabik'iyati' Committee to coordinate all federal programs, to assist and coordinate all requests for information, appearances and testimony relating to federal legislation impacting the Navajo Nation, and to hear and act on all resolutions that require final action by the Navajo Nation Council. 2 N.N.C. §§ 164 (A) (9), 700 (A), 701(A)(4), 701(A)(6) 2015; *see also* CO-45-12; and
7. The Antiquities Act authorizes the President, in his discretion, to declare by public proclamation historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest that are situated upon the lands owned or controlled by the Federal Government to be national monuments. 54 U.S.C. § 320301 (2014); and

Bears Ears National Monument

8. On December 28, 2016, President Barack Obama used his authority under the Antiquities Act to establish the Bears Ears National Monument, recognizing that "the land is profoundly sacred to many Native American tribes, including the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Navajo Nation, Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, Hopi Tribe, and Zuni Tribe." Proclamation 9558; and
9. The Bears Ears National Monument designation was the culmination of a years-long collaboration of these five tribes who formed the Bears Ears Inter- Tribal Coalition to put forth our collective desire to realize protection and recognition of ancestral lands, cultural resources, religious access, ecological values, and practical purposes; and
10. Proclamation 9558 further established the Bears Ears Commission to provide guidance and recommendations on the development and implementation of a management plan and on the ongoing management of the monument utilizing the traditional and historical knowledge of Indigenous people; and
11. On December 4, 2017, and without consultation with the Navajo Nation or the other tribes with important cultural and historical ties to this sacred landscape, President Donald Trump issued Proclamation 9681 Modifying the Bears Ears National Monument. This Proclamation significantly reduced the size of and protections for the monument and changed the role and structure of the Bears Ears Commission. The Navajo Nation opposed these modifications; and

12. At the urging of the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition and other Native Tribes with close ties to the region, on October 8, 2021, President Joseph Biden issued Proclamation 10285-Bears Ears National Monument, re-establishing the monument and recognizing that “the greater Bears Ears landscape, characterized by deep sandstone canyons, broad desert mesas, towering monoliths, forested mountaintops dotted with lush meadows, and the striking Bears Ears Buttes, has supported indigenous people of the Southwest from time immemorial and continues to be sacred land to the Hopi Tribe, Navajo Nation, Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, and Pueblo of Zuni. Approximately two dozen other Tribal Nations and Pueblos have cultural ties to the area as well.”; and
13. Proclamation 10285 recognizes that Bears Ears National Monument represents “the culmination of more than a century of efforts to protect the ancestral homeland of Tribal Nations that all refer to the area by the same name-Hoon'Naqvut (Hopi), Shash Jaa' (Navajo), Kwiyaagatu Nukavachi (Ute), and Ansh An Lashokdiwe (Zuni): Bears Ears. Preserving the sacred landscape and unique cultural resources in the Bears Ears region was an impetus for passage of the Antiquities Act in 1906.”; and
14. To “ensure that management decision affecting the monument reflect expertise and traditional and historical knowledge of Tribal Nations,” Proclamation 10285 re-established the Bears Ears Commission “in accordance with the terms, conditions, and obligations set forth in Proclamation 9558 to provide guidance and recommendations on the development and implementation of management plans and on management of the entire monument.”; and
15. From re-establishment of the monument until December 2024, the Bears Ears Commission and the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition worked tirelessly and collaboratively with the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service to develop a management plan for the monument. This management plan was finalized in January 2025, and incorporates traditional and historical knowledge of the Tribal Nations into the care and management of the monument; and
16. The Navajo Utah Commission supported the protection of the Bears Ears National Monument as established by Proclamation 10285 to preserve its cultural, prehistoric, and historic legacy and maintain its diverse array of natural, cultural, scientific and other environmental resources, ensuring that the prehistoric, historic and scientific values of this area remain for the benefit of all Americans; and

17. The Navajo Utah Commission firmly believes that conserving the lands and resources within Bears Ears National Monument will help protect and preserve the cultural, prehistoric and historic records and legacy of the Dine and other Native Peoples, and the cultural traditions and practices of Native Peoples that continue today, and will help protect the plants and animals that are part of Navajo heritage and cultural traditions and practices that continue through today; and

Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

18. On September 18, 1996, President William Clinton used his authority under the Antiquities Act to establish the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. Proclamation 9620 recognized the rich human and cultural history of the monument, from the Anasazi and Fremont cultures to the Southern Paiute and Navajo; and
19. On December 4, 2017, and without consultation with the Navajo Nation or the other tribes with important cultural and historical ties to these sacred landscapes, President Donald Trump issued Proclamation 9682-Modifying the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. This Proclamation significantly reduced the size of and protections for the monument. The Navajo Nation opposed these modifications; and
20. On October 8, 2021, President Joseph Biden issued Proclamation 10286- Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, re-establishing the Monument and recognizing that, “[r]ich in human history, the Grand Staircase-Escalante landscape abounds in evidence of habitation by the Ancestral Pueblo and Fremont cultures. Tribal Nations, including the Hopi Tribe, the Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, the Navajo Nation, the Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, the San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe of Arizona, the Pueblo of Acoma, the Pueblo of San Felipe, the Pueblo of Tesuque, and the Pueblo of Zuni, have ancestral, cultural, or historical ties to this area and continue to use the area to this day; and
21. Proclamation 10286 recognized the Grand Staircase-Escalante's outstanding biological resources “in the heart of perhaps the richest floristic region in the Intermountain West, spanning five life zones and supporting diverse, rare, and endemic populations of plants and a diversity of animals, as well as unusual and diverse soils that support communities of mosses, lichens, and cyanobacteria.” This rich biological diversity supports over 600 species of bees and more than 200 bird species; and

22. In January 2025, the Bureau of Land Management finalized the new management plan for the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, to help protect its irreplaceable paleontological, cultural, mineral, scenic, and ecological resources. The Navajo Nation and several other Tribal Nations worked closely with the Bureau on the plan, which commits to significant Tribal involvement in future planning, management, and co-stewardship of the Monument; and
23. On March 25, 2025, the Navajo Nation, Hopi Tribe, Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, and the Zuni Tribe formed the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Inter-Tribal Coalition to advocate for and share their knowledge of their ancestral lands in the Monument; and
24. The Navajo Utah Commission of the Navajo Nation Council firmly believes that conserving the lands and resources within Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, as restored by the Biden Executive Order helped protect and preserve the cultural, prehistoric and historic records and legacy of the Dine' and other Native Peoples, including the cultural traditions and practices of Native Peoples that continue today, and helped protect the plants and animals that are part of Navajo heritage and cultural traditions and practices that continue through today; and

July 2026 Presidential Proclamations Revoked Long-Standing Monument Protection for Three Million Acres across the Bears Ears National Monument and the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

25. The Navajo Utah Commission stands in complete opposition to the July 13, 2026 Presidential Proclamations that stripped long-fought-for protections for the Bears Ears National Monument and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, and vastly reduced the size of each Monument; and
26. With a stroke of a pen, the Proclamations removed support and protection for over three million acres. The Bears Ears National Monument was reduced to 121,100 acres down from 1.36 million acres, and the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument was reduced to 181,500 acres down from 1.87 million acres. Without consulting with tribal entities and Native peoples regarding their traditional and historic homelands, over 90% of the lands of the two National Monuments were stripped of Monument status; and

27. The July 2026 Proclamations ignores the very existence of Native people, our connection to place, and concerns for our culture, traditions and history on these lands; and
28. The July 2026 Proclamations mark the second time President Trump has significantly reduced the size of the Bears Ears National Monument and the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, when other national monuments around the country have not been similarly targeted and decimated. It is well documented and beyond dispute that native peoples have close ancestral, cultural, historical, and sacred connections to the Bears Ears National Monument and surrounding areas. Yet, in both instances when President Trump issued Proclamations drastically reducing the size of each of these monuments, he acted unilaterally and without notice to or consultation with any of the Tribal Nations with recognized significant ancestral, cultural, historical, and sacred connections to the Bears Ears National Monument and the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. These disrespectful actions appear to be deliberate attacks on our native cultures and heritage. In short, Proclamations 9681 and 9682, and the Proclamation of July 2026 are unfairly biased and discriminatory that have resulted in significant harm to our native cultures; and
29. The Navajo Utah Commission is aware of and fully supports the letter sent by 37 U.S. Senators to the President of the United States stating their united opposition to the recent Proclamations reducing the boundaries of, and stripping protections from the Bears Ears National Monument and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, emphasizing that irreplaceable cultural, historic, scientific, and ecological resources are now at risk of destruction and loss. Notably, the Senators' letter highlighted that the Bears Ears National Monument is our country's first "truly tribally-driven national monument" the result of an historic multi-tribal collaboration led by five sovereign Tribal Nations, including the Navajo Nation; and
30. The Navajo Utah Commission also appreciates that the Senators' letter specifically acknowledged that Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante national monuments are a living cultural landscape with deep spiritual and ancestral importance to multiple Tribal Nations, including the Hopi Tribe, Navajo Nation, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Pueblo of Zuni, Ute Indian Tribe and the Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians. These places are not abstractions on a map; they are homelands and sacred sites that deserve enduring protection; and

31. The July 2026 Bears Ears Proclamation abolished the Bears Ears Commission, a collaborative inter-Tribal entity created to “ensure that management decisions affecting the monument reflect expertise and traditional and historical knowledge of Tribal Nations,” as set out in President Biden’s Proclamation 10285 that re-established the Bears Ears Commission in accordance with the terms, conditions, and obligations set forth in Proclamation 9558 to “provide guidance and recommendations on the development and implementation of management plans and on management of the entire monument.”; and
32. The Navajo Utah Commission fully agrees with the Senators’ concern over the elimination of the Bears Ears Commission as stated in their letter to the President:

We are especially troubled that the Bears Ears proclamation disbanded the Bears Ears Commission, a landmark model of collaborative management between sovereign Tribal Nations and the federal government. Tribal leaders have made clear that Bears Ears is a sacred ancestral homeland, and that decisions affecting it must be made through meaningful government-to-government consultation. The Department of the Interior had previously committed to meeting with the Bears Ears Commission if changes to the monument were under consideration; no such meeting occurred before these proclamations were signed. Any major policy action regarding these culturally important places requires meaningful government-to-government consultation; and

America’s Red Rock Wilderness Act

33. The Navajo Utah Commission recognizes that Wilderness is one of the strongest and most protective designations available to public lands and provides the strongest protection for our sacred ancestral homeland and the prehistoric and historic cultural legacy of the Dine and other Native Peoples, the cultural traditions and practices of Native Peoples that continue today on these lands, and provides protection for the plants and animals that are part of Navajo heritage and cultural traditions and practices that continue through today; and
34. The Navajo Utah Commission is very aware of the significant negative long-term health impacts to the Dine’, and the extensive environmental impacts to our lands and water that the Dine’ have suffered from the exploration and development of oil, gas and uranium near our homes and communities, and recognizes that these fossil fuel resources and minerals, once put into production, have also caused broader climate change impacts; and

35. The Navajo Utah Commission appreciates and supports that designating undeveloped lands as Wilderness will keep fossil fuels in the ground so that greenhouse gases and other pollution that exacerbates climate change will not be produced during the exploration, development and eventual combustion of those natural resources, and will also conserve scarce water resources; and
36. The Navajo Utah Commission further acknowledges that lands covered by United Senate Bill S.1193 and H.R.2467 in the 119th Congress, titled "America's Red Rock Wilderness Act", include lands that were within the Bears Ears National Monument and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument as set forth in President Biden's Proclamations, and are important to Navajo culture and tradition; and
37. The Navajo Utah Commission also acknowledges and recognizes that for hundreds of generations Native peoples have lived in the canyons and mountains and on the mesas included in America's Red Rock Wilderness Act and that these sensitive areas comprise one of the most extensive and significant cultural landscapes in the United States; and
38. The Navajo Utah Commission recognizes that the rock art, cliff dwellings and other structures and ceremonial sites located on lands included in America's Red Rock Wilderness Act, are the critically important records of Native peoples' habitation that tells the story of the subsistence of daily life, traditions, and ceremonies of many generations' past, many of which continue today; and
39. The Navajo Utah Commission recognizes that the cultural importance of the lands and resources included in America's Red Rock Wilderness Act are sacred to many Native peoples, including the Navajo, and that important historic remnants of Navajo hogans, pottery, sweat lodges, sheep-herding camps and farming are found throughout the lands included in America's Red Rock Wilderness Act; and
40. The Navajo Utah Commission believes that protecting the lands and resources included in America's Red Rock Wilderness Act - from Cedar Mesa to the Book Cliffs, from the San Rafael Swell and the Escalante to the West Desert - will help protect and preserve the cultural prehistoric and historic records which are the legacy of the Navajo and other Native peoples, and will help protect the plants and animals that are part of Navajo heritage and cultural traditions and practices that continue through today; and
41. The Navajo Utah Commission is aware that there are various activities, including mineral and energy development, unmanaged recreation, vandalism and looting, and other actions that harm the prehistoric and historic cultural and natural resources on public lands included in America's Red Rock Wilderness. Designating these lands as Wilderness will better protect these cultural and natural resources from damaging development and activities; and

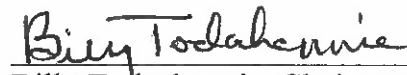
42. The Navajo Utah Commission's support for America's Red Rock Wilderness Act follows in the footsteps of the Navajo Nation Council's vote (Tracking No. 0196-21; OLC No. 21-351-1) to support for America's Red Rock Wilderness Act.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Navajo Utah Commission of the Navajo Nation Council calls on President Trump to rescind the July 13 Proclamations and restore the Bears Ears National Monument and the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument to the size and with the same federal protections each had under the prior Biden Executive Orders; and
2. The Navajo Utah Commission of the Navajo Nation Council calls on Utah Governor Cox to support the restoration of the Bears Ears National Monument and the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument to the size and with the associated federal protections each had under the Biden Executive Orders; and
3. The Navajo Utah Commission of the Navajo Nation Council calls on President Trump to restore the Bears Ears Commission, as set forth in the Biden Executive Order; and
4. The Navajo Utah Commission of the Navajo Nation Council hereby supports America's Redrock Wilderness Act, currently S.1193 and H.R.2467 in the 119th Congress, to protect these lands and resources, including traditional Native culture, values, and traditions for all future generations.

CERTIFICATION

We, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly considered by Navajo Utah Commission at a duly called meeting in Tse Bonito, New Mexico at which a quorum was present and the same was passed by a vote of 5 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions, this 19th day of August, 2026.



Billy Todachennie, Chairperson,
NAVAJO UTAH COMMISSION

MOTION: Herman Farley
SECOND: Curtis Yanito

Chair Todachennie not voting