

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 12, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write to commend your decision to review the boundaries of the Bears Ears National Monument after its unprecedented and illegal reduction under the Trump Administration. We are grateful that you have made Bears Ears a priority in your first 100 days in office and that you have affirmed your commitment to upholding our federal trust responsibility to Tribes and engaging in meaningful Tribal consultation. As Members who are committed to upholding our federal responsibility to protect sacred spaces and our nation's long tradition of protecting America's most treasured landscapes for future generations, we urge you to immediately restore full protections for Bears Ears National Monument and to strongly consider expanding the boundaries of the monument to the full 1.9 million acres proposed by the Native American Tribes whose ancestral lands the monument aims to protect.

The Bears Ears National Monument was established by President Obama in 2016 to conserve 1.35 million acres of wilderness and protect over 100,000 Native American archaeological and cultural sites. In 2017, the Trump Administration took drastic, unprecedented steps to illegally shrink the Bears Ears monument, leaving 85% of the land unprotected. The rollback threatened protections for archaeological and cultural sites of great spiritual importance to the Native people that have inhabited the land since time immemorial. In fact, the Hopi, Navajo, Ute Mountain Ute and Ute Indian Tribes and Pueblo of Zuni, who together form the historic Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition, have identified 1.9 million acres of Bears Ears to be sacred land and have sought protection for that acreage for years. That is why we urge you to strongly consider expansion of President Obama's original Monument to reflect the Tribes' original proposal as part of your administration's review.

At a minimum, we urge you to restore the boundaries of the Bears Ears National Monument as designated under the Obama Administration. While the 1.35 million acres included in the original boundaries do not protect all the land proposed by the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition, the designation offered significant protection for much of the land and cultural artifacts in Bears Ears from the threat of mining and damage due to ATV use, looting, vandalism, and target shooting. These protections must be immediately restored.

Not only is decisive action to restore this Monument crucial for the preservation of Bears Ears, it is a vital step in rejecting the precedent created by President Trump's actions to strip protections from the Bears Ears, Grand Staircase-Escalante National, and Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monuments. Presidents do not and should not have the authority to unilaterally

shrink or weaken federal Monuments they disagree with under the Antiquities Act. President Trump’s illegal action with regard to Bears Ears, Grand Staircase-Escalante National, and Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monuments must be swiftly overturned by your Administration to send a strong message to Tribes, stakeholders, and the American people that Antiquities Act authority must never again be misused in this way.

Thank you again for taking action on this issue and for your consideration of this matter. We look forward to the completion of your review of Bears Ears National Monument and we stand ready to work with your administration to protect our public lands and listen to the Native voices moving forward.

Sincerely,



Ruben Gallego  
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress

/s/ Joe Neguse  
Joe Neguse  
Member of Congress

/s/ Teresa Leger Fernández  
Teresa Leger Fernández  
Member of Congress

/s/ Jared Huffman  
Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress

/s/ Alan Lowenthal  
Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress

/s/ Diana DeGette  
Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress

/s/ Jesús G. “Chuy” García  
Jesús G. “Chuy” García  
Member of Congress

/s/ Grace F. Napolitano  
Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress

/s/ Nydia M. Velázquez  
Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress

/s/ Darren Soto  
Darren Soto  
Member of Congress

/s/ Rashida Tlaib  
Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress

/s/ Earl Blumenauer  
Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress

/s/ Steve Cohen  
Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress

/s/ Mark Takano

Mark Takano  
Member of Congress

/s/ David Scott

David Scott  
Member of Congress

/s/ Eleanor Holmes Norton

Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress

/s/ Tom O'Halleran

Tom O'Halleran  
Member of Congress

/s/ James P. McGovern

James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

/s/ Jerrold Nadler

Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress

/s/ Alcee L. Hastings

Alcee L. Hastings  
Member of Congress

/s/ Donald S. Beyer Jr.

Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress

/s/ William R. Keating

William R. Keating  
Member of Congress

/s/ Suzanne Bonamici

Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress

/s/ Jamie Raskin

Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress

/s/ Jan Schakowsky

Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress

/s/ Nanette Diaz Barragán

Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress

/s/ Gwen Moore

Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress

/s/ Betty McCollum

Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress

/s/ Salud O. Carbajal

Salud O. Carbajal  
Member of Congress

/s/ Anna G. Eshoo

Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress

/s/ Adriano Espaillat

Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress

/s/ Derek Kilmer

Derek Kilmer  
Member of Congress

/s/ Pramila Jayapal

Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress

/s/ Barbara Lee

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

/s/ Juan Vargas

Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress

/s/ A. Donald McEachin  
A. Donald McEachin  
Member of Congress

/s/ Peter Welch  
Peter Welch  
Member of Congress

/s/ Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress

/s/ Mark Pocan  
Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress

/s/ Suzan K. DelBene  
Suzan K. DelBene  
Member of Congress

/s/ Mike Quigley  
Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress

/s/ Jimmy Panetta  
Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress

/s/ Raul Ruiz, M.D.  
Raul Ruiz, M.D.  
Member of Congress

/s/ Jamaal Bowman  
Jamaal Bowman  
Member of Congress

/s/ Mike Thompson  
Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress

Cc: Deb Haaland, Secretary of the Interior