

**April 23, 2018**

Dear Member of Congress,

On behalf of our millions of members and supporters, we write to express our strong opposition to legislation weakening the Antiquities Act or codifying attempts to shrink or eliminate national monuments. Any attack on our public lands, monuments, oceans, and waters is an attack on our communities, our history, our contributions to this great nation, and our culture; and it robs the next generation of a chance to learn from these shared treasures. It has often been said that our nation's public lands system is one of our best ideas; we must now come together to protect these special places.

In addition to protecting majestic places, sustaining wildlife, and benefiting local economies and communities, national monuments promote diversity and inclusivity in our system of public lands. Our nation's public lands are owned by all people in this country, and we all ought to see our histories and cultures reflected in these public lands. That is one reason why national parks, historical sites, and monuments are so important: they can help tell a more complete story of our country's history and the many cultures and movements that have helped shape our United States.

National monuments in particular have helped make our public lands more inclusive by commemorating the fights for civil rights and racial justice, women's suffrage, LGBTQ equality, workers' rights, tribal recognition and traditions, and so many other pivotal moments, individuals, and movements that continue to take our country forward. Places such as Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument, Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument, Stonewall National Monument, Pullman National Monument, Cesar E. Chavez National Monument, and Bears Ears National Monument help preserve and share the history and experiences that comprehensively reflect the stories of all people in this country.

The Antiquities Act, which has been used by eight Republicans and eight Democrats, allows presidents to preserve important places as national monuments and has even provided the initial protections for nearly half of our national parks, including the Grand Canyon and Acadia National Parks. President Theodore Roosevelt signed this bedrock conservation law in 1906, and since then presidents have used it to protect remarkable places that tell the fuller story of our nation.

Unfortunately, we write at a time when national monuments and the Antiquities Act are under assault. Nearly one year ago, President Trump signed an executive order directing Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to review dozens of national monument designations. This resulted in President Trump taking the single biggest step in removing protections for public lands in our nation's history when he overstepped his statutory authority and cut Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments by two million acres. Now legislation may move in Congress that would not only codify Trump's rollbacks – H.R. 4532 and H.R. 4558 – but also

threaten the very purpose of the Antiquities Act. Representative Bishop's H.R. 3990 and Senator Murkowski's S. 33, for example, would severely limit presidents' power to protect incredible and representative places for future generations.

Congress should not be making it harder to protect places that can make our parks and monuments system more inclusive and tell the fuller story of our nation's history. That is why we urge you to reject any legislation that would limit the president's authority under the Antiquities Act or codify any unlawful rollbacks of existing national monuments.

While not all undersigned groups work on every issue discussed in this letter, we can all agree on what's at risk if protections for special places are removed and our legacy of shaping a more inclusive system of public lands is undermined. Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

**350.org**

**Alaska Wilderness League**

**American Civil Liberties Union**

**American Rivers**

**American Society of Landscape Architects**

**Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC**

**Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance**

**Center for American Progress**

**CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers**

**Chispa**

**Clean Water Action**

**Conservation Lands Foundation**

**Continental Divide Trail Coalition**

**Defenders of Wildlife**

**Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund**

**Earthjustice**

**Endangered Species Coalition**

**Environmental Working Group**

**FORGE, Inc.**

**GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality**

**GLSEN**

**GreenLatinos**

**Hip Hop Caucus**

**Hispanic Access Foundation**

**Human Rights Campaign**

**League of Conservation Voters**

**Movement Advancement Project**

**National Audubon Society**

**National Black Justice Coalition**

**National Center for Lesbian Rights**

**National Center for Transgender Equality**

**National Congress of American Indians**

**National Immigration Law Center**

**National LGBTQ Task Force**

**National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund**

**National Parks Conservation Association**

**Natural Resources Defense Council**

**Next 100 Coalition**

**Ocean Conservancy**

**Ocean Conservation Research**

**Oceana**

**People For the American Way**

**Public Citizen**

**Rails-to-Trails Conservancy**

**Save Animals Facing Extinction**

**Service Employees International Union**

**Sierra Club**

**Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance**

**State Innovation Exchange (SIX)**

**Surfrider Foundation**

**The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights**

**The Praxis Project**

**The Trust for Public Land**

**The Wilderness Society**

**Union for Reform Judaism**

**URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity**

**Western Values Project**

**WildEarth Guardians**

State and Local Organizations

**ACLU of Idaho**

**Amargosa Conservancy**

**Audubon South Carolina**

**Boise Bicycle Project**

**California League of Conservation Voters**

**Carrizo Plain Conservancy**

**Charleston Audubon Society**

**Columbia Audubon Society**

**Conservation Alabama**

**Conservation Colorado**

**Conservation Northwest**

**Conservation Voters for Idaho**

**Conservation Voters of South Carolina**

**Conserve Southwest Utah**  
**Desert Wildlife Consultants, LLC**  
**Engage Idaho**  
**Environmental League of Massachusetts**  
**Environmental Protection Information Center**  
**Fort Ord Recreation Trails (FORT) Friends**  
**Friends and Neighbors of the Deschutes Canyon Area**  
**Friends of Arizona Joshua Tree Forest**  
**Friends of Cedar Mesa**  
**Friends of Gold Butte**  
**Friends of Point Arena-Stornetta Lands**  
**Friends of the Desert Mountains**  
**Friends of the San Pedro River**  
**Friends of the Sonoran Desert**  
**Grand Canyon Trust**  
**Grand Staircase Escalante Partners**  
**Hoosier Environmental Council**  
**Idaho Business for the Outdoors**  
**Idaho Conservation League**  
**Idaho Outdoor Business Council**  
**Klamath Forest Alliance**  
**Los Padres ForestWatch**  
**Maine Conservation Voters**  
**Michigan League of Conservation Voters**  
**Montana Conservation Voters**  
**Mystic Aquarium**  
**Nature for All**  
**North Carolina League of Conservation Voters**

**Nevada Conservation League**  
**New Jersey Highlands Coalition**  
**New Jersey League of Conservation Voters**  
**New Mexico Wildlife Federation**  
**Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness**  
**NW Energy Coalition**  
**Oregon League of Conservation Voters**  
**Oregon Wild**  
**Pinelands Preservation Alliance**  
**Raritan Headwaters**  
**Seven Circles Foundation**  
**Sound Action**  
**South Carolina Wildlife Federation**  
**The Ohio Environmental Council**  
**Trinidad Coastal Land Trust**  
**Utah Dine Bikeyah**  
**Virginia League of Conservation Voters**  
**Washington Conservation Voters**  
**Washington Environmental Council**  
**Western Slope Conservation Center**  
**Wilderness Workshop**  
**Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters**  
**Women's Rights and Empowerment Network**