



OUTDOOR ALLIANCE



April 23, 2021

The Honorable Deb Haaland
Secretary of the Interior
1849 C Street
Washington, DC 20240
Via email: shantha_alonso@ios.doi.gov

RE: Bears Ears National Monument Review

Dear Secretary Haaland:

On behalf of the climbing and human powered outdoor recreation communities, we are grateful for the Biden administration's commitment to restoring Bears Ears National Monument in order to protect one of the most significant cultural landscapes in the United States. The Bears Ears landscape also attracts tens of thousands of visitors each year. The region is home to world-class rock climbing and other sustainable, human powered recreation activities.

Access Fund is America's national climbing advocacy organization, representing more than 7 million American climbers. Outdoor Alliance comprises 10 member organizations representing the human-powered outdoor recreation community and the millions of Americans who climb, paddle, mountain bike, backcountry ski and snowshoe, and enjoy coastal recreation on our nation's public lands, waters, and snowscapes. The mission of the Salt Lake Climbers Alliance is to serve as the unified voice of all climbers in the greater Wasatch, UT region, engaging as an advocate to protect outdoor climbing access and as a steward to maintain sustainable climbing resources in the Wasatch and surrounding regions. The Friends of Indian Creek works with land managers to promote responsible climbing, and provides resources that help alleviate recreation's impact throughout southeastern Utah.

The Antiquities Act is a bedrock conservation tool used by sixteen presidents to protect many of America's most iconic landscapes and historic sites. Threats to one national monument, such as Bears Ears, threatens all national monuments. Please defend the integrity of the Antiquities Act.

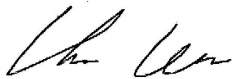
As you know, the Bears Ears landscape is home to more than 100,000 archeological and cultural sites dating back more than 10,000 years. These ancestral lands are inseparable from the Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, Ute Mountain, and Ute Indian tribes, and the traditional value of these lands is immeasurable. It is also critical to conserve the region's unique, yet fragile, ecosystem and world-class opportunities for scientific inquiry. The human-powered recreation community deeply appreciates the cultural and biological importance of this unique and invaluable landscape.

As you develop your report to recommend the best way to restore national monument protections to the Bears Ears landscape, we hope you will maintain consistency with Proclamation 9588 and acknowledge the world-class recreation opportunities found here. This acknowledgement reflects and reinforces the outdoor recreation community's respect and commitment to help steward, and protect one of America's most important landscapes. In addition, the acknowledgement will help ensure that management prescriptions thoughtfully and appropriately account for sustainable outdoor recreation.

3,464 climbers and human-powered recreationists signed this petition statement (see attachment for signatures):

“Please protect Bears Ears National Monument. This exceptional region is rich in Native American culture, ecological value, and recreational opportunities that drive the regional economy. We must protect the Bears Ears landscape for current and future generations.”

Respectfully,



Chris Winter, Access Fund executive director



Adam Cramer, Outdoor Alliance CEO



Julia Geisler, Salt Lake Climbers Alliance executive director



Rachel Nelson, Friends of Indian Creek president

cc:

Kate Kelly, Dept. of Interior

Matthew Lee-Ashley, Council on Environmental Quality