

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

August 5, 2015

The Honorable Sally Jewell  
Secretary of the Interior  
Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Jewell,

We write to update the Department of the Interior (Department) on yesterday's historic public land management vote in San Juan County, Utah. Yesterday, the San Juan County Commission unanimously voted to endorse a land management plan that would result in the designation of more than 1,000,000 acres of land for conservation purposes. Included in this plan are designations for the world-renowned areas of Cedar Mesa, the Bears Ears Buttes, and Indian Creek (among many others).

The San Juan County Commission has been an active participant in the Utah Congressional delegation's Public Lands Initiative (PLI). To help guide and inform local officials and residents during the PLI process, a San Juan Citizen's Lands Council was formed. The Citizen's Council was composed of 10 – 12 San Juan County residents with varying interests from various areas of San Juan County. The Council, comprised of Navajo residents and other Native American representatives, conservationists, and multiple-use advocates, met 22 times from January 2014 – June 2015, held six public meetings, and considered dozens of alternatives as part of their deliberations.

Yesterday's 3-0 vote by the San Juan County Commission formally endorsed the Citizen's Council final alternative, known as Alternative 4. The Citizen's Council adopted Alternative 4 on June 15, 2015. Alternative 4 has been endorsed by San Juan County's only Native American Commissioner, Rebecca Benally, and nearly 200 different tribal members that represent all seven Utah Navajo Chapters.

Regretfully, yesterday's progress could be undermined if a National Monument were to be designated in Utah. Earlier this week, Utah Governor Gary Herbert sent a letter to President Obama expressing opposition to his use of the Antiquities Act in Utah. During the same work session, the San Juan County Commission passed a separate resolution opposing the creation of a National Monument within their county. We echo the sentiments expressed by Governor Herbert and San Juan County and oppose the use of the Antiquities Act in Utah. Local support does not exist and doing so would be detrimental to the larger PLI process.

It was been widely reported that a meeting was recently held in San Juan County, Utah involving high-ranking Department officials to discuss the future of public lands in the county. The perception that these officials attended the meetings in order to plan for an impending National Monument designation harms PLI and sends the wrong signal to stakeholders and the public. Furthermore, continued discussions involving the potential use of the Antiquities Act undermines public processes such as the

PLI as they breed an atmosphere of distrust and discourages participants from working amicably to resolve conflict.

PLI will result in a legislative proposal that will help conserve the spectacular places in our state while protecting the interests of the people whose livelihoods depend upon multiple-use of public lands. We also hope that the Department will continue to make good on commitments to allow this locally driven process to move forward.

Sincerely,



Rob Bishop  
Member of Congress



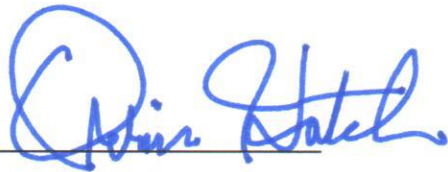
Jason Chaffetz  
Member of Congress



Chris Stewart  
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Mia Love  
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Orrin Hatch  
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Mike Lee  
U.S. Senator