

10 June 2021

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Deb Haaland, Secretary of the
Interior
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington DC 20240

Re: Support for the restoration of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase - Escalante National Monuments to their 2016 boundaries

Dear Mr. President and Madam Secretary,

We write in support of efforts to restore Bears Ears and Grand Staircase National Monuments to their 2016 boundaries, and in support of continued reasonable use of the Antiquities Act of 1906.

On April 26, 2017, the former President signed an executive order, "Review of Designations Under the Antiquities Act," directing a review of the law and its uses. The Society of Architectural Historians provided public comment on 19 July 2017 encouraging the Secretary of the Interior to maintain the long tradition of Presidential use of the Antiquities Act of 1906 to create national monuments.

The Antiquities Act of 1906 authorizes the President to "at 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 Government of the United States to be national monuments" (54 U.S.C. §§320301-320303). For over a century, the Antiquities Act has done much to preserve and protect historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest across the United States.

On 4 December 2017, the former President signed a Proclamation modifying Proclamation 6920 which created the Grand Staircase - Escalante National Monument. This original proclamation reserved approximately 1,700,000 acres for the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument; the modification excluded 861,974 acres from protection, a reduction of 50%. On the same day, the former President signed another Proclamation, this one modifying Proclamation 9558 which created the Bears Ear National Monument. The original Proclamation reserved approximately 1,350,000 acres for the Bears Ear National Monument; the modification excluded 1,150,860 acres from protection, a reduction of 85%. SAH wrote to the previous Secretary of the Interior in objection to both of those reductions on 4 April 2018.

The Society of Architectural Historians (SAH) expresses strong support for the proposed restoration of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase - Escalante National Monuments to their 2016 boundaries. We further urge you, Mr. President and Madam Secretary, to look for ways to continue the reasonable use of the Antiquities Act so that future generations of Americans will be able to experience these special places that both define and enrich our lives as Americans.

Sincerely,

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Bryan Clark Green, Ph.D., LEED AP BD+C
Chair, Society of Architectural Historians Heritage Conservation Committee

cc: Mr. Kenneth Breisch, Ph.D.; Mr. Jeffrey Cody, Ph.D.; Mr. Anthony Cohn, AIA; Mr. David Fixler, FAIA; Ms. Priya Jain, AIA; Mr. Theodore H. Prudon, Ph.D., FAIA, Ms. Pauline Saliga; Ms. Deborah Slaton; Ms. Victoria Young, Ph.D.; Members, SAH Heritage Conservation Committee.