



AMERICAN FLY FISHING TRADE ASSOCIATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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American Fly Fishing Trade Association Announces Support For Bears Ears National Monument Proposal in Southeast Utah

(*Bozeman, MT*) – The American Fly Fishing Trade Association (AFFTA) today announced, through a [letter](#) sent to President Obama, its support for the proposed Bears Ears National Monument in southeastern Utah. In calling for permanent protection of this majestic landscape, AFFTA joins a large, diverse coalition of stakeholders, led by the Bears Ears Intertribal Coalition.

Encompassing 1.9 million acres of public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, and National Park Service, the Bears Ears area is the most significant unprotected cultural landscape in the United States. In addition to protecting traditional Native American land use and tens of thousands of cultural sites, a monument designation for Bears Ears would ensure the conservation of the area's diverse natural resources -- including its waters, plant and animal life -- and the outdoor recreation they support.

"As the voice of America's 4.5 million fly-fishing anglers and the thousands of outfitters and guides who depend on the health of our nation's waterways, the American Fly Fishing Trade Association recognizes that establishing the Bears Ears National Monument helps to ensure the future health of our industry and the waterways that nourish it," said AFFTA's President Ben Bulis.

The letter noted that "the lakes, streams and reservoirs in and around the Abajo Mountains west of Monticello, and the San Juan River running between Bluff and Lake Powell, offer a myriad of trout fishing opportunities' and that "while Lake Powell itself would fall outside of the Bears Ears Monument, the lake's future depends on an abundant supply of fresh water flowing from its tributaries, including the San Juan River."

"According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, fishing in Utah accounts for over \$451 million in yearly spending, supporting businesses and jobs and generating tax revenue throughout the state," said Dustin Carlson, a Utah-based member of AFFTA and partner of Green Drake Outdoors. "We hope the President acts to safeguard our outdoor heritage and sporting traditions and the economic opportunities they support."

AFFTA's support comes as U.S. Interior Secretary Sally Jewell, Agriculture Undersecretary for Natural

Resources and Environment Robert Bonnie, and other high ranking Obama Administration officials are touring the Bears Ears region this week. This tour includes a listening session on Saturday, July 16, in Bluff, Utah, to hear more from tribes, local residents, and other stakeholders about the future of the region's public lands.

"We applaud Secretary Jewell, Undersecretary Bonnie, and other administration officials for coming to Utah to meet with stakeholders. They have invested an extraordinary amount of time and energy in the management of our nation's public lands and resources," said Bulis. "We hope they will conclude that the time is ripe to protect the Bears Ears region. We welcome actions by the administration that maintain and improve our nation's fishing grounds and provide quality opportunities for anglers."

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