



UTE MOUNTAIN UTE TRIBE

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April 13, 2016

President Barack Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing on behalf of the people of the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe to express our support for the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition and to state the Tribe's interest in the protection of natural and cultural resources within the Bears Ears region. The five tribes of the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition (Navajo, Hopi, Uintah and Ouray Ute, Ute Mountain Ute, and Zuni) operate jointly and formally under a Memorandum of Understanding that governs our sovereign actions. Individually and together, we strongly support your formal designation of the 1.9 million acres of public lands including and surrounding the Bears Ears Buttes in southeast Utah as a national monument utilizing the Antiquities Act of 1906.

The Ute Mountain Ute Tribe has numerous important and sacred interests in the region surrounding Bears Ears. Not only does the Tribe have federal trust lands (both reservation land and allotments) that are held in trust for the best interests of the Tribe and the related Tribal Members, but we also have private fee lands. Our Tribal Members reside in a small community named White Mesa, within San Juan County, Utah, where the proposed Bears Ears National Monument is located. Our ancestors have occupied the region for generations, and our people are intrinsically tied to the lands; our individual and collective health and prosperity depends upon the health of these lands. Few things are more important to us than the protection and preservation we can put in place today on these invaluable natural and cultural resources.

Working as a part of the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition, we prepared and submitted a formal proposal to protect the Bears Ears region on October 15th, 2015. In addition to your administration receiving the proposal, we also delivered it to Representatives Rob Bishop (R, UT) and Jason Chaffetz (R, UT). At that time, we requested that the representatives incorporate our proposal in their draft Utah Public Lands Initiative (PLI) legislation. Regrettably, the draft PLI released on January 20th, 2016, failed to incorporate our proposal, wholly ignored our

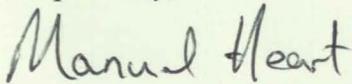
concerns, and failed to adequately protect the Bears Ears in both size and scope. Worse still, the supposed "protections" that the PLI draft proposes erode existing protections already in place, while allowing destructive development on Native American ancestral lands, including the Trust lands of our Tribal partners. As such, the PLI is insensitive to our interests and the interests of Native Americans who live in and have long-standing ancestral ties to Utah.

In service of protecting the lands and preserving the important cultural and natural resources that are so valuable to us at Bears Ears, we appreciate your staff's willingness to meet with us and other representatives of the Coalition to hear our vision for a Bears Ears National Monument that includes robust tribal collaborative management.

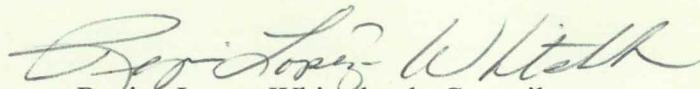
We sincerely thank you for your commitment made at the 2015 Native Nations Conference to: *"review tribal proposals to permanently protect sacred lands for future generations."* Our Bears Ears National Monument proposal is the first national monument proposal submitted by sovereign Native American Tribes, and our formal agreement to work together to protect Bears Ears is truly historic. One voice alone can be lost in a canyon, but with many voices we create a song. With the togetherness of our coalition, the five core Tribes and the more than 270 other Tribes who have passed resolutions of support, we have that bond; we sing our collective song as a group of indigenous people to protect our ancestral lands for our people today and for future generations.

Both Regina Lopez-Whiteskunk, Councilwoman, and Malcolm Lehi, Councilman and representative for the White Mesa community, are the appropriate contacts with the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe regarding Bears Ears. Regina can be reached at rwhiteskunk@utemountain.org, or 970-564-5601, and Malcolm Lehi at mlehi@utemountain.org, or 435-678-3396. Please do not hesitate to reach out to him/her with any questions or concerns

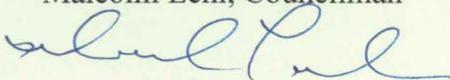
Respectfully,



Manuel Heart, Chairman


Regina Lopez-Whiteskunk, Councilwoman

Malcolm Lehi, Councilman



CC: The Honorable Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior
The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture
The Honorable Christina W. Goldfuss, Managing Director,
Council on Environmental Quality