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National Trust for Historic Preservation ◊ Archaeological Conservancy ◊ Friends of Cedar Mesa
American Anthropological Association ◊ Archaeological Institute of America ◊ Archaeology Southwest
California Preservation Foundation ◊ Colorado Plateau Archaeological Alliance ◊ Colorado Preservation, Inc.
Crow Canyon Archaeological Center ◊ National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers
Nevada Preservation Foundation ◊ Providence Preservation Society ◊ Site Steward Foundation
Society for American Archaeology ◊ Society for Historical Archaeology
Utah Rock Art Research Association ◊ Washington Trust for Historic Preservation

November 30, 2016

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We urge you to proclaim a Bears Ears National Monument this year.

Bears Ears is one of the most significant cultural landscapes in the United States. It contains more than 100,000 cultural and archaeological sites associated with the Navajo, Ute, Hopi, and Pueblo people who consider this region their homeland. The 1.9 million acres of public lands south and east of Canyonlands National Park include Ice Age hunting camps, cliff dwellings, prehistoric villages and petroglyph and pictograph panels that tell the diverse stories of 12,000 years of human habitation.

Despite its vast cultural significance, inadequate legal protections and insufficient funding have resulted in the degradation and destruction of these archaeological treasures from illegal looting, mismanaged recreational use, and inappropriate energy development. The designation of this new national monument, including adequate funding, will provide the enhanced protections required to protect this national treasure.

Several of the organizations who have signed this letter have been actively engaged in the Public Lands Initiative legislative process. However, it now appears unlikely that Congress will put forth a bill that has the broad based bi-partisan support necessary to become law.

The Antiquities Act was enacted in 1906 in order to provide protection for objects of historic and scientific interest from appropriation, excavation injury or destruction. Our groups represent a broad range of national, regional and local organizations dedicated to the preservation of cultural and archaeological resources. With great enthusiasm we request that you use your authority under the Antiquities Act to protect this world class yet unprotected landscape by designating a Bears Ears National Monument.

If you have any questions, please contact [REDACTED] Vice President, Government Relations and Policy at the National Trust for Historic Preservation, at [REDACTED]@savingplaces.org or [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

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