

OUTDOOR ALLIANCE

May 12, 2017

Secretary Ryan Zinke
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

Re: Executive Order No. 13792, Review of National Monuments

Dear Secretary Zinke:

Outdoor Alliance is a coalition of eight member-based organizations representing the human powered outdoor recreation community. The coalition includes Access Fund, American Canoe Association, American Whitewater, International Mountain Bicycling Association, Winter Wildlands Alliance, The Mountaineers, the American Alpine Club, and the Mazamas and represents the interests of the millions of Americans who climb, paddle, mountain bike, and backcountry ski and snowshoe on our nation's public lands, waters, and snowscapes. Across the West and around the country, our members have benefitted from and enjoyed the public lands protected through National Monument designations under the Antiquities Act.

While we intend to follow up in greater detail concerning a number of the Monuments under review and the invaluable outdoor recreation opportunities they contain, we write to share our concern regarding the process the administration is currently undertaking.

Outdoor Alliance appreciates the importance of public input from a wide range of stakeholders—including locals, as well as the nationally dispersed citizen co-owners of our country's public lands—on all land management decisions. Throughout the years-long process leading up to the designation of Bears Ears National Monument, as well as the designation of numerous other Monuments under review, Outdoor Alliance, alongside our member organizations, local affiliates, and partners, shared information with the previous administration, both in the field and in Washington, D.C. We are gratified to have seen such a robust public process, including a wide range of essential stakeholders, leading to the protection of this invaluable landscape in a way that recognizes its recreational value alongside its cultural and historic resources.

In addition to working with the previous administration toward the ultimate protection for the Bears Ears region, Outdoor Alliance also participated extensively in efforts to craft a more far-ranging vision for our country's public lands in Utah through the Public Lands Initiative. We appreciate Rep. Rob Bishop's efforts in this process, and although we understand that some stakeholders are unhappy with the ultimate outcome, we view this process as having facilitated even further input regarding the future of this landscape, with the boundaries of the Bears Ears National Monument closely tracking conservation proposals contained in the PLI.

As a coalition working with our members, local affiliates, and partners across the country, we have also worked to support locally-driven efforts to garner support for National Monument



OUTDOOR ALLIANCE

designations that have not ultimately materialized. Through this process, we have come to understand even better the tremendous level of local, regional, and national support necessary for any administration to exercise its authority under the Antiquities Act. In places like West Virginia's Birthplace of Rivers, Oregon's Owyhee canyonlands, and Idaho's Boulder-White Clouds, we have participated in long, public processes with the hope of garnering additional protections for superlative landscapes. While some of those protections may yet come to pass and others may find other solutions or be left unprotected, the common thread is the years of conversation, stakeholder outreach, and hard fought compromise necessary to develop the broad public support that is ultimately likely to lead to protections. The idea that National Monuments are ever enacted without this support is simply, in our experience, inaccurate.

Given the years of diverse stakeholder input that ultimately lead to the designation of Bears Ears (and other Monuments under review), we are disheartened by the idea that a 15-day comment period would in some way correct for a perceived lack of public input on the development of this protective designation. Additionally, we regard the idea of revisiting Monument designations through anything other than the legislative process as a deeply troubling step that undermines the integrity of the Antiquities Act, a bedrock conservation law, signed by Theodore Roosevelt, which has led to far-sighted protections for iconic landscapes across the country, including places with incalculable value for outdoor recreation.

We believe strongly that as you reach out to the public regarding these Monuments, you will come to further appreciate the depth of support that our country's protected public lands enjoy.

Best regards,



Adam Cramer
Executive Director
Outdoor Alliance

cc: Louis Geltman, Policy Counsel, Outdoor Alliance
Brady Robinson, Executive Director, Access Fund
Wade Blackwood, Executive Director, American Canoe Association
Mark Singleton, Executive Director, American Whitewater
Dave Wiens, Executive Director, International Mountain Bicycling Association
Mark Menlove, Executive Director, Winter Wildlands Alliance
Tom Vogl, Chief Executive Officer, The Mountaineers
Phil Powers, Executive Director, American Alpine Club
Lee Davis, Executive Director, the Mazamas

