

Supporting Materials Attachment for the Friends of Gold Butte Comment to the Department of Interior regarding Monument Review, DOI-2017-0002-0001, July 10, 2017

Enclosed, please find the following:

1. Map of traditional Southern Paiute territories and the Sacred Salt Song Trail.
2. Executive Summary for poll, "Clark County Voters and Protection For Gold Butte." Released April 15, 2012 by Moore Information.
3. Executive Summary for poll, "Conservation in the West." Released January 31, 2017 by The Colorado College.
4. Executive Summary of Gold Butte Damage Report released by the Friends of Gold Butte in August 2015.
5. Executive Summary of Gold Butte Damage Report released by the Friends of Gold Butte in August 2016.
6. List of Supporters or Permanently Protecting Gold Butte, updated December 2016.
7. Nevada Assembly Joint Resolution 13, passed by the Nevada State Assembly on April 25, 2017 and the Nevada State Senate on May 17, 2017.
8. Selected opinion editorials and letters to the editor to local and national newspapers re: Gold Butte National Monument submitted and published since National Monument designation.
9. Article: "Water district to retain water rights in Gold Butte" published in Mesquite Local News, January 2, 2017.
10. Annotated bibliography of recently published studies that assess the economic impact of protected lands and national monuments.
11. Executive summary of "Economic Impact of Gold Butte National Conservation Area" study published by Applied Analysis in November 2015.
12. Executive Summary of "Economic Impacts of Obama Administration Natural National Monuments" published by the Small Business Majority in April 2016.



May 15, 2012

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Bob Moore
RE: Clark County Voter Survey

This memo includes results from a Moore Information Inc. telephone survey conducted April 21-22, 2012 among a representative sample of 325 likely voters in Clark County, Nevada. The potential sampling error is plus or minus 5.5% at the 95% confidence level.

Voter Attitudes about Gold Butte Protection

Clark County voters favor protecting additional public lands in Nevada as wilderness by a better than two-to-one margin (63% favor/27% oppose). Moreover, a specific proposal that would designate Gold Butte as a national conservation area is favored by a 66-20% margin when voters hear the following description:

"The Gold Butte proposal would change the way some public lands are managed in the Gold Butte region of Nevada near Valley of Fire State Park, south of Mesquite. The proposed changes in how these lands are managed, or overseen, include conserving the most pristine areas in the region as wilderness. The proposal would also create a national conservation area surrounding these wilderness areas. The non-wilderness lands within the broader national conservation area would be managed primarily for conservation but would allow for a wider range of recreational uses such as off-road vehicle and mountain biking use, without closing any roads."

This proposal, which would create a national conservation area with wilderness designation, is popular throughout the entire county, and among men and women of all ages. Further, it is favored by a wide margin of Republicans and Democrats alike, as well as Independent voters. In addition, the Gold Butte proposal finds majority support among those who utilize Nevada's public lands for recreational purposes such as hiking and camping, mountain and road biking, fishing and hunting and off-road vehicle recreation activities.

Majorities in all subgroups favor a national conservation area with wilderness designation for the Gold Butte area after hearing more about the proposal, including Republicans (57-29%), Democrats (72-15%) and Independents (69-16%). In addition, the proposal is more widely supported by voters age 18-54 (76-14%) than it is among voters age 55 and older (53-30%). Among voters who recreate on Nevada public lands, support for designating the Gold Butte area as a national conservation area with wilderness is also favored by wide margins, including voters who occasionally or frequently use Nevada public lands for hiking and camping (68-21%), mountain and road biking (75-18%), fishing and hunting (66-25%) and off-road vehicle recreation activities (73-23%).

Voters are also positive when asked if they would be more likely or less likely to vote for a candidate who supported the proposal to designate the Gold Butte area as a national conservation area with wilderness. By a two-to-one margin, voters are more likely to support a candidate who supports a proposal to designate the Gold Butte area as a national conservation area with wilderness, but for roughly a third, this information would not impact their vote today.

Nevada

Want To Keep In Place Existing National Monuments

“And, do you think that existing national monument designations for some public lands protected over the last decade should be kept in place or should they be removed?”

81%

Believe Gold Butte Protection Was A Good Thing

“As you may know, a proposal to protect existing public lands of Gold Butte just south of Lake Mead was granted at the end of last year, resulting in a new national monument in Nevada with protections for natural areas and water similar to those in national parks. The public can go there to view wildlife and American Indian artifacts, camp, hike, hunt, or ride ATVs. It would not allow new mining or oil and gas development.”

63%



67% identify as a "conservationist," up six points from 2016

Trump administration should emphasize...

Ensuring we protect sources of clean water, our air quality and wildlife habitat while providing opportunities to visit and recreate on our national public lands

70%

Ensuring we produce more domestic energy by increasing the amount of national public lands available for responsible oil and gas drilling and mining

21%

% Support

92% Improve and repair infrastructure in national parks and outdoor destinations

80% Improve access to public lands

82% Allow more wind and solar energy projects on public lands

79% Continue methane reduction rule on public lands

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Located in southeastern Nevada between the Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument and Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Gold Butte is 350,000 acres of BLM managed land. Most of the land area in the Gold Butte region is designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) to protect habitat for the Mojave Desert tortoise and big horn sheep; to protect significant cultural resources, such as petroglyphs and historic mining and pioneer-era artifacts; and to protect sensitive plant species, such as the endemic Las Vegas bearpaw poppy (*Arctomecon californica*). In addition, Gold Butte supports multiple uses including hiking, hunting, birding, camping, all-terrain vehicle riding on designated trails, and traditional tribal uses. Southern Nevadans have been asking elected officials for 15 years to protect the nationally significant cultural, historic, and natural treasures in Gold Butte.

Due to adverse circumstances, the BLM and all federal land management agencies have halted official activities in the Gold Butte area since April 2014. In the absence of a land management presence, Friends of Gold Butte (FoGB) has witnessed an increasing level of intrusion near historic and cultural sites as well as impacts to sensitive desert areas that are habitat for threatened and endangered species. Between November 2014 and July 2015, FoGB documented significant damage in Gold Butte.

FoGB conducted observations through road surveys and by hiking in impacted areas. Impacted sites were documented by photography and by recording GPS waypoints. All waypoints reported in the following pages were recorded using North American Datum 1983 (NAD 83) standard of the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) coordinate system. In the report, the Gold Butte Road is also known as Gold Butte Backcountry Byway (Byway).

This report compiles the significant impacts observed in Gold Butte. The report has been redacted to protect archaeological artifact and cultural site locations so as not to drive additional visitation to sensitive yet unprotected areas.

Part 1 provides evidence of unauthorized water infrastructure that is being constructed across several miles of desert that is designated as ACEC.

Part 2 documents multiple, illegal vehicle intrusions that have impacted archaeological and cultural sites; sensitive desert ecosystems including riparian areas, crypto-biotic soil, stretches of desert pavement, and unique red sand dunes; and sensitive bearpaw poppy restoration areas.

Part 3 documents vandalism, noting the looting of historic gravesites and damage to signs in Gold Butte.

Friends of Gold Butte is a 501(c)3 organization with over 500 members and a mission to achieve permanent protection for Gold Butte's natural and cultural resources through education, community outreach and advocacy. For more information about FoGB and our activities contact Jaina Moan at info@friendsofgoldbutte.org.

Executive Summary

Introduction

Located in southeastern Nevada between the Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument and Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Gold Butte is approximately 350,000 acres of public land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Most of the Gold Butte region is designated as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) to protect habitat for desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) and bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*); to protect significant cultural resources such as petroglyphs, historic mining sites, and pioneer-era artifacts; and to protect sensitive plant species such as the Las Vegas bearpoppy (*Arctomecon californica*).

In addition, Gold Butte supports multiple uses including hiking, hunting, birding, camping, all-terrain vehicle riding on designated roads, and traditional tribal uses. Southern Nevadans have been asking elected officials for over 15 years to protect the nationally significant cultural, historic, and natural treasures in Gold Butte.

Background

Due to adverse circumstances, the BLM and all federal land management agencies halted on-the-ground activities in the Gold Butte area from April 2014 to June 2016. In the absence of a land management presence, Friends of Gold Butte (FoGB) has witnessed an increasing level of damage near historic and cultural sites as well as disturbance to sensitive desert areas that are habitat for threatened and endangered species.

Between November 2014 and July 2015, FoGB documented significant damage in Gold Butte and released a [report](#) to the public and community leaders in August of 2015. FoGB continues to document damage to cultural, historic, and natural resource in the area and has produced a new report focusing on the September 2015 through April 2016 time period.

Similar to the 2014-2015 report, data were gathered through field observations completed from road surveys and by hiking into affected areas. Damage was documented by photography. GPS waypoints were recorded at damage sites using the North American Datum 1983 (NAD 83) and the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) coordinate system; all coordinates are in UTM Zone 11S. Where appropriate, GPS data were used to create maps on Google Earth to illustrate the extent of damage on the landscape. For this report, the Gold Butte Road is also referred to as Gold Butte Backcountry Byway.

A redacted version of this report will be available to the public on the FoGB website with redactions made to GPS waypoints, location names, and maps of culturally sensitive locations to protect archaeological artifacts and cultural sites so as not to drive additional visitation to sensitive yet unprotected areas.

Overview of Findings

This report compiles significant damage observed at Gold Butte over time with numerous observations made during the period of September 2015-July 2016. Previously reported damage is cited to illustrate long-lasting affects to cultural and natural resources.

Damage to Historic Resources, Natural Resources, Signs, and Fencing

FoGB has documented vandalism to cultural sites and deliberate destruction to sensitive plant species and their habitat. Additionally, signs and fencing erected to deter illegal trespassing have been damaged or removed. Signs and fencing are important for directing appropriate and respectful use of the land; however, fences that protect vital spring riparian habitats have cut or removed, causing additional vehicle and range animal intrusion to these sensitive areas.

Vehicle Incursions

Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use is a great way to see Gold Butte while on the 500 miles of roads and trails designated by the BLM for that use. Damage occurs when riders pioneer their own routes, which can damage the fragile desert landscape. Illegal OHV routes can kill native plants, collapse desert tortoise burrows, crush desert tortoises, trample desert biological soil crusts, spread invasive weed species, create abnormal erosion patterns, and simply mar the beautiful, untouched landscape. This report summarizes numerous illegal vehicle incursions in the Gold Butte area.

Illegal Range-Land Development

Finally, this report documents an extensive system of non-permitted water developments in northern Gold Butte. Heavy equipment was used to create a network of trenches across 22 miles of pristine desert. The land is now littered with rusty water tanks and industrial waste. Illegal water developments at Dudd and Seep springs, the Great Eastern Mine, and Key West Mine are described in this report.

About the Friends of Gold Butte

Friends of Gold Butte is a 501(c)3 organization with over 500 members and a mission to achieve permanent protection for the natural and cultural resources in Gold Butte through education, community outreach, and advocacy. For more information about Friends of Gold Butte and their activities, contact Jaina Moan at info@friendsofgoldbutte.org.

SUPPORT FOR PERMANENTLY PROTECTING GOLD BUTTE

Local Elected Official Support

Mesquite City Council Resolution
Richard Green, Councilman, City of Mesquite
Karl Gustaveson, Former Councilman, City of Mesquite
Susan Holecheck, Former Mayor, City of Mesquite
Debra March, Councilwoman, City of Henderson
Gerri Schroder, Councilwoman, City of Henderson
Ricki Barlow, Councilman, City of Las Vegas
Bob Coffin, Councilman, City of Las Vegas
John Lee, Mayor, City of North Las Vegas
Isaac Barron, Councilman, City of North Las Vegas
Pamela Goynes-Brown, Councilwoman, City of North Las Vegas
Steve Sisolak, Chairman, Clark County Commission
Clark County Commission Resolution
Clark County Latino Democratic Caucus

State Elected Official Support

Kelvin Atkinson, Senator, State of Nevada
Moises Denis, Senator, State of Nevada
Ruben Kihuen, Senator, State of Nevada
Tick Segerblom, Senator, State of Nevada
Elliot Anderson, Assemblyman, State of Nevada
Nelson Araujo, Assemblyman, and NHLC Vice Chair, State of Nevada
Teresa Benitez-Thompson, Assemblywoman, State of Nevada
Irene Bustamante-Adams, Assemblywoman, State of Nevada
Richard Carrillo, Assemblyman, State of Nevada
Olivia Diaz, Assemblywoman, and NHLC Chair, State of Nevada
Edgar Flores Assemblyman, and NHLC Secretary/Treasurer, State of Nevada
Dina Neal, Assemblywoman, State of Nevada
Heidi Swank, Assemblywoman, State of Nevada
Barbara Buckley, Former Assemblywoman, State of Nevada
Nevada Hispanic Legislative Caucus
2016 Nevada State Democratic Party Platform

Federal Elected Official Support

Harry Reid, Senate Minority Leader, U.S. Senate

Dina Titus, Congresswoman, U.S. House of Representatives
Ruben Kihuen, Congressman-Elect, U.S. House of Representatives
Jacky Rosen, Congresswoman-Elect, U.S. House of Representatives
Catherine Cortez Masto, Senator-Elect, U.S. Senate
Shelley Berkley, Former Congresswoman, U.S. House of Representatives
Steven Horsford, Former Congressman, U.S. House of Representatives

Tribal Support

Ely Shoshone Tribe
Las Vegas Paiute Tribe
Moapa Band of Paiutes
Native American Student Association
The Paiute Indians Tribe of Utah

Business & Tourism Organizations

Culinary Workers Union, Local 226
Hispanic Museum of Nevada
Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority
Latin Chamber of Commerce
Nevada Resort Association

Businesses

Advanced Marketing Collateral
Advantage Landscape
Anchor Chiropractic
AVI Wear
Axiom Consulting Solutions
Big Horn Olive Oil Company
CMWireless
Coosha Travel
CP Group
Craig Tann Group
Desert Wildlife Consultants LLC
Design SLS
deSpain deSigns
Einstein Bros Catering
Emenai de Quince Photo
Expo Ease
Expressions Catering
Eetza Research Associates
Faiss Foley Warren
FortuneDNA

G.A.T.E. – International American Consulting Group
Gaia Flowers Plant Act
GlutenZero Bakery
Greenway Pest Services
Hunter Marketing Group
KEEN Footwear
McKinney-James & Associates
Man G
Mesquite Veterinary Clinic, Inc.
Morton Group
Nevada Outside
Nuila Events
Onsite Lasermedic
Olsen Strategic Group, LLC
Palm Mortuary
Patagonia
PI Media
Quick Claim USA
R&D Events
RE Editorial Services, LLC
Ready Golf & Gear
Realty Executives
Reliable Banner
Sage Design Studios, Inc.
SH Architecture
Soft Water Specialist
Soul Appeal
Strategic Note Network
TerraFerma Real Estate
The Atrium at Henderson
The Dignitas Agency
The Perkins Company
Topsy Totes
Urban Cairn Productions
Vadeal Print
Valley Paralegal Services
VegasGiant
Vik Chohan Photography
WonderLand
Zappos.Com

Community Groups

After-School All-Stars Las Vegas
Battle Born Progress
College of Southern Nevada Hispanic Student Union
Elaine Wynn, Elaine P. Wynn & Family Foundation

Hispanics Enjoying Camping Hunting and the Outdoors
Hispanics in Politics
League of Conservation Voters
League of Women Voters of Las Vegas Valley
Nevada Conservation League
Nevada Arts Council Board Members
Outside Las Vegas Foundation
Paradise Democratic Club
Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada
Southwest Las Vegas Democratic Club
UNLV Young Democrats
Vet Voice Foundation
Western Sustainable Agriculture Working Group
Women’s Democratic Club of Clark County

Scientist and Archeological Groups

Dr. Melissa K. Giovanni, Department of Geosciences, UNLV
Dr. Rosales-Lasgarde, Environmental Science, Nevada State College
Dr. Stephen Rowland, Department of Geosciences, UNLV
Nick Sanies, Interpretive Naturalist and Geologist
Nevadans for Cultural Preservation
Southern Nevada Rock Art Association

Conservation & Recreation Organizations

Armargosa Conservancy
Back Country Horsemen of Nevada
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers – Nevada Chapter
Conservation Lands Foundation
Conserve Southwest Utah
Desert Fossil Hiking Club
Environment America
Friends of Gold Butte
Friends of Nevada Wilderness
Friends of Red Rock Canyon
Friends of Sloan Canyon
National Parks Conservation Association
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Natural Resource Defense Council
Protectors of Tule Springs
Red Rock Audubon Society
Sierra Club
Sierra Club: Southern Nevada Group
Sierra Club: Toiyabe Chapter
Southern Nevada Climbers Coalition

The Nature Conservancy
The Pew Charitable Trusts
The Wilderness Society
UNLV Wilderness Club

Wild Ecosystems Conservation Initiative

Updated: 12/2/2016

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 13—Assemblywoman Swank

FILE NUMBER.....

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION—Expressing the support of the Nevada Legislature for the enactment and use of the Antiquities Act and the designation of the Basin and Range National Monument and the Gold Butte National Monument in this State.

WHEREAS, The provisions of 54 U.S.C. § 320301, commonly referred to as the “Antiquities Act,” authorize the President of the United States to designate as national monuments any historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures and other objects of historic or scientific interest that are located on land owned or controlled by the Federal Government; and

WHEREAS, The Gold Butte National Monument was designated as a national monument under the Antiquities Act to protect and preserve approximately 300,000 acres of public lands in Clark County, Nevada; and

WHEREAS, Desert Bighorn Sheep, Gila Monsters, Desert Tortoises and other species of concern live in the Gold Butte National Monument; and

WHEREAS, As a way to honor their ancestral lands, the Moapa Band of Paiute Indians and the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe have supported the designation of the Gold Butte National Monument because it is rich with cultural artifacts and sublime petroglyphs; and

WHEREAS, The Basin and Range National Monument was designated as a national monument under the Antiquities Act to protect and preserve approximately 700,000 acres of public land in Lincoln and Nye Counties, Nevada; and

WHEREAS, The Basin and Range National Monument provides vital habitat for Desert Bighorn Sheep, Gila Monsters, Rocky Mountain Elk, mule deer, various kinds of sagebrush and many other species of concern; and

WHEREAS, The Basin and Range National Monument protects many cultural artifacts which date from the early human inhabitants of the area encompassed by the Basin and Range National Monument to the creation of one of the world’s greatest works of art, entitled “City,” by world renowned artist Michael Heizer; and

WHEREAS, Hunting, hiking and hundreds of miles of motorized access are allowed in both the Basin and Range National Monument and the Gold Butte National Monument; and



WHEREAS, The residents of this State have long benefitted from the designation of the Lehman Caves National Monument by former President of the United States Warren G. Harding and the subsequent inclusion of the Lehman Caves National Monument in the Great Basin National Park; and

WHEREAS, Outdoor recreation activities generate approximately \$15 billion dollars in direct consumer spending each year in the State of Nevada and approximately \$1 billion dollars in state and local tax revenue; and

WHEREAS, The designation of the Basin and Range National Monument and the Gold Butte Monument will increase tourism and protect important wildlife habitat and cultural resources in this State; and

WHEREAS, Former President of the United States Theodore Roosevelt first used the Antiquities Act in 1906 and 16 former presidents in the last 111 years, of whom 8 were Republicans and 8 were Democrats, have used the Antiquities Act to protect the natural, cultural and historic heritage of the United States; and

WHEREAS, The designation of national monuments is a uniquely American idea and the Antiquities Act was enacted to preserve worthy public lands as national monuments for future generations; and

WHEREAS, Many unique sites, including, without limitation, the Grand Canyon, the Statue of Liberty and sites that celebrate and memorialize American history from slavery to civil rights battles, have been protected under the Antiquities Act; and

WHEREAS, The designation of national monuments provides additional protections for public lands which are held in trust for all Americans, including public lands which are available for traditional uses such as hunting, fishing, grazing, tribal wood and herbal gathering and other historical uses; and

WHEREAS, The beneficial use of renewable land, water and wildlife resources is essential to the long-term economy of this State; and

WHEREAS, The management of national monuments is guided by plans developed with input from state, local and tribal governments, members of the public and other stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, Landscapes which are protected and remain intact are important to cultural and traditional activities for all residents of this State; and

WHEREAS, National monuments which recognize and protect the contributions, histories, cultures and spiritual beliefs of tribal communities and communities of color are some of the most



precious public lands of the United States and are deserving of protection and are important in telling a more complete and inclusive history of the United States; and

WHEREAS, Recent polls indicate that approximately 81 percent of the residents of this State support keeping in place existing national monuments such as the Basin and Range National Monument and the Gold Butte National Monument; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY AND SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, JOINTLY, That the members of the 79th Session of the Nevada Legislature affirm and support the designation of the Basin and Range National Monument and the Gold Butte National Monument under the Antiquities Act; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Nevada Legislature supports the enactment and use of the Antiquities Act as a critical tool for protecting the public good by authorizing the designation of national monuments under the Antiquities Act; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Nevada Legislature urges Congress to oppose any efforts to weaken the Antiquities Act or to reverse the designation of any national monument under the Antiquities Act; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly prepare and transmit a copy of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States as the presiding officer of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and each member of the Nevada Congressional Delegation.





**Selected Opinion Editorial and Letters to the Editor
regarding the designation of Gold Butte National
Monument**

December 12, 2016 to May 11, 2017

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Letter: Donald Trump, Nevada and the Antiquities Act

Writer: Brenda Slocumb, Logandale NV
Published: May 5, 2017

In signing an executive order to re-examine national monument designations to determine if the Antiquities Act was used appropriately, President Donald Trump has further shaken the confidence of millions of Americans.

Here in Nevada, among supporters of two of our newest monuments, Gold Butte and Basin & Range, there had been a relief that these natural, historical and cultural treasures were finally protected. Native Americans in particular have a strong connection to this land.

So do environmentalists and recreational users such as hikers, horseback riders, mountain bikers, ATV enthusiasts and

campers, who all use and enjoy this spectacular landscape.

As a resident of Moapa Valley since 1999, I live near Gold Butte and spend a lot of time there. I have seen firsthand that many diverse groups — such as the LDS church youth who recreate the journey of their pioneer ancestors through the region — choose the area to connect with nature and reconnect with their history. Such activities allow us to appreciate the natural beauty as well as the historical significance of our newest national monument.

It is vital that these places be preserved to ensure that future generations have the same opportunity. The Antiquities Act does exactly that.

<https://www.reviewjournal.com/opinion/letters/donald-trump-nevada-and-the-antiquities-act/>



Dear President Trump – Leave Nevada to Nevadans

Writer: REP. RUBEN KIHUEN (D-NEV.)

Published: May 5, 2017

President Trump is only interested in one kind of deal – a raw deal for the people of Nevada. His latest executive order calls on the Interior department and Secretary Zinke to review national monuments created since Jan. 1 1996 that span at least 100,000 acres. There can be no clearer message from the president for residents of Nevada. He doesn't give a damn about you.

As I've said before, most Nevadans support public lands and their permanent protection. President Trump has criticized the creation of national monuments like Gold Butte and Basin and Range, calling them a "massive federal land grab" and portraying them as federal overreach.

What would be funny if it wasn't so sad is that President Trump is doing exactly what he's complaining about: imposing Washington, D.C.'s "wisdom" on the people of Nevada. Instead of "returning control to the people" as he has advocated, he's side stepping the desires of Nevadans. Instead of being part of the conversation, Nevadans are told to shut up and sit down. President Theodore Roosevelt, a Republican, first used the act in 1906, and for years presidents from both parties have used this action to protect our national treasures.

Now, President Trump is bucking years of precedent by threatening to revoke the protected status for these designations. Who <http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/politics/332010-dear-president-trump-leave-nevada-to-nevadans>

is President Trump really looking out for? Perhaps it's big oil and gas who want expanded drilling rights. Or mining companies that seek to extract resources from these federally held areas.

He certainly isn't looking out for Nevadans, or the Moapa Band of Paiutes, or residents of Mesquite, Caliente, Crystal Springs or any of the other countless towns and communities that surround Gold Butte and Basin and Range.

Designating these as national monuments also provides our state with federal resources and tools to protect their natural beauty while exploring ways to foster economic development at each site. Additionally, tourism and revenue from the outdoor recreation economy, a \$14 billion industry that supports 148,000 jobs, could act as an economic boon for the surrounding areas. The Nevada legislature recently passed a resolution expressing support for Basin and Range and Gold Butte. It can't be any clearer, Nevadans across party lines have made their voices heard. They want these monuments.

These special places mean a lot to the people of Nevada. Before doing anything that could potentially ruin these natural wonders, President Trump should talk to the majority of Nevadans who support their designation.

Kihuen represents Nevada's 4th District.



LAS VEGAS
REVIEW-JOURNAL

LETTER: Don't go backwards when it comes to protecting Nevada's public lands

Writer: Charyn R. McDonnell, Mesquite NV
Published: May 1, 2017

I read with dismay that President Donald Trump signed an executive order to “review” the past 20 years of national monument designations which will include Nevada’s Gold Butte.

Perhaps Mr. Trump needs to be reminded that more than 80 percent of Nevadans polled support the designation. He should know that 16 presidents, an equal number of Republicans and Democrats, have used the Antiquities Act to ensure protection for America’s wild places, and that the U.S.

Supreme Court has upheld that use, despite controversy.

Certainly, this unnecessary review will reveal that the designations are the best way to ensure that these treasures will be maintained, unspoiled and pristine, for future generations.

I would think that the positives outweigh the negatives. If we are an America looking toward a better future, why would we want to take two steps back?

<https://www.reviewjournal.com/opinion/letters/dont-go-backwards-when-it-comes-to-protecting-nevadas-public-lands/>

Los Angeles Times

Leave the national monuments alone

Writer: The Times Editorial Board

Published: April 27, 2017

More than a century ago, to prevent the degradation of open natural spaces and the pillaging of ruins and prehistoric sites, Congress adopted the Antiquities Act, which gives the president the authority and flexibility to unilaterally protect historically or geologically significant federal lands from exploitation. Four months later, President Roosevelt used the act to establish the Devil's Tower National Monument in Wyoming, the first of 152 such set-asides. All but three presidents since then have created national monuments under the act to protect federal lands from development, mining or other landscape-altering activities.

Enter President Trump. On Wednesday, he ordered the Interior secretary, who oversees national monuments, to review two decades of designations larger than 100,000 acres (more than two dozen monuments) and, if he decides it's merited, propose legislation or administrative steps to modify the proclamations. The move dovetails with long-running efforts by some Western politicians to transfer federal lands to the states under the unpersuasive argument that states know best how to manage land within their borders, an argument that Trump seemed to endorse in his public comments when he signed the executive order.

Focusing strictly on the Obama administration, Trump described the designation of monuments as a "massive federal land grab" and an "egregious abuse of federal power" and said his order would "give that power back to the states and the people, where it belongs." But the

monuments were carved out of existing federal land that has been under Washington's control since the nation's westward expansion — and which predates the states themselves. And the states have little interest in protecting the land: They want to be able to open it for extractive industries, which fits in with Trump's desire to dig, drill and burn more fossil fuels with blithe disregard for the environment. This is contrary to public interest. No one has offered a convincing argument that there is a problem in need of a solution or that the previously declared monuments were poorly chosen. Historically, in fact, Congress often has converted some presidentially selected monuments into national parks, which receive an even higher level of protection. They include the Grand Canyon and the Grand Tetons and, here in California, Death Valley and Mt. Lassen. The trigger for Trump's review was President Obama's designation last year of the Bears Ears National Monument in Utah, a stunningly picturesque region that state political figures wanted to open to oil and gas drillers and potash mining companies. But the Interior Department reviews will stretch back to Grand Staircase-Escalante, also in Utah, designated a national monument by President Clinton.

It's probably too much to hope that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke will report back to Trump that none of the monuments should be altered or withdrawn, and that the Antiquities Act is a valuable tool for a president. Fortunately, the president's authority to undo the designations of his predecessors is in doubt. The Antiquities

Act grants the president the authority to designate monuments but says nothing about the right to change, amend or revoke designations (although Congress can do so through legislation). Some presidents have reduced the size of monuments, but those changes went unchallenged in court. Environmental groups have promised a legal fight should Trump seek to alter the designations.

Zinke and Trump both said the review would give the public a chance to weigh in. But it already has. The Bears Ears designation, for instance, came after more than seven years of broad public debate and after a rival land-use plan by Utah's congressional delegation failed to gain traction.

The Antiquities Act was passed after Americans, following the lead of John Muir and other naturalists, recognized that there

was more to the vast expanses of the West than land to be tilled, forests to be felled and ores to be mined. Roosevelt wrote in 1913 that it is “vandalism . . . to destroy or to permit the destruction of what is beautiful in nature, whether it be a cliff, a forest, or a species of mammal or bird. Here in the United States we turn our rivers and streams into sewers and dumping-grounds, we pollute the air, we destroy forests, and exterminate fishes, birds and mammals — not to speak of vulgarizing charming landscapes with hideous advertisements. But at last it looks as if our people were awakening.”

The people need to remain awake, and they need to fight to ensure that neither the Trump administration nor the fossil fuel-friendly congressional leadership succeeds in this assault on our shared national heritage.

<http://www.latimes.com/opinion/editorials/la-ed-antiquities-act-monument-trump-obama-clinton-20170427-story.html>



LETTER: New monument represents tourist gold to Nevada

Writer: Geoffrey Frasz, Las Vegas

Published: March 6, 2017

Each time I travel up to Mesquite to take a ramble around the Gold Butte National Monument, I am struck by the number of drivers passing by on Interstate 15, many no doubt on their way to enjoy the scenic natural areas of southern Utah and spend their tourist dollars there. Gold Butte has the potential to draw those same tourist dollars to this land.

So I was interested to see that officials with the Outdoor Industry Association are looking for a new state to call home for their

trade show. It would be a shame if Nevada politicians did the same as Utah legislators and supported a resolution to transfer public land to state control — the very action that led the association to leave Utah.

Gold Butte National Monument and other public lands in Nevada represent tourist “gold” for our state. It would also be a shame if Nevada lost such economic activities by presenting itself as hostile to the continued public preservation of the scenic areas that all can enjoy.

<https://www.reviewjournal.com/opinion/letters/letter-new-monument-represents-tourist-gold-to-nevada/>



U.S. Senator vows to fight for rural communities

Writer: Kirk Kern

Published: February 16, 2017

U.S. Senator Catherine Cortez Masto calls Las Vegas home, but still feels a deep connection with the state’s rural communities. As a lifelong Nevadan, Cortez Masto grew up in a Las Vegas that was very different from the urban atmosphere it now projects.

“I was born and raised in Las Vegas, but let me tell you that it was more rural than than it is now,” she said in a recent phone interview from her Washington D.C. office. “That’s why I like the rural communities, it reminds me of early Las Vegas when I was growing up when there were still a lot of ranchers out there and cowboys. That’s why I love rural Nevada, it’s just gorgeous. I have a respect for not only the families and the people who have lived there for generations. You have some families that have lived there a 100 year that have worked the land. Farmers and cattle ranchers. It’s a beautiful place.”

Cortez Masto said she will visit the rural communities when she returns to Nevada later this month and is also looking to hire somebody to run a mobile office who can visit the rural communities on a regular basis.

“People will know this person and will be able to reach out to this person,” she said.

Cortez Masto made a point of doing a rural road trip twice a year during her eight years as the state attorney general. She feels one

of the biggest issues facing residents of communities in White Pine, Eureka, Lincoln and Mineral County, along with the rest of rural counties across the state, is a lack of effective broadband service.

“We need to provide these resources in the rural communities,” she said. “Broadband opens up the whole area of telemedicine and in bringing other types of resources out to rural communities for professional services.”

Cortez Masto, who is the first Latina to hold a seat on the U.S. Senate, illustrated this point by mentioning a former college roommate who now lives in Elko. Her friend can’t even stream a movie without first having to have the rest of her family get off the internet.

Healthcare is another big issue in the rurals, not only because of efforts to repeal the Affordable Healthcare Act, but also in having qualified doctors either living or visiting these communities regularly. She said legislation passed in 2013 to allow nurse practitioners to work without a physician present has been critical for those living in the rurals.

“My biggest concern is the impact on the rural communities who now have healthcare due to the expansion of Medicaid to some of the rural hospitals,” she said. “Some (hospitals) are already struggling to keep their doors open.”

Some hospitals, such as the Nye County Regional Medical Center, lost that struggle. It closed in the summer of 2015, leaving residents of Tonopah and Esmeralda County without any emergency room services within a 100-mile radius.

“Many people are challenged geographically transportation-wise,” she said. “They can’t get to certain places for services.”

Other big issues facing rural communities include land use, green energy, education and transportation.

“It’s important to get out there and really talk to Nevadans to find priorities for them and work together and find solutions,” she said.

One of the most recent issues was President Obama’s designation of Gold Butte as a national monument, which took place before Cortez Masto began her term. Many were critical of the then-President’s decision to use the Antiquities Act to declare 300,000 acres of land near Lake Mead as a national monument. Although she wasn’t in office at the time, Cortez Masto said she supports the designation.

“I support preserving our public lands for our kids in the future,” she said. “I support it for recreational purposes for our sportsmen and women who like to hunt. We have seen in the state of Nevada the positive effect on tourism and bringing people to areas where they wouldn’t normally be to help the economy.”

<http://sparkstrib.com/2017/02/16/u-s-senator-vows-to-fight-for-rural-communities/>

“You have to go there to see it. There are hidden jewels in the state that people haven’t been to. There are opportunities like this to open those doors for public recreation and to have a positive impact on those local communities who are struggling for revenue.”

Cortez Masto said she can work with the new administration on important issues such as growing the economy and helping veterans, but won’t back down on divisive issues such as immigration and women’s rights.

“We’re fighting to grow the economy, we’re fighting for those jobs,” she said. “We’re fighting for education and healthcare. We’re focused on helping families that are still struggling. We came from the worst recession we’ve ever seen. We were ground zero for the foreclosure crisis and people lost jobs. We’re just coming out of it and the focus is growing the economy. The governor has done an incredible job moving us forward and down a path to help grow the economy. I want to continue to support it and create job and fight for those working families ...

But I will always say, if the administration is going to continue the path of pain, hate, racism and discrimination, I will fight against it. I will be a vocal voice against it. I don’t think there’s any room for that type of hate and discrimination in the White House.”



LAS VEGAS
REVIEW-JOURNAL

LETTER: Let's quit squabbling over Gold Butte and enjoy it

Writer: Steve Dudrow, Mesquite NV

Published: February 13, 2017

I watched in semi-amusement, but with some horror at the unnecessary hysteria taking place Thursday night at the BLM Gold Butte National Monument information meeting (Friday Review-Journal). Lost on the anti-monument crowd was a statement by a gentleman of Southern Paiute descent who scoffed at the 200-year resident claims, stating correctly that his ancestors have been in the area much longer.

Let's face it, their land was taken over by the early European settlers. In my mind

cows (welfare cattle), fences, mines, rusted piping, discarded shot gun shells and man-assisted spring flows all pale in the face of preserving our ancestral resident's stories told on the many rock faces in the area.

We are lucky to have this magnificent piece of 300 million plus years of geologic and human history, located right in our backyard, protected. Let's us humans quit squabbling and enjoy it while we can.

<https://www.reviewjournal.com/opinion/letters/letter-lets-quit-squabbling-over-gold-butte-and-enjoy-it/>

6 Epic Road Trip Destinations to Visit in 2017

Ziptopia Blog

February 10, 2017

Hey — so why aren't you driving right now? We don't mean to single you out: it's just that it's 2017, and there are so many epic road trip destinations to visit this year that, well, you might wanna get started. From bucket list-worthy national parks to never-been-better city breaks, from shorter

getaways to long-haul adventures, you've got some road tripping to do.

See Number 5 for Bears Ears National Monument and Gold Butte National Monument.

<http://www.zipcar.com/ziptopia/going-places/6-epic-road-trip-destinations-for-2017>

The Desert Sun

A plea for cherished lands protection

Writer: Robert Paull, Special to The Desert Sun
Published: February 9, 2017

In Native American culture, the land, landscape, and everything in it is intertwined – it is sustenance, it is shelter, it is health.

Tribal people's relationship with the land also goes beyond the physical and is part of a connection to the spiritual and ancestral. Today, many other communities find solace and healing in the outdoors – whether hiking, hunting, or picnicking with family. This is a testament to the lost links between people and our natural environment.

Over 100 years ago Congress recognized that many Native American artifacts and historic sites were being vandalized, looted, and decimated to such an extent that something had to be done. America, Congress recognized, could not lose its rich heritage. The result was the passage of the Antiquities Act, which gave the President the power to preserve this heritage for all people and future generations.

President Teddy Roosevelt first used the Antiquities Act to protect some of America's most iconic lands. Since then Republican and Democratic presidents alike have used this authority to ensure that our nation's special landscapes and historic sites are preserved.

This includes places like the Mojave Trails National Monument, Sand to Snow National Monument, and Castle Mountains National Monument in the California Desert; the Gold Butte National Monument in southern Nevada; the Bears Ears National Monument in southern Utah; and the expansion of the California Coast National Monument. All of these spectacular landscapes also have

unparalleled historic value as Native American heritage sites. By designating them as national monuments, President Barack Obama ensured that they will remain open, and that their treasures will remain in the public trust, rather than be razed or sold off.

Just as these monuments tell stories from our nation's past, so do the last national monuments that President Obama designated in Alabama and South Carolina, at Birmingham, Anniston, and St. Helena Island, which tell the stories of the Reconstruction and Civil Rights eras; stories that are integral to the fabric of America and who we are today as a people.

These diverse places inspire and remind Americans to learn from our past, honor the men and women who came before us, and educate future generations. They represent our greatest ideals of commemorating our complex history, embracing the experiences and perspectives of different communities, and entrusting our landscapes and history to the public to cherish, honor, and respect these lands as Native people have done for generations.

To that end, Obama also issued a Presidential Memorandum encouraging federal agencies to make it a priority to engage all Americans in accessing and conserving our public lands and waters so that all feel welcome in our collective legacy. Yet, at the same time, bedrock conservation laws like the Antiquities Act face attack, and the new administration will now be its steward.

President Donald Trump has said he wants to follow President Roosevelt's example and voiced his support for being "great stewards" of our national public lands. While President Roosevelt has a mixed legacy for tribal people, his conservation policies were unprecedented in protecting areas that now remain intact for future generations. We hope that President Trump

and his nominee for Secretary of the Department of Interior, Rep. Ryan Zinke, will stand against partisan efforts to revoke national monuments and tarnish our great system of public lands. Instead, we ask them to unequivocally embrace our shared responsibility to protect America's parks, monuments and other public lands.

Email Robert Paull, a member of the board of the Native American Lands Conservancy (NALC), at rpaul@spotlight29.com.

<http://www.desertsun.com/story/opinion/contributors/valley-voice/2017/02/09/valley-voice-paull-cherished-lands-protection/97711940/>



Tribes encourage Zinke to visit Gold Butte

Guest writers: William Anderson and Fawn Douglas, Las Vegas

Published: February 1, 2017

Thank you for your editorial asking Rep. Ryan Zinke, if confirmed as secretary of the Interior, to uphold Gold Butte's protected status ("Interior secretary, Congress should support Gold Butte," Las Vegas Sun, Jan. 1).

We, too, were alarmed by Zinke's comments that he might strip the national monument of its designation, especially after he said he would heavily weigh state opinion before making a decision.

Gold Butte's designation did not happen overnight or unilaterally. It took decades of hard work, with the Moapa Band of Paiutes and the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe collaborating with Sen. Harry Reid, Rep. Dina Titus and other leaders on potential legislation and various tools for protection. There was a thorough, inclusive public process with community meetings and public tours soliciting feedback from Nevada residents, ranchers, businesses and conservationists. Then-President Barack Obama consulted with Gov. Brian Sandoval and tribal leaders in outlining the area to be protected before issuing his proclamation.

Nevadans were included every step of the way, and through numerous polls and thousands of letters to the federal government, they made their views clear: They prefer public lands to stay in public

hands, and for historic sites to be preserved for future generations.

We have explained this, as well as Gold Butte's sacred significance to our ancestors, many times. Yet, some congressional leaders appear not to listen. Sadly, Sen. Dean Heller is among them. He misleadingly said the designation lacked "an open and public congressional process." He claimed that not all voices and stakeholders were heard, despite evidence otherwise.

Heller has served in Congress for eight years, ample time to have sought safeguards for Gold Butte. When Reid introduced a bill in Congress asking for the land to be protected, Heller did not join his efforts. Despite pleading from our tribes and local community leaders to shield Gold Butte from further desecration, Heller did not act. Where was he while we were fighting for our lands?

If Zinke is confirmed, we welcome him to visit Nevada and learn about the deep support for Gold Butte National Monument from Nevadans who long fought for its protections, and who will continue to vigorously defend them.

Anderson is a former chairman of the Moapa Band of Paiutes. Douglas is a Paiute artist and tribal council alum for the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe.

<https://lasvegassun.com/news/2017/feb/01/tribes-encourage-zinke-to-visit-gold-butte/>



Zinke should back what he says

Guest writer: Brittany Lewis, Las Vegas
Published: January 31, 2017

In response to the editorial “Interior secretary, Congress should support Gold Butte” (Las Vegas Sun, Jan. 1):

Gold Butte National Monument was a gift to not only presumptive Secretary Ryan Zinke, but to all Americans. Gold Butte’s gnarled rock formations, ancient petroglyphs, natural wildlife and frontier history are an irreplaceable part of American heritage that needed to be protected.

I have explored Gold Butte’s rugged landscapes and am so thankful for the memories I made and that future generations will be able to have that same opportunity. I am glad to see Zinke express that “public lands are sacred” and should be accessible to the public. I hope to see Zinke stand behind his words and make sure that Gold Butte receives the funding and support it needs to remain protected and accessible for all Americans.

<https://lasvegassun.com/news/2017/jan/31/zinke-should-back-what-he-says/>



Zinke must follow leaders' example

Guest Writer: Eric Roberts, Las Vegas
Published: January 29, 2017

Regarding the editorial "Interior Secretary, Congress should support Gold Butte" (Las Vegas Sun, Jan. 1):

I couldn't agree more. What better Christmas present to Nevadans and all Americans than the new designation of Gold Butte National Monument! I am grateful to Sen. Harry Reid, Rep. Dina Titus, former Rep. Steven Horsford, and newly elected Rep. Ruben Kihuen and Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto for their support of Gold Butte. Finally, my biggest thank you goes to former President Barack Obama for speaking on behalf of all Americans. I'm a Nevadan who loves the open spaces and natural beauty that is so characteristic of this great state, and I appreciate that these elected representatives value keeping Nevada and Gold Butte beautiful.

Also, this was well said: "The next administration will be impossible to

predict." Newly nominated Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke says he is a supporter of public lands. Still, words only matter if you back them up, and I truly hope he backs those words up. More than 80 percent of Nevada is public land.

The upcoming change in management could have a huge effect on the everyday lives of Nevadans and the natural landscapes that surround every city and town in our state. I encourage Nevadans to remain vigilant and hold these folks accountable. These are our lands, and it's in our best interest to remain engaged in their management as we have with the designation of Gold Butte National Monument. The resources, history and culture found only in Gold Butte are important to my fellow Americans, and we all want our kids to have the opportunity to experience it. I encourage Nevadans to go out to Gold Butte National Monument and see its wonders.

<https://lasvegassun.com/news/2017/jan/29/zinke-must-follow-leaders-example/>

Obama's national monument designations were lawful, not land grabs

Guest writer: Michael Blumm and Hillary Hoffman

Published: January 23, 2017

President Obama's 2016 national monument designations have prompted Republican critics from Nevada to Maine to suggest that, under cover of the Antiquities Act of 1906, he exceeded his authority, orchestrating a massive federal land grab. These critics are ignoring the history and scope of the act and the positive effects of monument designations on nearby communities.

The Antiquities Act gives presidents broad authority to protect objects and surrounding public lands with historical, cultural and scientific value to the nation. Sixteen presidents have used the statute since Theodore Roosevelt signed it into law and created the first national monument at Devil's Tower in Wyoming. In the short term, their actions have frequently generated controversy.

One of the most significant battles arose in 1943. During a rancorous tug of war over the preservation of the valley at the foot of the Teton Range in Wyoming, President Franklin Roosevelt stepped in and established the Jackson Hole National Monument. It included 35,000 acres of ranchland purchased secretly, for the sake of preservation, by John D. Rockefeller Jr. FDR meant to resolve the situation, but the monument designation only intensified local anger over outsider interference, worries about lost tax revenues and ranchers' concerns about their future.

Numerous congressional revocation efforts by Wyoming Republicans followed, and a lawsuit challenged the use of the Antiquities

Act itself, but the monument survived. In 1950, it was incorporated into Grand Teton National Park, which now welcomes around 3 million visitors annually. Roosevelt's controversial action is now credited with bolstering, rather than destroying, Teton County.

A similar story has been repeated elsewhere. In southern Utah in the late 1990s, President Clinton designated the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument against the wishes of many in Utah who cited fears that "locking up" these lands would depress local economies. In fact, a recent study of the region by Headwaters Economics found that after the designation, the population grew by 8%, jobs by 38% and real per capita income by 30%.

The lengthy legal history of monument designations also informs the debate over presidential overreach. No monument proclamation has ever been revoked; federal courts have dismissed all legal challenges. And the U.S. attorney general long ago concluded that presidents lack the authority to undo designations made by other presidents.

Since the Antiquities Act applies only to lands that already are federal, no private property rights are affected. Monument opponents claim that designation will curtail grazing, mining and vehicular recreation, yet existing "multiple uses" that do not threaten the area's historic and scientific value are preserved. In Grand Staircase, pre-designation livestock grazing continues. The

same will be true in Bears Ears National Monument, in Utah, which was designated by Obama in December.

Monuments are neither wilderness areas nor national parks, both of which are created under more stringent criteria. All national monuments are managed according to plans that, by law, must be revisited over time. Although one president creates a monument, subsequent presidents often implement the management objectives.

Opponents have labeled Obama's 2016 monuments as "midnight regulations," although most of the recent designations have been a long time in the making. Interior Secretary Harold Ickes proposed Bears Ears in 1936. Gold Butte National Monument, added in southern Nevada in December, was first proposed by local tribes in 2008. The expanded Cascade-Siskiyou monument in Oregon and Washington was first established two decades ago, and the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, which Obama enlarged in August, was established in 2006 by President George W. Bush.

Designations are accompanied by detailed rationales that explain the nationally significant resources the monument will protect. The rationales take months, often years, to develop. They are hardly the result of midnight whims.

Tellingly, presidents from both parties have defended prior monument designations. George W. Bush's Justice Department successfully defended monuments designated by President Clinton in court. President Wilson's lawyers won

Supreme Court approval of the Grand Canyon monument in 1920, proclaimed by Wilson's predecessor, Teddy Roosevelt, in 1908.

Although the Antiquities Act does not require it, the Obama administration engaged in substantial public discussions before the recent designations. Those discussions led to scaling down the size of Bears Ears monument and eliminating several areas that might be mined or used for vehicular recreation in the future.

Bears Ears and Gold Butte are particularly fitting national monuments, since they include many sites sacred to local tribes. One of Congress' principal purposes behind enacting the statute in 1906 was to protect such sites from pot hunters and looters, to protect the important cultural legacy of Native Americans on public lands.

The often ephemeral local opposition to monument status should not persuade Congress or the Trump administration to attempt to revoke the Obama designations. Today's protesting voices represent a decided minority of the wider public that benefits from public lands conservation, including future generations. Short-term political expediency has not predominated in the past and should not prevail in the future.

Michael Blumm, a professor at Lewis and Clark Law School, specializes in public lands and natural resources law. Hillary Hoffmann, a professor at Vermont Law School, focuses on natural and cultural resources, and tribal lands.

<http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-blumm-hoffmann-validity-of-national-monument-designations-20170120-story.html>



Zinke must uphold Gold Butte's new protected status

Writer: Las Vegas Sun Editorial

Published: January 22, 2017

By revealing that he will consider tearing up the order declaring Gold Butte a national monument, Ryan Zinke has officially become a cause for alarm in Nevada.

Zinke, President Donald Trump's nominee for secretary of the Interior, told senators at a confirmation hearing Tuesday that he planned to review former President Barack Obama's declaration order. However, Zinke said he would visit Nevada before making a decision on the 300,000-acre area.

Zinke, a U.S. House member from Wyoming, is more than welcome to visit. But there's only one acceptable outcome to his decision-making, and that's to keep the order firmly in place.

For proof, Zinke should start by talking to William Anderson, former chairman of the Moapa Band of Paiute Indians. After the announcement that Obama had signed his order, a grateful Anderson gave an impassioned speech outlining why the area was an environmental and cultural treasure that deserved protection. He described the land's importance to the tribe, which has been living on it for centuries, and the pain that tribe members felt in recent years after seeing ancient petroglyphs in the area desecrated by vandals and the ecology damaged by campers and riders of off-road vehicles.

"Part of my culture, part of my heritage was being taken away," Anderson said.

Gold Butte must be preserved, and Obama's order was only a first step. Now, not only does Zinke need to leave the order in place, he needs to support funding to keep it clean and secure.

Zinke has said he would not sell, give away or transfer public lands, but he's also said he'd consider changing the way the federal government manages public lands and, just this month, voted in favor of a House rules package that makes it easier to give federal lands to states.

That's worrisome, as it could open the door to coal mining, oil and gas drilling or other environmentally destructive activity on public lands.

In the case of Gold Butte, such development makes no sense. In terms of generating energy, its biggest potential would be solar power, and there's more than enough space elsewhere in Nevada to plant solar arrays in areas that aren't environmentally or culturally sensitive.

Another detrimental effect of overturning the designation order is that it would no doubt be seen as a victory by rancher Cliven Bundy and those who support his extremists causes. Bundy has grazed cattle on Gold Butte for decades without paying fees, claiming the government has no right to the acreage. His dispute with the government came to a head in 2014 during what became known as the Battle of Bunkerville, an armed standoff between government agents who were rounding up the cattle and a group

of Bundy supporters that included militia members. Granted, the method behind the declaration wasn't ideal — it would have been wonderful if Nevada congressional delegates would have succeeded in pushing through a

legislative solution. But Obama's order was acceptable and appropriate.

Assuming Zinke makes his visit here, that's the message he should hear loud and clear from state leaders.

<https://lasvegassun.com/news/2017/jan/22/zinke-must-uphold-gold-buttess-new-protected-status/>

Gold Butte Deserves Monument Status

Guest Writer: Ron Hunter

Published: January 18, 2017

In southern Nevada, there is a beautiful area that is a treasure trove of cultural, historic and natural wonders; including thousands of petroglyphs, historic mining and pioneer artifacts, rare and threatened species (including desert bighorn sheep and the Mojave Desert tortoise), fantastic geologic features and fossil track sites over 170 million years old.

That place is Gold Butte. We at Patagonia are thrilled that President Obama used his authority granted by the Antiquities Act to designate the Gold Butte National Monument.

For nearly two decades, local activists, grassroots groups, business and community leaders, elected officials and Native American nations have been working to protect this incredible place. Over the last 15 years, I've had the privilege to work with these folks as well as explore Gold Butte's dunes and slot canyons, and hike its many peaks. Now, thanks to the dedication of Sen. Harry Reid, Rep. Dina Titus and President Obama, Nevada's piece of the Grand Canyon and the countless cultural, historical and natural marvels that make this area so unique are now preserved for future generations.

Gold Butte's national monument status came after thousands of hours put in by advocates working tirelessly, leading hikes, documenting and restoring damaged landscapes, writing letters, traveling to Washington D.C., working with opponents to craft compromises, and so much more. And this is why I was disappointed when I saw that Sen. Dean Heller and Rep. Mark

Amodei introduced the Nevada Land Sovereignty Act (S. 22, H.R. 243), a bill that would not allow new national monument designations in Nevada without approval from Congress. Contrary to what a few detractors may tell you, Gold Butte's designation was supported by the majority of the Nevada's members of Congress, and had extensive input from Nevada's federal delegation, Gov.

Brian Sandoval, local elected officials, agencies (like the Virgin Valley Water district), and many more.

I have seen firsthand the enormous amount of work supporters of Gold Butte put in with Congress and local officials to craft proposals for what was originally legislation in 2008 to protect Gold Butte and then a proposal to protect it as a national monument in 2016. It came down to a presidential proclamation, in short, because Congress refused to act on the legislation, not because of lack of input and engagement by all sides.

I'd like to thank Sen. Reid and Rep. Titus for working with the people of Nevada to craft a proposal that is supported by a majority of Nevadans, for letting everyone's voices be heard, and for urging President Obama to designate the Gold Butte National Monument.

Ron Hunter has worked for Patagonia for over 29 years, the last 20 in their Reno Service Center. He is responsible for employee activism and a number of the company's environmental grant programs.

<http://www.rgj.com/story/opinion/voices/2017/01/18/one-view-gold-butte-deserves-monument-status/96752254/>



Officials worked hard for Nevadans

Guest writer: Jacqueline Palacios, North Las Vegas

Published: January 17, 2017

On Dec. 28, President Barack Obama designated the Gold Butte National Monument in Nevada. Thanks to the leadership of President Obama, Sen. Harry Reid and Congresswoman Dina Titus, the people of Nevada are celebrating the protection of the state's piece of the Grand Canyon.

With the announcement, Obama also continues to cement his conservation legacy by permanently protecting more land and water than any president in history.

The Gold Butte region is home to a pristine desert landscape with rugged mountains and

canyons, Joshua trees, prehistoric fossils, majestic wildlife and an abundant Native American history that dates back more than 3,000 years.

As a Nevadan, I am thrilled Obama permanently designated these majestic landscapes and cultural treasures for current and future generations to enjoy.

I thank President Obama, Sen. Reid and Congresswoman Titus for their hard work making this national monument a reality and remembering that home means Nevada.

<https://lasvegassun.com/news/2017/jan/17/officials-worked-hard-for-nevadans/>

Heller, Amodei on wrong side of history

Guest Writer: Anne Macquarie

Published: January 16, 2017 in the *Nevada Appeal*

Reprinted: January 18, 2017 in *The Spectrum*

Reprinted: January 27, 2017 in the *Las Vegas Review Journal*

Last week Congressman Amodei and Senator Heller introduced legislation to “prevent the threat of executive action designating or expanding national monuments without Congressional approval or local support.” Their legislation would add Nevada to Wyoming as the only states exempt from presidential designation of National Monuments, except as authorized by Congress.

Their legislation is a reaction to President Obama’s designation of Gold Butte as a monument last month. Congressman Amodei’s news release about his anti-national-monument legislation says he “has always” supported a process that includes “input from interest groups, local communities, and elected representatives,” insinuating the designation of Gold Butte took place without any of this. He went onto say Nevadans “had no say in” the designation of Gold Butte.

Gold Butte is located in southern Nevada — an area not represented by Congressman Amodei. I asked a couple of southern Nevadans what they thought of his assertion they had “no say in the matter” of Gold Butte.

Jaina Moan, executive director of Friends of Gold Butte, says, “The proclamation to

make Gold Butte a National Monument is the result of a long, transparent process. Concerned citizens worked for 15 years to achieve permanent protection for Gold Butte with strong, vocal support from tribes, community groups, sportsmen, recreationists, elected officials and many others.”

JL, a young Sierra Club volunteer from Las Vegas, echoes Jaina Moan. He wrote to me, “It angers me how Congressman Mark Amodei does not consider all the time and effort local volunteers have put in supporting the permanent protection of Gold Butte. For years, Nevadans have been asking for the protection of Gold Butte and fortunately, recently we have succeeded to bring that change to our state reshaping the future for our kids and families. Seeing the thousands of passionate volunteers and everyday persons of all ages coming together to protect a historic piece of land is amazing to me.”

Amodei and Heller say elected representatives weren’t consulted. Have they forgotten at least half of Nevada’s Congressional delegation has supported monument designation for Gold Butte for years and years? Moan points out elected representatives weren’t only consulted, they were almost pleaded with. “Since 2008,

legislation to protect Gold Butte was introduced twice in the Senate and 3 times in the House but Congress failed to act.”

Why don't Amodei and Heller recognize the tribes, elected officials, community groups, sportsmen, recreationists, elected officials and JL's "everyday persons of all ages" who supported the Gold Butte monument? Don't they count?

It's too bad Amodei and Heller are letting their ideology get in the way of what is best for the state. In a 2014 study, economics research firm Headwaters Economics found local economies surrounding all 17 of the national monuments they studied expanded following the creation of new national monuments. People in Las Vegas get this. In a video thanking President Obama, Senator Reid, and Congresswoman Titus for Gold Butte National Monument, Rossi Ralenkotter, president and CEO of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority said:

“One of the key attractions of Las Vegas, especially for international visitors, is our proximity to so many amazing outdoor experiences. Maintaining these protected areas and adding others in southern Nevada provides us with a wider array of amenities to market to our international visitors and the growing number of nature tourism visitors.”

So Gold Butte had years of local support from southern Nevadans and designation as a national monument will probably be an economic boon to the surrounding area. Yet Amodei and Heller want to use its designation as a national monument as an excuse for effectively prohibiting future

national monuments in our state. Does that make sense?

We should look at Wyoming, the only state in the union that doesn't allow national monument designations. Wyoming passed a law similar to what Heller and Amodei are proposing in 1950, in the midst of a huge fight over designation of Jackson Hole National Monument and its addition to Grand Teton National Park.

In her recent book *The Hour of Land*, Utah writer Terry Tempest Williams tells the story of this fight and of the Wyoming cowboy who led it. Ranchers in Jackson Hole were irate and, led by local rancher Cliff Hansen, they turned their cattle loose on the new monument. (Remind you of a certain family in Nevada)?

She writes “Cliff Hansen later became Wyoming's governor and a United States Senator. And before he died, he would admit that he had been on the wrong side of history.” Cliff Hansen said, “I want you all to know that I'm glad I lost, because now I know I was wrong. Grand Teton National Park is one of the greatest natural assets of Wyoming and the nation.”

There have been no new national monuments in Wyoming since that fight and the ensuing law. But tourism thrives in Jackson Hole, next to the national monument the cowboys didn't want. Teton County is the wealthiest county in Wyoming, and in 2010 it received \$18.9 million in gross sales tax — much of it from visitors to the national park that was formerly a national monument.

So please remind me, Congressman Amodei and Senator Heller, what your legislation

will do for our state. In my view, it will do more harm than good.

<http://www.nevadaappeal.com/news/opinion/heller-amodei-on-wrong-side-of-history/>

<http://www.thespectrum.com/story/opinion/mesquite/2017/01/18/amodei-heller-wrong-national-monuments/96714280/>

<http://www.reviewjournal.com/opinion/commentary-plan-rep-mark-amodei-and-sen-dean-heller-exempt-nevada-the-antiquities-act-would>



Gold Butte designation protects tribe's history

Guest Writer: Darren Daboda

Published: January 15, 2017

Reprinted in Native News Online: January 30, 2017

President Barack Obama named Gold Butte a national monument Dec. 28, ensuring its preservation for years to come and generations to follow. In his proclamation, the president noted the importance of the land to the Southern Paiutes or Nuwuvi people. On behalf of the Moapa Band of Paiutes, I want to thank his administration, as well as Nevada champions such as Sen. Harry Reid and Congresswoman Dina Titus, for taking this important step and recognizing the crucial need to protect our piece of the Grand Canyon.

The significance of Gold Butte to Southern Paiutes cannot be understated. From time immemorial, my ancestors have traveled across this stretch of desert, learning and coexisting with the land. To us, the Gold Butte area is a sacred site. Our Salt Song Trails, sacred songs sung during ceremonies to honor members who have passed away, describe its beauty and its paths to guide spirits home.

The land is also home to rare species with deep ties to Nuwuvi, including the desert tortoise, bighorn sheep, eagles and many endangered plants. The desert tortoise has long held special significance to my people; its carapace, or shell, was used for practical and ceremonial purposes. Other rare plants like the bearpaw poppy have flowered there for thousands of years, long before Las Vegas was settled.

Gold Butte is what remains of our ancestral history and collective traditions. Our stories are recorded there and can be seen today in the petroglyphs, agave roasting pits, campsites, and trails still left in sand and stone. The land was even part of the original Moapa River Indian Reservation established in 1873. But those reservation boundaries were soon cut away by the government, removing Gold Butte from our safeguard.

Since then, our artifacts and resources have suffered wanton desecration. Graves have been looted, petroglyphs vandalized and archeological sites disturbed. Bullets, trash and illegal off-road vehicle use has ripped through the landscape and threatened the rare wildlife that still dwells there. When officials attempted to place signs or fences, these, too, were soon destroyed or cut down. The extensive damage has been observed and noted, detailed in public reports, and requests for protection to various government agencies have gone unheeded.

That's why a special designation for Gold Butte has been so important to my people, and why we have advocated for its protection for decades. Already, we have lost too many irreplaceable treasures and placed so much of our cultural and historical heritage at risk. For too long we have witnessed the land's degradation, unable to retake our role as its stewards.

Now that Gold Butte is a national monument, we look forward to working

with the Interior Department and other local stakeholders to protect these sacred sites. We will be willing partners in crafting a management plan that is respectful of our traditions while providing access to all. Like

our ancestors, future generations will be able to know and respect this invaluable land.

Darren Daboda is chairman of the Moapa Band of Paiutes Tribal Council.

<https://lasvegassun.com/news/2017/jan/15/gold-butte-designation-protects-tribes-history/>

<http://nativenewsonline.net/currents/gold-butte-monument-will-help-protect-sacred-lands-generations-come/>

A national treasure

Guest Writer: Karen Adams, Mesquite, NV
Published: January 12, 2017

As a fairly new citizen of Nevada, I am so proud to have Gold Butte as our latest U.S. national monument. Having moved to Mesquite a short 19 months ago, I am still exploring the wonders the area has to offer. Nevada is my new home and having a wonder such as Gold Butte in my backyard is an absolute joy.

I have now made several explorations of Gold Butte with friends and family. Each time, I discover additional treasures. Sadly, each time, I also see things that break my heart. Petroglyphs used as target practice, trash dumped and strewn in the wilderness,

and Joshua trees pushed over are just a few examples of vandalism I have faced at each outing.

The designation as a national monument will give funding for roads and better access to Gold Butte's many treasures. It will also add funding to protect these same treasures. I wholeheartedly support and appreciate the decision to make Gold Butte a national monument and will do what I can to further support all of the organizations working to preserve and protect the area for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

<http://www.thespectrum.com/story/opinion/mesquite/2017/01/12/letters-editor/96429370/>



What is Gold Butte National Monument?

Guest Writer: Terri Rylander
Published: January 12, 2017

The great news is out! We now have our very own national monument right in our backyard—Gold Butte National Monument. That's bragging rights for everyone in Nevada!

Gold Butte received this designation because it contains things that are of historic and scientific interest. These include thousands of Native American artifacts; historic mining and pioneer artifacts; rare and threatened wildlife such as the Mojave Desert tortoise and desert bighorn sheep; dramatic geologic features like sculpted red sandstone and rock spires; and fossil track-sites dating back 170 to 180 million years. The National Monument designation protects these resources so that people can continue to appreciate and enjoy them for generations to come.

The next obvious question is what does that mean for all of us who currently appreciate and enjoy Gold Butte?

What doesn't change is access. People can still responsibly enjoy Gold Butte as they always have through 2 and 4-wheeling on designated roads, hiking, camping, and hunting. All existing rights of way are maintained. In fact, the Virgin Valley Water District is pleased with the outcome knowing their interests are protected and they will have the access they always have had.

Also, unchanged is the management team. Our local southern Nevada BLM office will continue to manage the lands as they have been. That means ranger presence to educate people on responsible use and restoration projects to keep Gold Butte in the best possible shape. We are fortunate that we have some great people at BLM who appreciate the land and encourage us to enjoy it.

What does change are the available resources to help people enjoy Gold Butte into the future. As more people have discovered Gold Butte, visitation has increased. Unfortunately, with a lack of resources, there has been an increase in garbage, human waste, vandalism, and scars in the desert from those who chose to shortcut the roads.

As a national monument, Gold Butte has become part of the National Conservation Lands, a unit of the BLM that manages these special landscapes for their outstanding cultural, ecological and scientific values. As part of the National Conservation Lands, Gold Butte will be better positioned to receive additional resources in terms of money and people. Think road signs, bathrooms, campsites, etc. A new management plan will be created to support these resources. This is a multi-year process. In the next couple months, the BLM will start gathering user input through community meetings.

What you can do is to go see it for yourself! You can safely drive any car out the Gold Butte road to the end of the pavement. Enjoy the view of Lake Mead as you round the corner past Little Virgin mountain. Get out and walk around the desert and see the diverse flora and maybe even fauna. Wonder about the geology that caused the mountains to turn on end. Picnic at Whitney Pockets at the end of the road.

If you want to venture further, be prepared. The road past Whitney Pockets is unpaved and a high clearance vehicle is

recommended. Have a full tank of gas and bring water and food. Tread lightly when you are there and take all your trash with you when you leave.

Then, share what you've learned about Gold Butte National Monument with your friends—what's changing and what isn't, and why they should visit too. And, if you have additional questions, feel free to contact Friends of Gold Butte at: info@friendsofgoldbutte.org or visit the website at www.friendsofgoldbutte.org.

Terri Rylander lives in Mesquite Nevada. She spends a lot of time exploring the outdoors but also giving back to the community. She has served as a volunteer board member for the Friends of Gold Butte and is President of Mesquite Senior Games.

<http://mesquitelocalnews.com/2017/01/letter-to-the-editor-rylander/>



Gold Butte is the Work of Many

Guest Writer: Terri Robertson, Las Vegas

Published: January 12, 2017

It would be impossible to thank each person who helped get designation for the Gold Butte National Monument, but I would like to try.

If you ever made a phone call, sent an email, signed a petition, I thank you. To Congresswoman Dina Titus and her staff who have worked tirelessly for Gold Butte, I thank you. To Sen. Harry Reid and his staff who led this campaign and never wavered, I thank you.

To Fresh 52, who allowed us to table at their Farmers Markets, I thank you.

To the Las Vegas Band of Paiutes, the Moapa Band of Paiutes, Friends of Nevada Wilderness, Friends of Gold Butte, the Sierra Club, League of Women Voters, PLAN, the Wilderness Society and countless others, I thank you.

I want to make a special shoutout to Ann McConnell and Elaine Holmes. In 2001, Sen. Reid sent a legislative fellow out to walk Sloan Petroglyph Canyon. We were at the end of the campaign to create the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area. I asked Ann and Elaine to put together their best

photos of Gold Butte and put them in an album.

As I said goodbye to Reid's staff member, I handed her the photo album and told her to share it with Sen. Reid and tell him Gold Butte was our next project. With the help of Annie Hoskin and Nancy Gentis, our community held the first Friends of Gold Butte meeting in 2003.

Over the past 16 years, I have personally talked with approximately 10,000 Southern Nevada residents who supported Gold Butte.

I want to especially thank my children and grandchildren for their dedication to grandma's project. Thank you for every hour by my side, in the heat of summer and all year long.

Now is the time for contemplation and celebration. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart for this magnificent gift — this gift that will keep on giving long after we are all gone. Gold Butte will be sharing her beauty and her cultural history for decades to come.

I cannot wait to see the first Gold Butte National Monument sign.

<https://lasvegassun.com/news/2017/jan/12/gold-butte-is-the-work-of-many/>



Once hidden gem, now monument

Guest writer: Jesy Simons

Published: January 12, 2017

What great news for Gold Butte and for Nevada (“Gold Butte designated a national monument,” Las Vegas Sun, Dec. 28)! Nevadans have appreciated the recreation opportunities, the recent and ancient history, and the solitude that is unique to Gold Butte for many years. It’s been one of our best-kept secrets. I can’t tell you how thrilled I am the secret is out and Gold Butte is our newest national monument.

Native American tribes enjoyed the rock features, the resources and the location of Gold Butte long before modern Nevadans. One of the best things about Gold Butte is the feeling of being transported back in time, sitting in a shady spot admiring the rock art.

The petroglyphs are a mysterious and fascinating piece of Gold Butte’s history. They’re unique, but they contribute to the story of the Native American tribes and their movement across the Southwest.

Thank you to all the groups, individuals and representatives who worked so hard to see this realized; your efforts have paid off, and Nevadans are grateful. Thank you, President Barack Obama, for recognizing the treasure that Nevada has in Gold Butte and for protecting it for the next generations.

The writer is the Southern Nevada program coordinator for Friends of Nevada Wilderness.

<https://lasvegassun.com/news/2017/jan/12/once-hidden-gem-now-monument/>



Heller should support economy

Guest writer: Jim Boone, Las Vegas, NV
Published: January 11, 2017

I was excited to read that Gold Butte has been designated as a national monument (“Gold Butte designated a national monument,” Las Vegas Sun, Dec. 28). Such a designation ensures that the land remains as it is and open for recreation of all sorts, including hiking, off-highway driving, horseback riding, hunting, bird watching and camping. I’ve camped all over Gold Butte and driven all of the roads and most of the ATV trails. I look forward to driving the rest in the new year.

It is disappointing, however, to read that Sen. Dean Heller still opposes protections

for this area. Maybe he wants to build a big industrial park out there, but I and 71 percent of Nevadans would rather see it used for recreation and for the protection of historical sites, be they Native American, mining or ranching sites.

I encourage Sen. Heller to join with local businesses, tourism officials and the general public in encouraging a strong and vibrant tourism economy here in Nevada that uses places such as Gold Butte National Monument to keep money in Nevada rather than see it drive up Interstate 15 into Utah to be spent in and around Utah national parks.

<https://lasvegassun.com/news/2017/jan/11/heller-should-support-economy/>



Gold Butte's beauty preserved

Guest writer: Minas Mkhitarian, Las Vegas
Published: January 10, 2017

Regarding the article [“Gold Butte designated a national monument”](#) (Las Vegas Sun, Dec. 28):

The author claims that Gold Butte “tipped to the side of environmentalists today,” referring to President Barack Obama’s action in designating Gold Butte a national monument. In truth, it’s a victory for people of various interests, backgrounds and walks of life. For example, the off-highway vehicle community has 500 miles of roads in which to travel, those fascinated by archaeology can experience both the prehistoric and historic past, and Mesquite will see an economic benefit.

Our natural treasures make me proud to be an American, and Gold Butte’s unparalleled solitude, beauty and cultural significance are no exception. Its protection marks the continuation of a great American legacy — a legacy of foresight and respect for places of national significance.

This designation means that the threat of large development in the area will cease permanently. It also means that the area will be better managed to handle the amount of visitation it is already receiving. Thanks to President Obama, Sen. Harry Reid and Congresswoman Dina Titus, Gold Butte will be preserved for all Americans for generations to come.

<https://lasvegassun.com/news/2017/jan/10/gold-buttess-beauty-preserved/>



Antiquities Act Best Means to Protect Gold Butte

Guest Writer: Klaus Schmitt

Submitted: January 9, 2017

The “Nevada Land Sovereignty Act,” introduced by Sen. Heller and Rep Amodei is, in my opinion, an ill-informed, hasty reaction to the designation of Gold Butte as a National Monument. This legislation undermines one of our best means to protect cultural treasures in our country. The Antiquities Act has been used over a hundred times by Republican and Democrat Presidents alike since its inception in 1906 to preserve areas of historic, cultural, and scientific interest. The act has protected some of our most well-known and beloved national treasures, like the Grand Canyon, which was first a National Monument protected by the Antiquities Act before it became a National Park. In addition, our National Park and Monument system has become the envy of the World and communities adjacent to the Parks and Monuments profit considerably from the tourist dollars spent there.

If Sen. Heller and Rep. Amodei don’t like how Gold Butte was designated, they only have themselves to blame. President Obama used the Antiquities Act to protect Gold Butte because Congress failed to act. Grassroots supporters have tried for many years to advance legislation that would protect the area. Bills were introduced five times over the past eight years in both houses of Congress. Sen. Heller and Rep. Amodei refused to engage.

Gold Butte, together with the neighboring Grand Canyon - Parashant national monument, are cultural, historic and natural wonders and their resources are worth the preservation as National Monuments. It is sad that politics have such a major role in such an action. In the end, protection is the best possible way to preserve the landscape itself, and also save it for future generations to enjoy.



Big win

Guest Writer: Benjamin Moan

Published: January 7, 2017

As a hunter and outdoor enthusiast, I applaud President Barack Obama's decision to declare Gold Butte a national monument — and I take issue with the Review-Journal's misleading Jan 2 editorial. The choice of words matters, as the editors are keenly aware. To the uninformed, the words "land grab" might imply that ownership of the land changed with the declaration. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The Gold Butte area is owned by every single American and managed for our multiple uses by the Bureau of Land Management. This did not change with the designation of national monument status. In fact, the designation ensures this will continue to be the case.

While the BLM can and does auction off land for needed development, this area was

deemed so unique that it was chosen to be preserved as public land for future generations. While the new status may make certain types of destructive uses less likely, the majority of activities currently enjoyed — such as hiking, birding, fishing, hunting, four-wheeling, camping, etc. — will continue to be allowed.

Far from being an economic drag, the designation brings fresh attention from local land managers and scientists and tourist dollars from around the world. On a trip to Gold Butte I once met a family visiting from the Netherlands. They had seen pictures online and wanted to see the area in person. Thank you to President Obama and to the many people who worked hard to achieve this designation, which is a big win for we the people.

<http://www.reviewjournal.com/opinion/letters/statutes-allow-private-sale-gun-checks>

Celebrate Gold Butte

Guest Writer: Mary D. Wammack, Boulder City, NV

Published: January 6, 2017

The opposition to President Obama's national monument designation for Gold Butte is bewildering.

Sen. Dean Heller is "terribly disappointed" and would have preferred "an open and public congressional process." Really? What did Sen. Heller do to advance protections for Gold Butte through Congress? Additional opposition has emerged from the Bundy family and a small number of others. I suppose that we'll never really know the real reasons Sen. Heller, the Bundy family, and a few others have objected to protecting such a unique and beautiful area.

What we do know is that many more people are celebrating the national monument designation for Gold Butte than those who oppose it. Along with nearly three-quarters of Nevadans, thousands of grassroots advocates, local and state officials, business people in Southern Nevada and Southern Utah, and visitors from here and abroad who have been awed by Gold Butte's many wonders.

I applaud the tenacity of former Sen. Harry Reid and Rep. Dina Titus. And I salute President Obama, who, in the face of congressional intransigence, has ensured that Gold Butte can be enjoyed for generations to come.

<http://www.thespectrum.com/story/opinion/2017/01/06/celebrate-gold-butte/96266490/>



For tribes, new designations are culturally monumental

Writer: Glenn Nelson

Published: January 5, 2017

This story was produced in collaboration with [The Trail Posse](#), which focuses on the relationship between people of color and Western public lands.

One of the great fallacies associated with the outdoors is that diverse peoples are not present in or connected to it. If people are sincere in wanting to see us there, they need only look. Even if regarding our history in the most colonial sense — picking the country's cotton or fruit, building its railroads, or even stewarding its ancient spirit — we have had a highly visible presence outside.

What white America mostly means when it declares the absence of certain communities from the outdoors is that we tend not to be engaged in a manner consistent with mainstream recreational behavior: We usually are not the geared-up seekers of solitude in the wilderness who have banded together in longstanding green organizations to protect the right of that pursuit, as well as the state of the planet that suits us best.

We are, however, children of nature whose identities, without question, are imprinted upon the American landscape. No president has understood this better than Barack Obama.

On Dec. 28, Obama created national monuments at Bears Ears in Utah and Gold Butte in Nevada, sites with huge significance to Native Americans. He has established 25 national monuments, and

expanded several others, during his eight years in office. Of those, 17 have cultural significance to disenfranchised groups.

Preserving public lands of course means shielding them from the scarring unpleasanties of civilization such as development and energy extraction. Displacement and destruction of culture are other, albeit less-considered, byproducts of urbanization and its evil twin, gentrification. These are the main weapons this country has utilized to create a legacy of disconnection between communities of color, LGBTQ and women — and their use and stewardship of public lands.

The Native American connection to public lands has been particularly toxic, a tendril withered by centuries of deception, conquest, forced relocation and assimilation, and the attempted extermination of culture and identity. Obama has worked hard to heal this relationship, establishing nine monuments to protect traditional tribal sites and artifacts. The latest designations, Bears Ears and Gold Butte, tackle longstanding wounds with significance, creativity and abundant symbolism.

The Hopi, Navajo, Uintah & Ouray Ute, Ute Mountain Ute and Zuni have ancestral ties to Bears Ears and joined in an inter-tribal coalition to advocate for the monument designation. Each tribe will contribute a representative and participate in the management of the national monument. They also will be guaranteed access to the

land for tribal ceremonies, firewood and plant collection, as well as hunting, grazing and outdoor recreation.

Monument status adds a much-needed legal layer of protection for cultural assets at both sites. The region that includes Bears Ears has suffered from decades of looting. In 2009, the FBI and Bureau of Land Management conducted the largest Native American artifact sting operation ever in Blanding, a town on the eastern border of the new monument site. Volunteer patrols have uncovered several major incidences of looting in the area during this year alone.

Gold Butte, the monument in Nevada, has experienced similar damage to local Native cultural sites and artifacts. Nearly all federal oversight of the region ceased for two years, after an armed standoff in 2014 between BLM agents and rancher Cliven Bundy, who was arrested earlier this year while supporting the occupation by his sons of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon. In the vacuum, the Friends of Gold Butte, a non-profit support and advocacy group, [documented](#) numerous incidents of vandalism of historic sites, deliberate destruction to habitat, illegal water developments and vehicle incursions, and damage to signs and fencing intended to deter illegal trespassing.

Still, supporters have characterized last week's designations as "reparations" or "give-backs." There is danger in this as it stirs the "take-ours-back mentality" of the so-called "Sagebrush Rebellion," already amassed against the designations, federal land control and Obama's aggressive use of the Antiquities Act. Such characterizations also run counter to the belief of most Native American cultures that land belongs to no one and therefore to everyone.

Instead of a re-allocation, Obama's monument designations should be viewed as a re-engagement of Native Americans and other members of underserved communities. The demographics of our country are quickly changing, and the impacts of global warming mount even more swiftly. We need everyone activated, through support and stewardship of public lands, in the fight to protect the planet from the worst of ourselves. The best path to reconnecting disenfranchised communities to public lands is improving access — not so much in the physical sense but as a construct of historically and culturally manufactured barriers.

I belong to the [Next 100 Coalition](#) of civil rights, environmental justice, conservation and community organizations that advocates for greater inclusion of diverse communities in public lands. We commonly hear that no one has barred our access. "I've never seen a whites-only sign at a national park," is a common refrain. While this is true, the actual barrier is the continued conceit of white culture as the American default. The pervasive exclusion of people of color, LGBTQ and various gender backgrounds from the self-perpetuating "picture" of the outdoors is a powerful deterrent.

Relevancy is a most effective and available tool for improving access. If a young brown person can see her former selves on a butte overlooking a place like Bears Ears, she will feel attachment and inclination to protect it, and places like it. From César Chávez and Pullman to Mojave Trails and Stonewall, the Obama administration has been masterful in sewing relevancy back into the fabric of our protected public lands.

More opportunities exist in places like the Castner Range in Texas and Grand Canyon region in Arizona. America does not have to

build these places for us to come. We
already are there.

Just see us.

*Contributing editor Glenn Nelson is the
founder of [The Trail Posse](#), which
documents and encourages diversity and
inclusion in the outdoors.*

<http://www.hcn.org/articles/for-tribes-new-designations-are-culturally-monumental>

Gold Butte designation protects great assets

Guest writer: Julie Young

Published: January 5, 2017

The team at Big Horn Olive Oil Company is excited to hear that President Obama has designated Gold Butte as a National Monument. Nevadans of all backgrounds and interests have spent over two decades working to gain permanent protection for Gold Butte and its treasure trove of cultural, historic, and natural wonders that lie within. These wonders include thousands of Native American artifacts; historic mining- and pioneer-era artifacts; rare and threatened wildlife such as the Mojave Desert tortoise and desert bighorn sheep; dramatic geologic features like sculpted red sandstone and rock spires; and fossil track-sites dating back 170 to 180 million years. The Gold Butte National Monument makes a perfect addition to other iconic protected public lands here in our state like the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area, Great Basin National Park, and Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area.

Big Horn Olive Oil Company was proud to support the effort to protect Gold Butte. We cherish the visits we've made to Gold Butte with our family and we are so glad that our grandchildren will be able to experience it as we have been able to - in its wild, natural form. The Gold Butte National Monument will ensure the priceless petroglyphs (the bighorn sheep being our favorite) and the countless outdoor recreation opportunities available in the area will be forever held in

trust for the American people. It makes us proud that our nation treasures such values. In addition to feeling good about protecting these places, it's good for business too. As business owners in Nevada, with retail stores in both Reno and Las Vegas, we have experienced firsthand how integral protected public lands are to attracting and keeping good talent. Some of the many benefits that result from protecting public lands include enhancing open spaces, preserving outdoor recreational opportunities, and protecting clean air and water which all provide a high quality of life for local residents and prospective employees. When elected leaders have the foresight to realize that good employees expect higher standards of living, businesses benefit. Protected public lands also encourage tourism and increase expenditures for local businesses. According to the Outdoor Industry Association, the outdoor recreation economy is responsible for \$14.9 billion in consumer spending and 147,600 direct jobs in Nevada.

We are ecstatic that President Obama, with the strong support of Congresswoman Dina Titus and Senator Harry Reid, made the courageous move to protect Gold Butte for future generations of Americans. The Gold Butte National Monument is an incredible addition to President Obama's already impressive conservation legacy.

Julie Young is general manager of Big Horn Olive Oil Co. in Las Vegas.

<http://www.rgj.com/story/opinion/voices/2017/01/05/one-view-gold-butte-designation-protects-great-assets/96212946>



Gold Butte National Monument Enhances Access

Guest Writer: Karl Gustaveson, Mesquite NV
Submitted: January 5, 2017

Assemblyman Chris Edwards makes several inaccurate statements in his January 3 editorial about the new Gold Butte National Monument. He claims that people will be shut out of the land and that the designation will “likely close off access to water.” This is simply not true.

Mr. Edwards clearly has not read the National Monument Proclamation for Gold Butte, the law that provides the overarching direction for how the land will be managed. If he read it, he would learn that the existing road network will remain in place and that all valid and existing rights of way, including water rights, are maintained. Even the Virgin Valley Water District stated that they are satisfied with the language in the Proclamation and confident they “will be able to do what we need to do,” as reported in a Jan. 2 article in this paper, “Water district to retain water rights in Gold Butte.” In the same article, BLM Field Manager

Gayle Marrs-Smith provided assurance that no additional roads will be closed.

Assemblyman Edwards is also wrong in his statement that the monument was designated “against the wishes of the majority of Nevadans.” In a recent poll, 71% of Nevadans across party lines supported the designation of Gold Butte as a National Monument. As a former Mesquite City Councilman, I have been involved with efforts to protect Gold Butte for many years. During this time, I have seen strong support for protection from Mesquite citizens and others in southern Nevada, notably including the Moapa Band of Paiutes and the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority. These entities have since issued statements in support of the National Monument designation. I hope that Assemblyman Edwards will take the time to listen more to his constituents and do his homework before making public statements.



Gold Butte

Guest Writer: Jim Boone

Published: January 3, 2017

I, like many others in the outdoors community, read with excitement your recent article “President Obama declares Gold Butte a national monument.” Years of efforts by a diverse coalition of people finally resulted in permanently setting aside the Gold Butte region for recreation, including hiking, hunting, camping, off-highway driving, horseback riding and other recreational uses. A poll even shows that 71 percent of Nevadans support the designation.

But the article states, “Conservatives have voiced concern about the lack of input in designations. Those concerns resulted in an armed standoff with Bundy, his sons and their supporters, including militia and patriot groups that had gathered on the family’s Bunkerville ranch in April 2014.” There is

no connection between these two ideas (designations and standoffs). The standoff was about some 20 years of court orders to remove cattle illegally grazing on public lands.

In addition, the article states, “The Bundy family, in a statement, said to Obama that ‘we are saddened, but not surprised, by your decision to make our ranch and home a national monument.’ ” This is false. Some 50,000 acres of the proposed national conservation area were not included in Gold Butte National Monument, and this 50,000 acres coincides with most of the former Bundy grazing allotment. The Bundy home is about 3¼ air-miles from the nearest point on the boundary, so the president did not make their home into a national monument.

Jim Boone
Las Vegas

<http://www.reviewjournal.com/opinion/letters/the-embarrassment-broken-escalators>

Find common ground

Guest writer: Chris Gorzalski, St. George, UT
Published: January 3, 2017

As a Southwest Utah resident, I am excited and relieved that the Bears Ears and Gold Butte monuments have been proclaimed. I have had the opportunity to explore both areas and have found a wealth of beauty and history in these amazing places. Whether sleeping under the darkest skies I have ever seen or hiking amongst ruins and art scattered among cliffs, the experience has humbled me. It has also made me feel that the land needed protection.

The first step in protection starts now. There will be many things to iron out. People will have different opinions.

I attended the meeting on Bears Ears in Bluff last summer when Secretary Jewell was in Utah. It was over 100 degrees, the crowd was too large for the venue, and there were strong conflicting views. But what I saw was civility. I sat next to an elderly woman who obviously had an opposing viewpoint and we talked and clapped for our sides. I have no doubt she knows and loves the land. My hope is that we can find common ground on these beautiful lands so that they will be enjoyed by generations to come.

<http://www.thespectrum.com/story/opinion/2017/01/03/find-common-ground/96124994/>



Thanks, Obama, for protecting Gold Butte

Guest Writer: Shevawn Von Tobel, Reno

Published: January 3, 2017

Thank you to President Obama for designating Gold Butte National Monument in southern Nevada. Nevadans have appreciated the recreational opportunities, the rich history of the region and the solitude that is unique to Gold Butte for many years. My husband and I love to camp and hike in Gold Butte and, over the years, we have seen reckless damage to the priceless natural resources that are in the region. President Obama and our Nevada elected leaders, Senator Reid and Congresswoman Titus, heeded the call and gave permanent protection to this iconic corner of southern Nevada - and not a moment too soon. Thank you President Obama for recognizing the treasure that Nevada has in Gold Butte and for protecting these resources for the next generations to enjoy just as we have.

<http://www.rgj.com/story/opinion/readers/2017/01/03/letter-thanks-obama-protecting-gold-butte/95969432/>

Thanks to officials for Gold Butte designation

Guest Writer: Kurt Kuznicki, Reno

Published: January 3, 2017

Thank you, President Obama, Senator Reid and Congresswoman Titus for listening to the voice of the majority of the American People and proclaiming Gold Butte a national monument. Gold Butte is a landscape beyond compare and is worthy of permanent protection. Gold Butte is home to rare and threatened plants and animals,

stunning rock formations and some of the most important Native American cultural sites in the Southwest. What we choose to save says a lot about who we are as people, what we choose to protect for present and future generations shapes our legacy. Future generations of Americans will say we got this one right

<http://www.rgj.com/story/opinion/readers/2017/01/03/letter-thanks-officials-gold-butte-designation/96062888/>

A great idea!

Guest writer: Michele Burkett, Mesquite NV

Published: January 2, 2017

Gold Butte National Monument, what a great idea! Let's protect the land and embrace our natural environment.

I live and do business in Mesquite and now we have a named monument in our backyard, finally some good news in the landslide of dreary news. If you don't already know, Nevadans have been working to protect the nationally significant cultural,

historic, and natural treasures in Gold Butte for decades and now their hard work has paid off.

I am thrilled that President Obama heard the call of thousands of Americans and the 71 percent of Nevadans who wanted to see Gold Butte protected as a national monument.

<http://www.thespectrum.com/story/opinion/mesquite/2017/01/02/letters-editor/96061646/>

San Francisco Chronicle

Obama's monumental legacy on nature

Writer: San Francisco Chronicle Editorial Staff
Published: January 2, 2017

President Obama designated two more culturally and historically distinct areas as national monuments last week, wading into one of the most divisive issues of our current political debate — the best use of the lands owned by all Americans. Obama did the right thing and he should expand two more national monuments — one in California and one in Oregon — before he leaves office.

With a Dec. 28 executive order, Obama established the Bears Ears National Monument, protecting from oil and mineral development 1.35 million acres of land in southeastern Utah with well-preserved Native American ancestral sites dating back 3,500 years. A commission of five American Indian tribes will help manage the lands. This is the first time a president has used the powers granted under the 1906 Antiquities Act to honor a tribal request to protect sites sacred to Native Americans.

While there was broad agreement the area deserved the designation, Utah's congressional delegation had attempted unsuccessfully for three years to pass legislation that offered protections but allowed mineral development. Now the delegation vows to work with the incoming Trump administration to overturn the president's order.

Obama also, at the insistence of Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., designated 300,000 acres east of Las Vegas rich with petroglyph panels and fossilized sand dunes as the Gold Butte National Monument. Local, state and federal land managers have worked for more than a

decade to formalize protections for the area as a rapidly expanding urban area put more pressure on the lands. When grazing permits were sold as part of that effort, only one family refused to recognize federal authority over land use — rancher Cliven Bundy, whose sons and followers occupied the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon last year as a protest.

Both those new monument areas are spectacular desert landscapes. Now the president should turn his attention to bringing more federal protection to one of California's most spectacular (and we have many) landscapes — our coastline.

Obama should add another 6,200 acres to the California Coastal National Monument to include the Cotoni-Coast Dairies in Santa Cruz County, Piedras Blancas Light Station in San Luis Obispo County, and Trinidad Headlands and Lighthouse Ranch in Humboldt County. The effort is supported by the San Luis Obispo and Santa Cruz boards of supervisors and the Trinidad Rancheria Tribal Council, as well as other tribal and business organizations. Since the monument was created in 2014, tourism has grown and economic revitalization is pronounced. Expansion would preserve historic sites and make access easier.

Similarly, the president should enlarge the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument on the California-Oregon border to protect its wildlife habitat. In an area where mountainous and desert regions intersect, the monument is unique — home

to both desert snakes and giant salamanders, which favor old-growth forests. It is a favored retreat of hikers, horsemen, fishermen and snowmobilers.

President Obama has an impressive environmental legacy, invoking 29 times the Antiquities Act, which allows a president to designate national monuments without the approval of Congress, to add 553 million acres of land and (in Obama's case, mostly waters) to our national system of land conservation.

The Republicans, who will control both houses of Congress and the White House after Jan. 20, have vowed to reverse these designations or attempt to curtail the federal law. The Antiquities Act gives the power to designate the lands as monument, but is silent on removing that status. A formal opinion written by the U.S. attorney general in 1938 says the act does not give a president the right to abolish a national monument. Expect a legal challenge in coming months that will determine the power of future presidents over public lands.

National monuments are managed under plans developed by federal managers with local communities and reflect local priorities. Unlike national parks, some monuments allow grazing, hunting — and dogs.

The United States is blessed with spectacular landscapes with rich cultural, historic and scientific values. Over the years, and as our nation's population has grown, attitudes toward our public lands have changed. The federal role has changed from real estate broker, to rental agent to, increasingly, steward of our national treasures.

We applaud President Obama for establishing Bears Ears and Gold Butte and encourage him in the few days left of his term to expand California Coastal and Cascade-Siskiyou national monuments. Nothing is more American than our lands. Every American should have the opportunity to share in their beauty, their vastness, and their power to inspire and restore.

<http://www.sfchronicle.com/opinion/editorials/article/Obama-s-monumental-legacy-on-nature-10830998.php>

Interior secretary, Congress should support Gold Butte

Writer: Las Vegas Sun Staff

Published: January 1, 2017

President Barack Obama, in collaboration with outgoing Sen. Harry Reid and Rep. Dina Titus, has gift-wrapped an opportunity for the Trump administration's presumptive secretary of the Interior to make an immediate splash in his new role.

The gift was designating Gold Butte a national monument.

The opportunity it presents the presumptive secretary, Ryan Zinke, is to protect public land and strike a blow against sovereign citizen extremists by working to ensure it receives adequate federal funding.

Gold Butte provided the backdrop in 2014 when rancher Cliven Bundy and his followers became involved in a standoff with federal authorities in nearby Bunkerville.

The feds were there to round up cattle that Bundy, without paying required federal fees, had allowed to graze in the area for years. Bundy, his family and their militia supporters were there to defy government authorities, who in their twisted view had no authority over the land.

As Nevadans remember all too well, the Bundy group won. During a standoff in which militia members pointed weapons at authorities — not just the feds, but Metro Police officers, as well — officials capitulated. They did the right thing in de-escalating the situation, but federal officials bungled the aftermath by failing to pursue and prosecute the individuals who raised

arms against duly-sworn law enforcement officials.

Now, the president-elect's administration and the Republican-controlled House and Senate should send the extremists a clear message that they're out of bounds by supporting Gold Butte.

That's where Zinke comes in.

Zinke, a former Navy SEAL, has made several statements indicating he opposes those like the Bundys.

"I will never agree with the transfer or sale of public lands," Zinke told the Montana Standard in October. "I view our public lands as sacred, and access to our public lands has to be part of it because we're shutting gates, we're closing roads and the public is losing access."

That said, Zinke's actual voting record has been less than ideal on land issues. The League of Conservation Voters gave him a 3 percent rating, and Salon reported that he consistently voted against any regulation that would protect public lands from environmental damage from business interests.

But Gold Butte gives Zinke an opportunity to put his money — or, more accurately, government funding — where his mouth is.

Although Obama's designation guarantees that the area will receive certain protections, whether it receives the funding to provide

proper security, maintenance and enhancement is in the hands of Congress.

That's where Zinke, with Trump's endorsement, would come in.

If Zinke is truly a proponent of keeping public lands in the government's hands, he has a chance to work toward ensuring that Gold Butte gets the support it needs to be protected.

Let's make no mistake: That's exactly what he should do. The area is a Nevada

environmental and cultural treasure, with its diversity of wildlife and its centuries-old petroglyphs. It should be kept as pristine as possible for future generations to enjoy.

The designation was a Christmas gift to Nevada and the entire nation from Obama, Titus and Reid, albeit one that arrived a few days late.

Now, Zinke should help make sure it's a gift that keeps on giving.

<https://vegasinc.com/news/2017/jan/01/interior-secretary-congress-should-support-gold-bu/>

Deseret News

New monument designation reflects conservative values

Guest writer: David Jenkins

Published: January 1, 2017

There is nothing more predictable than Utah officials, especially Congressman Rob Bishop, coming unglued over a national monument designation. And when that designation is located in Utah, you can expect the emotional equivalent of a nuclear meltdown.

That is exactly what happened when President Obama announced his designation of Bears Ears and Gold Butte national monuments.

The reaction is predictable because of Bishop and company's radical, deep-seated opposition to public lands ... and virtually any effort to protect them. Bishop is the anti-Theodore Roosevelt, and his agenda — which runs counter to our longstanding American conservation ethic — is not the least bit conservative.

As ironic as it may seem, Obama's decision to protect Bears Ears and Gold Butte reflects genuinely conservative values. Those designations are conservative irrespective of who designated them.

Ronald Reagan correctly pointed out, "What is a conservative after all, but one who conserves. ..." Reagan was echoing a stewardship ethic embraced by conservatives throughout history, including Abraham Lincoln, the aforementioned Teddy Roosevelt, and author Russell Kirk, whom Reagan labeled "the prophet of modern conservatism."

According to Kirk, "There is nothing more conservative than conservation."

It makes sense then that the Antiquities Act, which gives the president authority to designate national monuments, is a Republican idea. It was introduced in Congress by a Republican, passed by a Republican Congress and signed into law on June 11, 1906, by another Republican, President Roosevelt.

It specifically granted the president authority to designate monuments, because Congress had proven incapable of acting quickly or decisively enough to save America's cultural and natural heritage from plunder.

In the early 1900s, our nation faced a serious problem with the rampant looting and destruction of historic artifacts on public lands, much of which was done to turn a quick buck. Time after time, Congress failed to act quickly enough to preserve them.

There were similar concerns about the exploitation and abuse of the nation's wildlife and natural landscapes. Birds and mammals had been hunted to near extinction for the feather hat and fur market, iconic geologic features had been defaced or otherwise damaged, and entire landscapes had been stripped bare of trees.

That was the sad state of affairs prior to passage of this law. America's cultural and natural wealth was being ruined by a voracious and unchecked greed.

Apparently, not that much has changed in 110 years.

With Bears Ears beset by threats, including the same kind of looting and vandalism the Antiquities Act was designed to prevent, Congressman Bishop was given every opportunity to come up with legislation protecting the area. Instead, he peddled his broader and much maligned Public Lands Initiative (PLI) as the answer.

Not only does Bishop's PLI offer inadequate protections for Bears Ears, much of it is an unprecedented giveaway to the very interests seeking to exploit the region — and other public lands in Utah — for short-term gain or gratification.

Nevada's Gold Butte area is experiencing similar threats. Vandalism of historical sites and other resource damage has been well documented, as has illegal activities by the militant Bundy clan and its supporters.

As with Bears Ears, the outlook for legislative protection is dim. A bill to protect

Gold Butte has been bottled up in Congress and shows no sign of moving.

The Rob Bishops of the world despise the Antiquities Act for the very reason our nation's most genuine and thoughtful conservatives have embraced it, because it enables the president — or Congress — to place America's long-term national interests above greed-driven parochial ones. Bears Ears and Gold Butte belong to all of us. They are shining examples of America's history, its cultures and its spectacular natural beauty. We should all be grateful for the added protection these designations afford.

President Reagan, as he so often did, put our responsibility for such assets in the proper perspective when he said, "This is our patrimony. This is what we leave to our children. And our great moral responsibility is to leave it to them either as we found it or better than we found it."

David Jenkins is the president of Conservatives for Responsible Stewardship, a national nonprofit organization.

<http://www.deseretnews.com/article/865670251/My-view-New-monument-designation-reflects-conservative-values.html>



Gold Butte designation is a win for Nevada, and for all Americans

Guest Writer: Representative-Elect Ruben Kihuen
Published: December 30, 2016

This past November I was humbled to be elected to represent the people of Nevada's 4th District. The 4th District encompasses all that Nevada and the West are made of—rural and urban communities that are made of all races and ages, and steel and concrete landscapes as well as rugged mountains and pristine deserts. The beauty of both wide open spaces existing in the same space as urban development is the wonder of the West.

During my campaign, I highlighted my passionate support for the protection of our public lands because they are both an essential part of our American heritage and an economic engine.

In Nevada alone, the outdoor recreation economy generates 148,000 jobs and \$14.9 billion, that's Billion, dollars in consumer spending. These are jobs that can help revitalize rural economies as many of our public lands are in more rural communities. These are jobs that can't be outsourced, and more of these jobs can be created with even more focus on protecting our public lands portfolio.

Take for example, my Congressional district. It is now home to two new national monuments, Basin and Range and our newest National Monument, Gold Butte. Both exist near small towns that could stand to benefit from the exposure a new National Monument can bring. In a recent study, Outside Las Vegas Foundation found that a modest but sizable increase in

jobs and other economic benefits would occur in the town of Mesquite if Gold Butte was permanently protected. Not to mention, being near public lands increases property values and quality of life for local residents.

As a Nevadan I couldn't be more thrilled that President Obama decided recently to give Gold Butte, Nevada's piece of the Grand Canyon, the full protection it deserves. This newest national monument designation in Nevada means that we now have the tools to properly safeguard Gold Butte's thousands of awe-inspiring rock formations, ancient petroglyphs, and rare wildlife for all Nevadans to enjoy. I believe this will be remembered as a major part of President Obama's impressive legacy of conserving our natural treasures. The use of Antiquities Act is a time honored tradition that both Republican and Democratic Presidents alike have used to protect important natural and historical sites.

It is frustrating that the President had to use executive authority to protect this important site, especially when 71% of Nevadans support Gold Butte's permanent protection. The effort to protect Gold Butte has been over a decade long legislative effort, driven by the many local Nevadans who live near it and the Moapa Band of Paiutes who consider Gold Butte sacred ground. Gold Butte has had a number of champions working to push for its preservation, including Sen. Harry Reid, Rep. Dina Titus, and former Reps. Shelley Berkley, and

Steven Horsford. However, we have a Republican majority in Congress that sees public lands as nothing more than a potential piggy bank for private interests.

When I am sworn in on Jan. 3, I will continue the fight my predecessors and colleagues started to ensure Congress is working to protect our lands and historic sites for the public good, not seizing our them for private profit. America's natural

wonders and historic sites embody who we are as a country, and it's time that all of us came together to protect them.

Ruben Kihuen was elected to serve Nevada's 4th District this past November. Prior to his election he served in Nevada's legislature as a State senator. He is the first Latino to serve as a member of Congress from Nevada.

<http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/energy-environment/312258-gold-butte-designation-is-a-win-for-nevada-and-for-all>



Gold Butte National Monument will boost Las Vegas Reputation

Guest Writer: Leora Olivas

Submitted: December 30, 2016

I have the pleasure of serving on the board of Friends of Gold Butte, a small organization working to protect the resources within the newly-designated National Monument. The group has been working for over a decade, started by folks in Mesquite who wanted to ensure this special place would be preserved for future generations. They've taken folks out to discover the landscapes and cultural heritage that makes Gold Butte so special, and once I visited I decided to get involved in the effort to protect the land.

The threats are real, from damage to petroglyphs to illegal offroading to garbage and more. These add up to erode the

experience for everybody – the hiker and ATVer, hunter and wildlife watcher alike. We've worked to get a conservation designation for years, and held a variety of community meetings in addition to educational outings. Action was long overdue, and I applaud President Obama, Senator Reid, and Rep. Titus for their work to protect Gold Butte.

Gold Butte National Monument will add to the reputation of Las Vegas as a great outdoors gateway. It will provide a draw for people to visit and stay in Mesquite. And we're committed to work on a management plan that preserves access and enjoyment for all forms of recreation on our public lands."

Bears Ears And Gold Butte National Monuments Honor Our Service

Guest Writer: Garrett Reppenhagen

Published: December 29, 2016

Thanks to President Obama, the new national monuments at Bears Ears and Gold Butte will provide areas for future generations to enjoy exploring nature and learning about the history of indigenous cultures.

Protected open spaces are also important to veterans reintegrating to civilian life. Nevada based, Marine Corps veteran Ray Curry said in [a Las Vegas Sun article](#), “The healing nature that our public lands offer for veterans cannot be understated. Without the ability to use our national parks, forests and conservation lands, the transition back to civilian life for many veterans after coming home from Afghanistan or Iraq would have been much more difficult. Whether it’s reconnecting with family and friends or hunting, fishing, hiking and exploring back roads, or finding peace and solitude, our public lands provide opportunities for it all.”

Gold Butte - Nevada’s piece of the Grand Canyon - is beloved by Nevadans and visitors from throughout the country and across the world who come to hike, camp, hunt, ride ATVs on designated routes, climb, explore cultural and historical sites, and otherwise enjoy the great outdoors. I am grateful that these incredible experiences will forever be available to me and to future generations of Americans.

The Gold Butte National Monument will preserve a region that is rich in cultural, natural and historical resources, including ancient petroglyphs, caves, agave roasting pits and camp sites dating back at least

3,000 years, as well as artifacts from Spanish exploration in the 1700s, and pioneer mining camps from the 1800s.

The monument will conserve habitat for numerous wildlife species, including desert tortoise, desert bighorn sheep, the banded Gila monster, great horned owls and a great variety of reptiles, birds and mammals.

Nevada is home to a proud military tradition that includes Nellis and Creech Air Force bases, the Hawthorne Army Depot, and Fallon Naval Air Station, as well as being the home to one of the largest veteran populations in the country per capita. Nevada contains some of the most breathtaking wilderness in the country and, for many, the defense of the nation and the defense of its public lands go hand in hand. Indeed, protection and conservation of lands for public use and enjoyment is a proud military tradition going back for generations.

Bears Ears - Americans most significant cultural landscape - lies in Southern Utah, north of the Navajo Nation and the San Juan River, east of the Colorado River, and west of the Ute Mountain Ute Reservation. It earns its name for the twin buttes in the heart of a landscape that rise high above the piñon-juniper forests, deep canyons, inspiring arches, and arresting red rock formations that adorn the renowned and majestic Cedar Mesa.

The inter-tribal led coalition has been attempting to safeguard the more than 100,000 Native American cultural sites in

this landscape for over 80 years. Many tribes throughout the southwest have ancestral connections to these lands, which is why all the Tribal governments in the region, local grassroots Navajo and Ute people and the vast majority of the citizens of Utah support the monument designation.

Protection of Bears Ears will help end the rampant and ongoing grave robbing, looting and destruction of sacred sites. These acts literally rob Native American people of spiritual connections, as well as a sense of place and history. The national monument honors our Native American's deep connection with these lands, while ensuring continued access for current traditional uses. Native Americans are a foundation of the U.S. Military and serve more than any other American demographic. Code Talkers were vital to success in World War II, and over 42,000 tribal members served in Vietnam. It is a salute to these brave men and women to finally protect their ancestral lands.

Utah Air Force Veteran Barry Bonifas said, "I first discovered the Bears Ears area shortly after I left the USAF. I've been returning to it, when I feel the need for restoration, for almost half a century. It is such a special and unique place. I can't

remember anyone who hasn't been astounded by the beautiful mesas and canyons filled with ruins and art."

Military veterans proved their support for President Obama designating Bears Ears as a National Monument in a Vet Voice Foundation (VVF) [letter signed by 247 veterans](#) from the Four Corners states (UT, CO, NM, and AZ), including 35 Utah veterans. The monument protects over 1 million acres of public lands, preserves more than 100,000 Native American cultural sites, and also protects incredible recreation opportunities for visitors and important habitat for iconic American wildlife.

Thank you, President Obama, for listening to local Nevada and Utah residents, veterans, Tribes, business owners, community and tourism leaders, as well as citizens throughout the country who understood the urgent need to protect these magnificent places. We applaud your action and will work with advocates around the region and the country to protect and preserve the legacy you and so many presidents before you established through your Antiquities Act designations.

Water district to retain water rights in Gold Butte

 mesquitelocalnews.com/2017/01/water-district-to-retain-water-rights-in-gold-butte/

By Stephanie
Frehner

1/2/2017

Virgin Valley Water District Manager Kevin Brown is confident with the district's current relationship with the Bureau of Land Management that the district be able to get all the water it needs from its resources in Gold Butte.

"We have all the right of ways we need," Brown said.

Brown is referring to six different springs located in what is now the Gold Butte National Monument as proclaimed on Dec. 28 by President Barack Obama. The monument encompasses 296,937 acres south of Mesquite and includes two smaller areas designated as Wilderness Areas, Lime Canyon and Jumbo Springs.

Management of the area will be taken on by Gayle Marrs-Smith, a field manager at the Las Vegas Headquarters for the BLM. Marrs-Smith said eventually there will be a monument manager, park ranger and other law enforcement officials as the implementation of a Resource Management Plan is carried out. That plan, however, will not be completed for some time as it still needs to be created with the help of public input.

"We look forward to working with everyone on this," she said. "We plan on making sure everyone is heard and the plan meets the needs of the people."

While the preferred language wasn't used, Brown is pleased there were provisions included for the water district. "It is what it is, and we'll deal with it. Even though they didn't use the exact wording we wanted in the proclamation, they did include language that I feel, based on our relationship, we'll be able to do what we need to do," he said.

Marrs-Smith confirmed that nothing will change for the water district. "It is clearly stated in the proclamation that they will keep what they have. The only way that would change is if they gave it up."

Brown said while the development of the six springs the VVWD owns rights to in the monument may not be for another 25 to 30 years, change in management for the BLM, higher government and the VVWD is almost certain. Because of the verbiage in the proclamation, nothing will be changed regardless of who is in charge.

While the management plan will take some time to develop, Marrs-Smith insists meetings with the shareholders, or people and organizations with direct ties to the monument, should begin close to the end of January or into February. Notices should be published through the County Commissioner's office and other media entities to ensure that everyone is able to have an equal chance of putting in their two cents on the management plan. She also said the time table for completion of the plan is slated for three years.

The plan will lay out rules and regulations that will be imposed, enforced and the improvements and conservation to several vital areas in the perimeter. Marrs-Smith said her office will seek funding for the projects planned and to maintain management.

Other concerns that have been expressed in previous discussions with the BLM include road closures. Some have noticed on a map that there have been about 15 roads closed. Marrs-Smith said these roads were actually closed back in 2007, and some visitors to the area had used them anyway. She reiterated there will be no additional road closures, and the management team will be placing new signage to mark those roads better. "I'm very pleased," she said, "that those who have used the roads have done minimal amounts of incursions."

Other local entities, such as Overton Power District and the City of Mesquite shared in Brown's satisfaction that the VVWD will be able to maintain its rights to the resources in Gold Butte, but do not have a direct or immediate conflict with the designation of the monument.

“Our closest line is two miles from the area,” said OPD General Manager Mendis Cooper. “It doesn’t directly affect us, as there aren’t any customers in that area.”

While Mesquite continues to grow, moving towards the west along Interstate 15, Bunkerville will be unable to expand southward once they reach the area closest to the border of the designated monument.

Mesquite Mayor Al Litman said he was disappointed with the way that the designation was obtained, stating that “it would have been better had it gone through legislation (instead of the Antiquities Act).”

Economic impact of protected lands: References to recent studies and published reports

People love protected lands and they will travel, spend money, and relocate to areas that are in proximity to protected lands. The City of Mesquite will certainly benefit from a national monument designation for Gold Butte. Below is a list of recently published reports and studies that have sought to quantify this impact.

- In June 2017, Headwaters Economics, a non-profit organization, released a study titled “The Economic Importance of National Monuments to Communities.” Building off a previous analysis completed in 2016, the firm reported that updated 2017 results—like the earlier studies in 2011 and 2014—found that the local economies surrounding all 17 of the national monuments studied expanded following the creation of the new national monuments.
2016: <http://headwaterseconomics.org/public-lands/federal-lands-performance>.
2017: <https://headwaterseconomics.org/public-lands/protected-lands/national-monuments/>
 - Rural counties in the West with more federal lands or protected federal lands performed better on average than their peers with less federal lands or protected federal lands in four key economic measures: population, employment, personal income and per capita income.
 - From 1970-2014, western rural counties with the highest share of **federal lands** on average had faster population, employment, personal income, and per capita income growth than their peers with the lowest share of federal lands.
 - Similarly, from 1970-2014, counties with the highest share of **protected federal lands** on average performed better for population, employment, personal income, and per capita income growth than those with the least protected federal lands.
 - Some rural counties are struggling and are searching for ways to benefit from nearby federal lands. While every county has unique circumstances, the changing economy of the West has impacted all counties and altered the role and importance of nearby public lands
- In April 2016, the Pew Charitable Trusts published a study titled "Quiet Recreation on Public Lands: Economic Contribution 2014."
http://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/assets/2016/03/quiet_recreation_on_blm_managed_land_economic_contribution_2014.pdf?la=en
 - The study summarized the economic impact of non-motorized outdoor activities on BLM-managed land across the U.S. In Nevada alone, there were 3.9 million visits to BLM lands in 2014 generating \$168 million in direct spending, \$172 million in overall spending, and over 1,600 jobs. You can read a summary on the measured impact in Nevada on this link:
http://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/assets/2016/03/wli_nv_quietrec_final.pdf?la=en
- Also in April 2016 the Small Business Majority released a study titled "Economic Impacts of Obama Administration Natural National Monuments" which looked at the impact to local economies after President Obama designated National Monuments in adjacent areas. The

Economic impact of protected lands: References to recent studies and published reports

report can be viewed on this link: <http://www.smallbusinessmajority.org/our-research/outdoor-economy/report-economic-impacts-obama-administration-natural-national-monuments>.

- The study found that National Monument visitation results in approximately \$58 million in labor income per year, with the lodging industries produces the most labor income in the local economy (\$10.5 million). Other key sectors supported by visitor spending include restaurants (\$7.4 million) and gasoline (\$8.7 million) and Average expenditures made by non-local visitors whose primary trip purpose was to visit one of the national monuments total \$129 million, while local visitors spend about \$51 million on primary trips to the national monuments.
- In November 2015, the Outside Las Vegas Foundation, a non-profit organization released a report titled “Gold Butte National Conservation Area: Economic Impact.” The firm Applied Analysis conducted the study. You can download the study from this link: <http://www.outsidelasvegas.org/gold-butte-economic-analysis/>
 - This study found that designation and preservation of the area would draw an additional 35,000 visitor trips per year and that if only 10 percent of the projected visitors to a Gold Butte stayed in Mesquite, it would have an economic impact of \$2.7 million dollars for the community.
- In March 2015, the Center for Western Priorities produced a report titled “The Golden Rush: How Public Lands Draw Retirees and Create Economic Growth.” The report can be downloaded on this link: <http://westernpriorities.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/The-Golden-Rush.pdf>
 - The study concluded that retirees are three times more likely to move to Western counties with protected lands. The report describes the multiplier effect that new retirees have on the economy and how new jobs are created in many industry sectors including health services, construction, housing, banking, restaurants, and entertainment.
- February 2013, the Outdoor Industry Association released a report that calculated the economic impact of outdoor recreation in the United States in 2012. You can read the study on this link: <https://outdoorindustry.org/research-tools/outdoor-recreation-economy/>.
 - In Nevada alone, outdoor recreation generated \$14.9 billion in consumer spending, \$1 billion in state and local tax revenue, 147,600 jobs were attributed to outdoor recreation generating \$4.8 billion in wages and salaries.

Memorandum

To: Mauricia Baca
From: Jeremy Aguero, Applied Analysis
Date: November 16, 2015
Subject: Gold Butte Economic Study | Public Release
CC: Brian Gordon, Applied Analysis; Chris Drury, Applied Analysis

Applied Analysis was retained by the Outside Las Vegas Foundation to review and analyze the economic impacts associated with visitors to a designated Gold Butte National Conservation Area (NCA). Applied Analysis employed a two-step analytical approach, first estimating a stabilized visitor count for Gold Butte and then quantifying the economic impact of these visitors. Below is a brief summary of the key findings from our report as originally issued in February 2014.

Summary of Findings

- **Visitation to the Gold Butte area is likely to increase as a result of the designation.**
The analysis found that Gold Butte's proximity to nearby cities, including both Mesquite and Las Vegas, as well as various other nearby national parks, monuments, and recreation areas provide a reasonable expectation that designation and preservation of the area would draw an additional 35,000 visitor trips per year.
- **Gold Butte visitors are likely to visit other southern Nevada locales as well.**
The study found that while most visitors to Bureau of Land Management (BLM) sites are day-visitors, a small, 10 percent subset of these visitors will require hotel or motel facilities, providing a potential boon to the nearby city of Mesquite.
- **Additional economic impact is expected from visitors to Mesquite.**
In addition to the normal economic impact expected from the average BLM visitor to Gold Butte, Mesquite businesses have the opportunity to capture new overnight visitors, who will need lodging, entertainment, and food and beverages. If just 10 percent of these new visitors to Gold Butte decided to spend the night in Mesquite, the total economic impact for the community would be \$2.7 million per year, creating 28 full-time jobs throughout the community.
- **Other further potential economic impacts are possible as a result of the designation.**
Though the visitation would provide most of the substantial impacts of designation, additional benefits could result as well. Construction of infrastructure as well as additional resources provided at the site by the BLM could provide additional benefit.

If you have any additional questions or comments, please feel free to contact Jeremy Aguero at (702) 967-3333

Executive Summary

The Antiquities Act of 1906 authorizes protection of public lands through national monument designation. At the time this report was written, President Obama had designated 17 new national monuments and two monument expansions.¹ This preservation of public lands benefits local economies and small businesses as they attract visitors to these often-rural areas. Monument visitors spend money on entrance fees, lodging, meals, and other retail items from local businesses during their trip—providing an economic boost to local communities. These economic benefits to rural communities are an important component when considering the total value of public land protection.

This study quantifies the economic impacts associated with visitation to national monuments designated by an Obama Administration executive order.² For the purposes of this study, Obama-designated national monuments are categorized by type. The first category of national monuments is comprised of historical resources such as decommissioned forts and historical houses (e.g., Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Monument). The second category of national monuments includes unique and pristine natural or cultural resources (e.g., Chimney Rock National Monument). This study evaluates national monuments protecting natural or cultural resources.³

National monuments strengthen local and regional economies by attracting a substantial number of visitors each year from outside the local region, many of whom spend multiple days in the area spending money at local businesses and contributing to the local economy. Monument-related visitor expenditures are especially important in rural areas where local economies and small businesses may be particularly reliant on income derived from tourism and outdoor recreation.

BBC estimated direct spending by visitors to the national monuments examined for this study and used well-known economic modeling techniques involving IMPLAN multipliers to calculate the secondary (induced and indirect) economic benefits. Economic benefits are expressed in the labor income and economic output supported by out-of-region visitor spending. Economic output is generally synonymous with economic activity or consumption.

As shown in Figure 1 on the following page, the combined natural and cultural national monuments have a total economic impact of \$156 million per year on the local economies surrounding the monuments, including direct and secondary impacts. These estimates are based on an average of 3.9 million non-local visitors per year between 2011 and 2015.

Figure 2 on the following page presents labor income impacts associated with non-local visitor spending. Economic activity generated by national monument visitation contributes \$58 million in labor income per year in the local communities surrounding the national monuments.

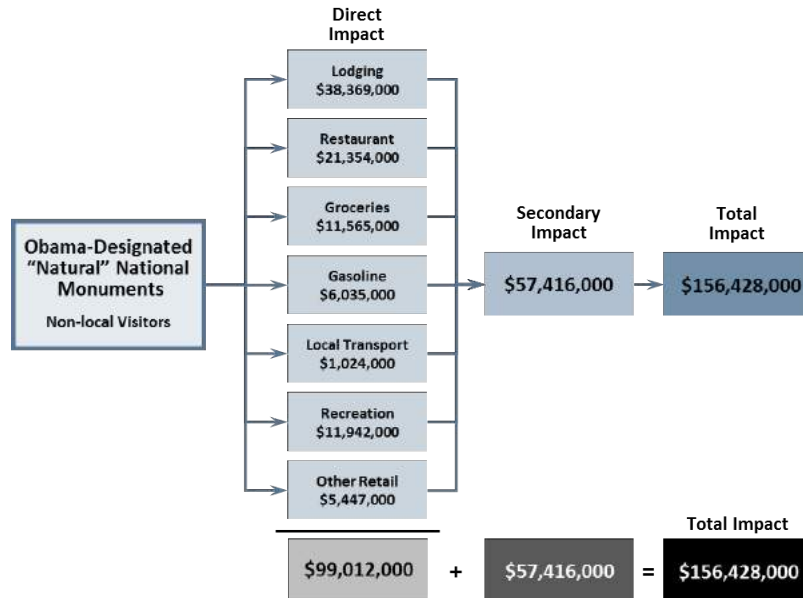
The economic impacts discussed in this report benefit all residents, workers, and business owners in the local communities surrounding the national monuments. Small businesses are uniquely positioned to derive economic benefit from the travel, tourism and outdoor recreation preserved by national monument designation, as they account for the majority of all firms and employment in the leisure and hospitality industry. National monuments bring tourism dollars into their places of business and help attract talented employees, and the majority of small business owners support continued protection of public lands.

¹ Since the initial draft of this report, President Obama also designated the California Desert National Monuments (Mojave Trails, Sand to Snow and Castle Mountains). They are not included in the analysis.

² During Obama's presidency, Congress also designated two new national monuments; those are not considered in this study.

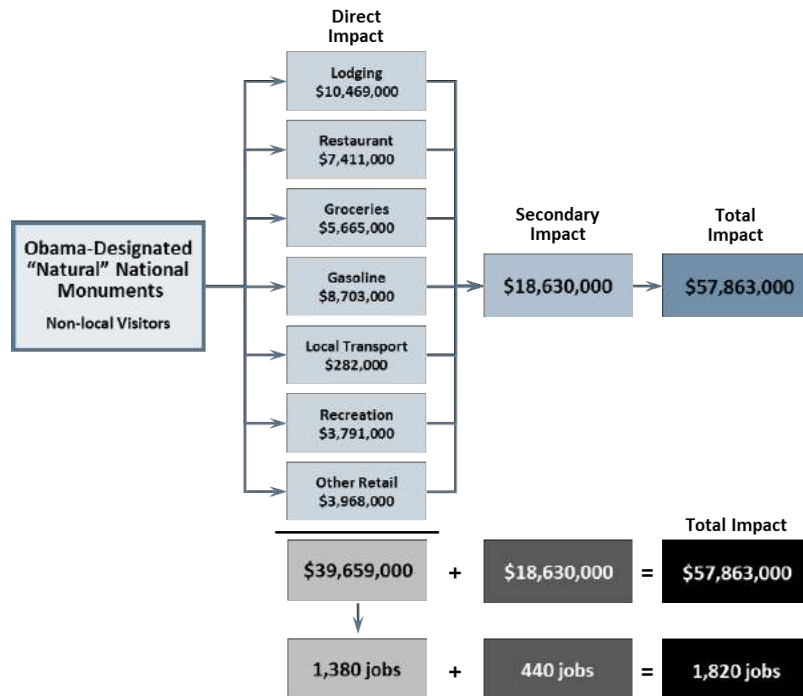
³ Rational for this exclusion is discussed on page 3.

Figure 1.
Annual Economic Impact of National Monuments



Note: Direct Expenditures reported net of taxes (sales, lodging and excise).
 Source: BBC Research & Consulting, 2016. Based on IMPLAN Regional Input-Output Modeling System.

Figure 2.
Annual Labor Income and Employment Impacts of National Monuments



Source: BBC Research & Consulting, 2016. Based on IMPLAN Regional Input-Output Modeling System.