

Cultural Survival

Indigenous Peoples' Rights

<https://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/cultural-survival-condemns-trumps-decision-reverse-bears-ears-national-monument>

Campaign and Advocacy

President Trump illegal decision to shrink the Bears Ears Monument on December 5, 2017, reversing the Obama administrations designation of Bears Ears as a National Monument in Utah, is an attack on Tribal sovereignty and self-determination and a measure that is continuing the Trump administrations discriminatory treatment of Native Peoples in the United States. Trumps recent decisions include issuing permits to the Dakota Access and Keystone XL pipelines, the revoking the executive order to protect the Bering Sea, and the recent opening of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for oil and gas leases, demonstrate the blatant disregard for Native Peoples rights.

Bears Ears has been home to Native Peoples since time immemorial and is a place of cultural and spiritual significance for the Navajo, Hopi, Ute, Ute Mountain Ute, and Zuni Peoples. The five Tribal governments, in unity, worked hard with the Obama administration to secure formal protections under US law for the creation of a National Monument, protecting the 100,000 plus structures, sites, and objects found on the land and barring extractive industries from operating in the area. The Obama administration also guaranteed hunting, fishing, gathering and grazing rights of Native People with the creation of the National Monument.

Trumps executive order to shrink the monument by 1.1 million acres, more than 85 percent, degrades the agreement reached between the Tribes and the federal government. Under the US Antiquities Act, the president may create national monuments, not modify or revoke existing monuments. Only Congress has this power. No president has ever revoked and replaced a national monument before.

The Trump administration failed to meaningfully consult Tribal governments and has violated international standards like the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which the Obama administration endorsed in 2010, guaranteeing Indigenous Peoples the right to free, prior and informed consent in matters concerning them. We are encouraged by the actions taken by the five Tribes to sue the President and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, and hold faith for justice to prevail on this matter.

We stand in solidarity.

Suzanne Benally
(Santa Clara Tewa)
Cultural Survival
Executive Director

[Gwich'in Steering Committee Responds to Trumps Sale of Sacred Lands in the Arctic Refuge](#)

[Native Solidarity with Black Lives Matter as Both Communities Confront Centuries-Long State Violence](#)

[Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Reservation Disestablished by Trump Administration: Urgent Action Needed](#)

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are headquartered on [Massachusetts land](#), in Cambridge, MA, and we thank the past and current Indigenous stewards of this land.

Cultural Survival advocates for Indigenous Peoples' rights and supports Indigenous communities self-determination, cultures and political resilience, since 1972.

Cultural Survival envisions a future that respects and honors Indigenous Peoples' inherent rights and dynamic cultures, deeply and richly interwoven in lands, languages, spiritual traditions, and artistic expression, rooted in self-determination and self-governance.

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