



## Bears Ears National Monument Designation

RESOLUTION: THE UTAH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION OPPOSES THE PRESIDENTIAL DESIGNATION OF THE BEARS EARS NATIONAL MONUMENT THROUGH AUTHORITY OF THE ANTIQUITIES ACT OF 1906

**Adopted by USBA Delegate Assembly, August 20, 2016**

WHEREAS, considerable funding for the Utah public education system comes from the extraction of natural resources in Utah, and

WHEREAS, continued opportunity for natural resource development is vital to the economy of San Juan County and the State of Utah providing tax revenue which supports the education of Utah students both in Southeast Utah and statewide and is taxable, and

WHEREAS, only 8% of the land in San Juan County is privately owned, and

WHEREAS, Access to public land is vital to the economic and social welfare of the residents of the County, schools, roads, hospitals, and other basic necessities of a County are understood by local elected officials, and

WHEREAS, Special Interest groups have proposed a 1.9 million acre National Monument in San Juan County, Utah, and

WHEREAS, the federal government and San Juan County have a common interest in public lands and how they are used. Special interest groups have a much narrower objective which does not take into account the real needs of funding public education.

WHEREAS, Utah School Boards Association opposes the unilateral and unwarranted Presidential designation of a Monument, which is opposed by the local elected officials, the Utah House of Representatives, and Utah’s Congressional Representatives, and

WHEREAS, local officials are in the best position to identify threats and solutions for funding education while protecting assets to ensure continued tax revenue through multiple land use on public lands, and

WHEREAS, San Juan County is already home to Natural Bridges National Monument, Hovenweep National Monument, Canyonlands National Park, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Dark Canyon Wilderness, Grand Gulch Wilderness Area, and more than 400,000 acres of Wilderness Study area, and

WHEREAS, the unique, mostly intact archeological record found throughout San Juan County is of interest to many local residents and visitors and is sacred to numerous Native American Tribes. This archaeological record is also of great significance to American history and scientific research, and

WHEREAS, Native American Tribes maintain deep connections and commitments to the lands within San Juan County and continue to rely on and utilize these lands for practicing ceremonies, spiritual rejuvenation, gathering herbs, firewood and cedar poles and posts, hunting for game, and caretaking of sacred places, and

WHEREAS, many local residents, many with early pioneer heritage, have similarly strong attachments to the land and associated lifestyles, both vocational and avocational; and many visitors develop similar attachments and appreciation for these landscapes, and

WHEREAS, San Juan County is the poorest county in Utah and one of the poorest counties in the nation, San Juan School District relies heavily on activities on public lands to fund public education, and

WHEREAS, 176,000 acres of Utah Land Trust is within the proposed national monument designation, and

WHEREAS, a monument designation would eliminate the ability of the State of Utah to access almost all of the 176,000 acres of Utah Land Trust Lands which have been set aside to produce income to support Utah public schools

THEREFORE, be it resolved that The Utah School Boards Association, represents all 41 public school districts in Utah and does hereby declare opposition to the designation of 1.9 million acres as a National Monument, and call on all to acknowledge that existing federal and State land-use laws and regulations provide adequate protection for this landscape.

UTAH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION supports land-use decisions of this magnitude to be done only by means of the representative process.