

RE: Oppose Efforts to Block New Parks or Repeal Protections for Parks and Monuments

January 17, 2017

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the over 170 undersigned organizations and our millions of members across the country, we are writing to strongly urge you to OPPOSE any “blocking new parks bills” like S. 33 or other attempts to undermine the Antiquities Act or repeal protections for new parks and monuments.

Less than a week into the new Congress, multiple bills have been filed to gut the law that first protected nearly half of our national parks – the Antiquities Act. Additionally, Members of Congress in both chambers have indicated their intention to advance efforts to repeal protections for existing parks and monuments – with the House even voting to make it easier to give away our public lands.

Since its enactment over a hundred years ago, the Antiquities Act has been one of our nation’s most critical conservation tools for preserving our nation’s most important public lands and waters. Our national parks and monuments and other protected public lands and waters unite all Americans by protecting our shared American heritage for future generations to enjoy. The sheer diversity of historic, cultural, and natural treasures that have been protected by the Antiquities Act is the reason why hundreds of groups representing sportsmen, cultural heritage organizations, evangelicals, conservation, recreation businesses, historic preservation, and many others all oppose efforts to undermine this vital law.

The American people, including the millions of members we represent, overwhelmingly oppose efforts to block establishment of new parks and repeal protections for the places they love. According to Colorado College’s Conservation in the West Poll, 80% of western voters support “future presidents continuing to protect existing public lands as national monuments.” This poll reinforces other surveys that document widespread public opposition to congressional attacks on new parks. In a December 2014 Hart Research Poll, 90% of Americans support the permanent protection of some public lands, monuments, wildlife refuges and wilderness. Americans want more protected public lands, not less! We believe that the Senate should listen to the American public and celebrate our National Park System and work towards making it even more inclusive of our nation’s diverse history and cultures, not attack the ability to add to it!

Our organizations and the diverse array of members and interests we represent are united in our support for our national parks and monuments. Our national parks and monuments protect our uniquely American heritage and we stand with the overwhelming majority of our fellow Americans in defending them from efforts to block new parks and repeal protections for existing parks and monuments. We urge you to stand with our national parks and monuments and OPPOSE all bills to block new parks bills – like S. 33 – and attempts to repeal protections for existing monuments.

Sincerely,

The Wilderness Society
NAACP

Conservation Alliance
Vet Voice Foundation

Friends of Cedar Mesa
Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance
Californians for Western Wilderness
Soda Mountain Wilderness Council
San Juan Citizens Alliance
Los Padres ForestWatch
The Praxis Project
The Ocean Project
Mission Blue
Crow Canyon Archaeological Center
Western Environmental Law Center
Tuleyome
Outside Las Vegas Foundation
Friends of Organ Mountains - Desert Peaks
Alaska Wilderness League
Earthjustice
National Geographic Pristine Seas
WILDCOAST
Surfrider Foundation
Grand Canyon Trust
Hispanic Access Foundation
Hispanic Federation
Islanders for the San Juan Islands National Monument
Center for Biological Diversity
Defenders of Wildlife
Conserve Southwest Utah
National Parks Conservation Association
Marine Conservation Institute
Arizona Wilderness Coalition
Pacific Environment
Wilderness Workshop
Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Oregon Natural Desert Association
Rocky Mountain Wild
Natural Resources Council of Maine
Appalachian Mountain Club
Maine Conservation Voters
Maine Sierra Club
Grand Valley Audubon Society
Animal Protection of New Mexico
Animal Protection Voters
New Mexico Wilderness Alliance
California Wilderness Coalition (CalWild)
New Mexico Voices for Children
Next100 Coalition
Klamath Forest Alliance

Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC)
Mystic Aquarium
League of Conservation Voters
Ventana Wilderness Alliance
The California Chaparral Institute
EcoFlight
Conservation Colorado
Quiet Use Coalition
Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters
Texas League of Conservation Voters
Oceana
High Country Conservation Advocates
Western Colorado Congress
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Sierra Club
Conservatives for Responsible Stewardship
Archaeology Southwest
Conservation Lands Foundation
Conejos Clean Water
Friends and Neighbors of the Deschutes Canyon Area (FANs)
Natural Resources Defense Council
American Rivers
Coalition to Protect America's National Parks
Conservation Law Foundation
Bodie Hills Conservation Partnership
Friends of Agua Fria National Monument
Friends of the Inyo
Environment America
Colorado Outdoor Business Alliance
Mojave Desert Land Trust
Scenic America
Azul
Dolores River Boating Advocates
Friends of Gold Butte
Verde Brand Communications
Hala Gear
Patagonia Denver
Monterey Bay Aquarium
Friends of Nevada Wilderness
Peninsula Open Space Trust
Maine Audubon
Partnership for Responsible Business
Arizona Conservation Partners
Council of Mexican Federations
Native American Land Conservancy
Latino Outdoors

Las Cruces Green Chamber of Commerce
Sequoia ForestKeeper
National Audubon Society
Amah Mutsun Tribal Band
West Virginia Rivers Coalition
Sempervirens Fund
Michigan League of Conservation Voters
Evangelical Environmental Network
New Mexico Wildlife Federation
Amargosa Conservancy
Grand Staircase Escalante Partners
West Virginia Environmental Council
West Virginia Sierra Club
West Virginia Wilderness Coalition
Partnership for the National Trails System
Food & Water Watch
Elders Rising
WildEarth Guardians
Western Watersheds Project
The Wildlands Conservancy
Nevada Conservation League
Environmental Learning for Kids (ELK)
Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center
Coloradoans for Utah Wilderness
Mendocino Land Trust
New Mexico Friends of Utah Wilderness
Wasatch Mountain Club
Friends of the Ironwood Forest
Great Salt Lake Audubon
West Virginia Highlands Conservancy
Hilltromper
FishWise
Mattole Restoration Council
Friends of the Desert Mountains
Audubon Rockies
Audubon Dakota
Mormon Environmental Stewardship Alliance
Santa Fe Green Chamber of Commerce
Battle Born Progress
Greenpeace
Outdoor Project
Fishpond
Lotus Alpine Adventures
Sea to Summit
Powder7
The Frontera Land Alliance
Trust for Public Land
Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition

Wild Connections
Central Colorado Wilderness Coalition
Wild Utah Project
Morongo Basin Conservation Association
Conservation Voters New Mexico & CVNM
Education Fund
Audubon South Carolina
Naturaland Trust
Appalachian Trail Conservancy
South Carolina Wildlife Federation
Exxel Outdoors (Sierra Designs, Kelty and
Ultimate Direction)
Icelandic Skis
HECHO (Hispanics Enjoying Camping, Hunting,
and the Outdoors)
Citizens for a Healthy Community
Friends of Browns Canyon
Shedd Aquarium
The League of Women Voters of Utah
Colorado Mountain Club
Seattle Aquarium
Greenbrier River Watershed Association
New Mexico Environmental Law Center
Backbone Media
Torrey House Press
Utah Dine Bikeyah
Women's Empowerment Workshop
Relish Studio
Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition