



P.O. Box 4310, Whitefish, Montana 59937

Sec. Ryan Zinke
Monument Review, MS-1530
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW.
Washington, DC 20240

May 30, 2017

Dear Secretary Zinke:

We are alarmed and dismayed by the President's [Executive Order 13792](#) calling for the review of 21 National Monuments. As Montanans we are particularly concerned with the Order's inclusion of the Upper Missouri Breaks National Monument. As you know, this Monument was not "sprung" on the state as some last-minute decision by the then sitting president, George W. Bush. Instead, this designation came after years of extensive discussion by Montanans. President Bush's decision to protect the Upper Missouri Breaks as a National Monument was based on a clear and decisive record of public participation and statewide support, including strong support from the area around Great Falls and the proposed monument itself. To suggest – as this review clearly intends – that the review did not adequately consult the public, that the decision was rushed, that other public, and multiple use values were trampled is patently incorrect.

Each monument's decision subject to Executive Order 13792 has a similar history of public debate and discussion. The actual records of each national monument designations clearly demonstrates that monument proposals get careful consideration. Most national monument designations get proposed by local constituents, and each proposal engenders years of public participation and discussion, and often very passionate testimony, disagreement, and finally compromise.

Debate over public land decisions like national monuments provides opportunities for the nation to advance conservation and the public good as a whole, and should be encouraged. However, the debate ends when a sitting President uses his authority to consider individual nominees and weighs the benefits and costs. Those decisions do not get made lightly, yet some people feel disenfranchised by those decisions.

We strongly suspect that the current review of 21 monuments was provoked by a small, disgruntled, minority of people who hold strongly anti-federal beliefs, including the belief that public lands should be transferred to state or private control or ownership. As this is the case, we hasten to remind you of your commitment to support the retention of

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public lands in the public domain. The very idea that you would condone this review indicates your sympathy to this minority view. That is unfortunate.

We ask you as the US Secretary of the Interior and as a Montana to reject the idea that these 21 National Monuments – and particularly the Upper Missouri Breaks National Monument – were somehow foisted upon the citizens of the United State and Montana. It was not.

We trust you will recommend to the President that the Upper Missouri Breaks National Monument - and all the monuments currently under review – be retained under this protective status. If President Trump is not interested in positively adding to America's conservation legacy, so be it. Undoing the rightful action of his predecessors is *not* an option.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Hadden", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dave Hadden, Executive Director
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