

February 24, 2016

To: National Leaders and Utah State Leaders

President Obama, please preserve our sacred land, the Bears Ears and Cedar Mesa in Utah, by not making it a National Monument. These areas are sacred to us Navajos that live in Monument Valley, Ojato and surrounding areas. The Bears Ears and Cedar Mesa are sacred to all of the residents of San Juan County Utah (Navajos, Utes and Anglos).

These areas are sacred because that is where us residents of San Juan County Utah gather fire wood, plants (herbs) for medicine and ceremonies, and hunt. Most Navajo burn wood for heat and to cook (particular traditional fry bread). This is a tradition going back many generations. Many Anglos also burn wood as do Utes of Whitemesa that they gather at the Bears Ears and Elk Ridge.

If the Bears Ears and Cedar Mesa are made a National Monument these activities would be prohibited and the Bears Ears and Cedar Mesa would no longer be a sacred place. If these areas are made a National Monument the sacredness will be destroyed.

The Bureau of Land Management is starting to do a good job protecting archeological sites and limiting the number of visitors per day to fragile sites like Moon House and other sites on Cedar Mesa.

Most members of Dine Bikiyah that are supporting the National Monument, like Alfred Lomahquahu (Vice Chairmen of the Hopi Tribe) and Eric Descheenie (Executive of the Navajo Tribe) are receiving significant financial remuneration from environmental groups for their support to make the Bears Ears and Cedar Mesa their personal playground for these environmental groups. Most members of Dine Bikiyah are from the south part of the Navajo Reservation or other Reservations and have never been to Cedar Mesa or the Bears Ears except at the party they had at the Bears Ears last fall where they left trash all over and pouched 2 deer to eat. They said they had permission from the Whitemesa Ute Tribe but did not hunt the deer on Ute land.

It is sad that some of our Tribal Leaders have sold out for personal gain. We ask our National and State Leaders to support the Bears Ears and Cedar Mesa to remain public and sacred land, not extremely limited National Monument land for the few to pay to enter.

Please preserve our sacred land that we residents of San Juan County Utah and the Navajo Reservation can enjoy our traditional activities as well as visitors who may come.

Albert Holiday, Vice President, Ojato Chapter

On behalf of the majority of Navajo People, please leave Cedar Mesa and the Bears Ears alone. Let it remain useful for our sacred purposes. Do not make change it's standing as BLM and Forest Service Land!