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Officially known as the Zuni Tribe of the Zuni Indian Reservation

PRESS RELEASE **For Immediate Release**

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Zuni Leaders See New Hope For Protection of Lands Key to Origin of the Zuni People

Praise White House for Creating Bears Ears National Monument

Zuni, NM – The Pueblo of Zuni saluted President Obama today for taking action after decades of efforts to protect the lands and the culture and history represented there. Zuni is one of 30 Native nations that formally supported the creation of the Bears Ears National Monument in southeastern Utah.

“We are very pleased that, at last, President Obama has made the decision to protect these lands from further harm and mitigate damage already done to the Bears Ears region, which is spiritually, culturally and historically connected to Native Americans, including our people,” said Val R. Panteah, Sr., Governor of the Pueblo of Zuni.

”For more than a century, the Bears Ears region has been a target for looters and grave robbers, and for nearly that long we have asked the U.S. government to commit the resources to stop these atrocities,” said Governor Panteah. “Now we have new hope that our ancestors will be at peace and a new generation will be able to learn from and connect to our homelands.”

The Pueblo of Zuni is one of five nations, including Ute Mountain Ute, Uintah and Ouray Ute, Hopi, and Navajo tribes, that make up the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition. The Coalition has urged the President to act and also requested an arrangement of collaborative management between the tribes and the federal agencies to better manage and preserve the archeological and cultural sites in the area.

“This designation represents a new path forward between the Tribes and the Federal Government, ensuring that the tribes have a voice in the management of these lands from the beginning,” said Carleton Bowekaty, Zuni councilman and co-chair of the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition. “Tribal voices are important because we bring traditional knowledge and unparalleled regional expertise that’s normally foreign to federal policy.”

President Obama used his authority under the Antiquities Act which Congress passed in 1906 to preserve endangered historical and cultural sites. The new Bears Ears National Monument will protect public land already managed by the Bureau of Land Management, and provide additional protection against looting and desecration of graves and irresponsible off-road vehicle use.

[Here](#) is the resolution passed by the Zuni Tribal Council in March urging the President to take action.

More information about Bears Ears can be found at www.bearscoalition.org.