

President Trump Significantly Reduces Size of Two National Monuments

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On December 4, 2017, President Trump announced significant reductions to the size of two national monuments in southern Utah; Bears Ears National Monument will be reduced by 85 percent to 202,000 acres and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument will be reduced by 40 percent to one million acres. President Trump's actions represent the largest-ever reversal of federal monument protections.

Supporters of the reductions argue, in part, that the establishment of these national monuments represented federal overreaching. Environmentalists and tribal groups have filed lawsuits opposing President Trump's actions, however. Opponents argue that while presidents have authority under the Antiquities Act of 1906 to establish national monuments to protect federal land with historic, scientific, or cultural value, the law does not similarly grant the power to reduce the size of established monuments.

The reductions may represent the first of many such actions. The Department of the Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has submitted a [report](#) to President Trump recommending reducing the size of additional national monuments, including the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument located on the border of Oregon and California and the Gold Butte National Monument in Nevada.

For more information on the Trump Administration's review of nation monuments, see our prior blog post, "[President Trump Orders Review of National Monument Designations](#)."

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