



# The Mountain Pact

December 8, 2021

Dear President Biden and Honorable Secretary of the Department of Interior Deb Haaland,

Thank you for your commitment to taking climate action and protecting our public lands through programs like the historic [America the Beautiful initiative](#). Public lands are an integral part of the fabric of our mountain communities and a major driver of our local economies. We also thank you for your decision to restore protections to Bears Ears, Grand Staircase-Escalante, Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine national monuments.

As local elected officials, we are tasked with finding creative solutions to the many challenges that come with the ever-increasing popularity of our public lands; our growing infrastructure needs; lack of access to parks and open space by historically under-served communities; as well as the devastating and expensive impacts of climate change. With these reasons in mind, we ask you to use the Antiquities Act to protect more of our public lands by designating them as national monuments.

**Overcrowding and Infrastructure Needs:** The COVID pandemic has shown us that access to public lands is more vital to our health and well-being than we ever thought as more and more people have gravitated to the outdoors close to home and ever-increasing numbers of visitors recreate on the public lands near our communities. Adding more protected lands through parks and public land, as well as funding to manage these lands would improve access and lessen overcrowding.

**Increased Access for an Outdoors for All:** We applaud the America the Beautiful initiative that includes goals to create a more inclusive and equitable vision of nature conservation that better reflects our country's values and expands access to the outdoors for all. By uniting local governments, private landowners, Native American Tribes and Tribal communities, as well as historically underserved communities, this initiative will bring us all together to advance a shared vision of a better America. To do this, we need more protected public lands, including as national monuments, that build upon ongoing and often-untold stories of the true history of the United States.

**Climate Impacts:** Increased drought, wildfires, flooding, dust on snow events, and record-setting temperatures have caused astronomical expenses for our communities and have negatively impacted our public health, land, water, and air quality and quantity while harming our agriculture, economies, and quality of life. [Fossil fuel extraction on public lands generates 25% of our country's climate change causing emissions](#). Yet, science has shown that conserving nature can provide over [one-third of the cost-effective climate mitigation needed through 2030](#) to hold warming below 2°C. We urge you to use your authority

under the Antiquities Act to designate new national monuments, which would protect more lands from oil and gas drilling and could help reduce climate impacts that are greatly harming our communities.

**Economic Benefits of Protected Lands to Mountain Communities:** Economic research shows that [employment and personal income grew significantly faster in rural counties with conserved, restored, and protected public lands](#) than rural counties with fewer protected and conserved areas. [Conserved public lands, including wilderness areas, wildlife refuges, national conservation lands, and national monuments, are the backbone of the rapidly growing outdoor recreation economy, generating \\$788 billion in consumer spending nationally and supporting 5.2 million jobs.](#) They are the foundation of our strong tourism economies and make our communities a very attractive place for businesses and their employees to locate.

With an evenly split Congress with a lot on its plate that is unlikely to move on its own to protect public lands, we are counting on the administration to move swiftly to use its authority under the Antiquities Act to protect more natural, cultural, and historic sites, as well as waters and lands of great scientific value.

The Antiquities Act conserves vital places so our stories can be told and experiences can be shared for generations to come. Please take action to protect more of our great public lands as national monuments through the use of the Antiquities Act to truly accomplish the America the Beautiful Initiative.

Sincerely,

- Mayor Paul Deasy, City of Flagstaff, Arizona
- Council Member Adam Shimoni, City of Flagstaff, Arizona
- Mayor Pro Tem Devin Middlebrook, City of South Lake Tahoe, California
- Council Member Cody Bass, City of South Lake Tahoe, California
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- Mayor Pro Tem Ward Hauenstein, City of Aspen, Colorado
- Council Member Rachel Richards, City of Aspen, Colorado
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- Mayor Bill Kane, Town of Basalt, Colorado
- Council Member Elyse Hottel, Town of Basalt, Colorado
- Council Member Bill Infante, Town of Basalt, Colorado
- Council Member David Knight, Town of Basalt, Colorado
- Council Member Ryan Slack, Town of Basalt, Colorado
- Council Member Gary Tennenbaum, Town of Basalt, Colorado
- Council Member Glenn Drummond, Town of Basalt, Colorado
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- Council Member Mark Wallach City of Boulder, Colorado
- Council Member Matt Benjamin, City of Boulder, Colorado
- Council Member Dick Carleton, Town of Breckenridge, Colorado
- Mayor Eric Mamula, Town of Breckenridge, Colorado
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- Town Trustee Luis Yllanes, Town of Carbondale, Colorado
- County Commissioner Keith Baker, Chaffee County, Colorado
- Council Member Beth Goldstone, Town of Crested Butte, Colorado

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- Council Member Melissa Youssef, City of Durango, Colorado
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- County Commissioner Kathy Chandler-Henry, Eagle County, Colorado
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- Council Member Melissa Sherburne, Town of Frisco, Colorado
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- County Commissioner Lynn Padgett, Ouray County, Colorado
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- County Commissioner Steve Child, Pitkin County, Colorado
- County Commissioner Kelly McNicholas Kury, Pitkin County, Colorado
- County Commissioner Francie Jacober, Pitkin County, Colorado
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- Council Member Kevin Grambley, Town of Ridgway, Colorado
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- County Commissioner Tamara Pogue, Summit County, Colorado
- County Commissioner Elisabeth Lawrence, Summit County, Colorado
- Former County Commissioner Karn Stiegelmeier, Summit County, Colorado
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- County Commissioner David Strohmaier, Missoula County, Montana
- County Commissioner Josh Slotnick, Missoula County, Montana
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- County Commissioner Tick Segerblom, Clark County, Nevada
- County Commissioner Justin Jones, Clark County, Nevada
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- Assemblymember Nevada Legislature Sandra Jauregui, Las Vegas, Nevada
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- County Commissioner Jacques Hadler, Grand County, Utah
- County Commissioner Sarah Stock, Grand County, Utah
- County Commissioner Kevin Walker, Grand County, Utah
- County Commissioner Gabriel Woytek, Grand County, Utah
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- County Council Chair Glenn Wright, Summit County, Utah
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- Council Member Michael Lilliquist, City of Bellingham, Washington
- Mayor Carl J. Florea, City of Leavenworth, Washington
- Council Member Jessica Sell Chambers, Town of Jackson, Wyoming