

# The Mountain Pact 2021 Recap

I hope this note finds you doing well and finding sources of hope after another difficult year. Please take time to enjoy some positive news by reviewing all of the work The Mountain Pact did in 2021.

Check out our [website](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#) pages for regular updates and to read more about our work. [Sign up here](#) to get monthly [Conservation Updates](#) detailing how current federal policies impact mountain communities across the west.

*Anna Peterson, Executive Director*

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## New Presidential Administration

Last January, we finalized a [letter, signed by over 140 Western local elected officials](#), along with a [report](#), Building Back Better, [asking](#) the Biden administration to take these actions:

- *Fight the Climate Crisis with bold action. Halt [new oil and gas leases on public lands and waters](#).*
  - *Reject any royalty relief and lease suspension provisions for the oil and gas industry in future COVID relief packages.*
  - *Support state and local clean energy building requirements and initiatives, emissions reduction programs, and utilities with renewable energy goals.*
- *Help our Western communities.*
  - *Include conservation-friendly [financial support for local governments in future COVID relief packages](#).*
  - *Modernize the country's antiquated public lands royalty system and ensure that those who profit from them provide a fair return to the taxpayers.*
  - *Ensure the outdoors is a place for all by prioritizing environmental justice.*
  - *Restore environmental and public health safeguards.*
- *Protect our Public Lands.*
  - *Restore protections for Bears Ears and Grand Staircase Escalante national monuments.*
  - *Reverse the last-minute oil and gas lease sale in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.*
  - *Work to conserve 30 percent of U.S. lands and waters by 2030.*



**We are thrilled to report that many of these actions were taken by the administration in 2021!**

Our report was covered by [Vail Daily](#), [Longmont Times-Call](#), [Daily Camera](#), [Steamboat Pilot](#), [Mountain Mail](#), [Colorado Newline](#), [Longmont Leader](#), [Electrek](#), [Common Dreams](#), [Deseret News](#), [KPAX](#), and [KSL](#).

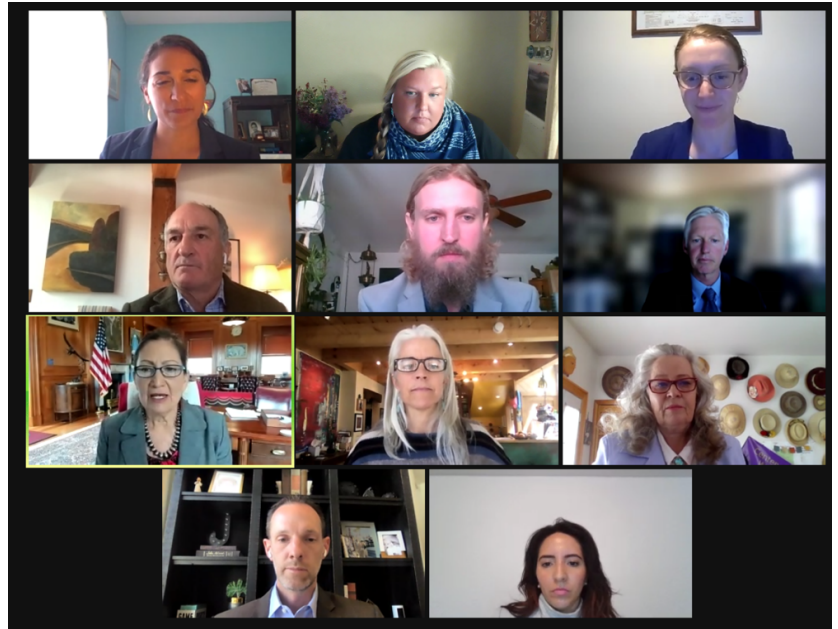
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## Administrative Appointees & Actions

We supported confirmations of some historic nominees, now leaders in the Biden administration, including:

- [Charles “Chuck” Sams III](#), the 1st Native American to lead the National Park Service with our statement covered in [National Parks Traveler](#), [E&E](#).
- [Tracy Stone-Manning](#) to lead the Bureau of Land Management - covered in the [Gallup Sun](#).
  - [The Missoula County Commission](#) and others supported her nomination and [confirmation as well](#).
- [Tommy Beaudreau](#) for Deputy Secretary of the Department of the Interior.

- [Laura Daniel Davis](#) for Assistant Secretary of the Department of Interior.
- Our release supporting former Rep. [Haaland's](#) confirmation as Secretary of the Department of Interior included quotes from Western county commissioners, mayors, and council members. This was covered by the [Denver Post](#), [Greely Tribune](#), [Cañon City Daily Record](#), [Lamar Ledger](#), [Ark Valley, NGI](#), and [Sopris Sun](#).
- We were even lucky enough to get to meet with the Secretary in May!
- We were also supportive of the Bureau of Land Management announcing a common-sense compromise to move the BLM Headquarters back to DC.
- We also supported the repeal by the Biden's Department of Interior of former Secretary Bernhardt's Secretarial Order on [Land Water Conservation Funding](#).



## America The Beautiful Initiative

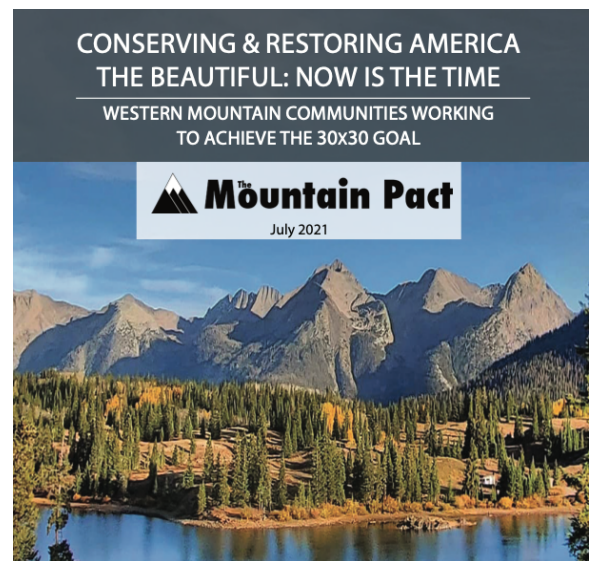
We supported the president's America the Beautiful initiative through many actions.

**REPORT:** Last summer, The Mountain Pact released a report entitled *Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful - Now is the Time - Western Mountain Communities Working to Achieve the 30x30 Goal* that highlights examples from all eleven Western states on what Western mountain communities are doing to conserve nature and contribute to the [America the Beautiful Initiative](#). The report offers [recommendations](#) for on-the-ground conservation work, policy recommendations, as well as new strategies and projects to help achieve the goals of the America the Beautiful effort. It was covered by [Inside Outdoor](#), [Colorado Newsline](#), [E&E](#), and [Aspen Daily News](#).

**RESOLUTIONS:** Many communities in The Mountain Pact network passed resolutions in support of the America the Beautiful Initiative in 2021.

- [Town of Carbondale](#)
- [Pitkin County](#)
- [Town of Frisco, Colorado](#) along with an [Op-ed](#) from a Frisco council member
- [Town of Avon, Colorado](#)
- [Town of Ridgway, Colorado](#)
- [La Plata County, Colorado](#)

In December, The Department of Interior released its first annual [America the Beautiful progress report](#). The Mountain Pact responded with this [media release](#).



# National Monuments

One of the highlights of 2021 was President Biden signing three proclamations that restore protections to [Bears Ears](#), [Grand Staircase-Escalante](#), and [Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine](#) national monuments after protections were stripped away by former President Trump. The White House highlighted our [statement](#) in its media release. It was also covered in [Farm Progress](#), [KSL local elected mention](#), [Ark Valley Voice](#).



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
October 8, 2021

## **WHAT THEY ARE SAYING: Leaders Across the Country Applaud President Biden's Restoration of Protections for Three National Monuments**

Today, President Biden signed three proclamations restoring protections for Bears Ears, Grand Staircase-Escalante, and Northeast Canyons and Seamounts National Monuments. This [announcement](#) advances the Administration's commitment to better protect, conserve, and restore our most cherished lands and waters, many of which are sacred to Tribal Nations.

The President's protection of these three national monuments upholds the longstanding principle that America's national parks, monuments, and other protected areas are to be protected for all time and for all people. Through a series of conservation efforts, the Administration is furthering a broader agenda of tackling the climate crisis, protecting public health, promoting wildlife and biodiversity, and rebuilding America's economy.

Recognizing the significance of today's actions, a broad coalition of federal, Tribal, and local officials, industry groups, advocacy organizations, and more are praising President Biden's leadership on conservation.

*See below for what they are saying:*

### **Tribal and Local Leaders:**

**Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition (BEITC):** "By taking this action, President Biden will be recognizing the deep and enduring ancestral and cultural connections that Tribes have to this landscape and taking a step toward honoring his commitment to Indigenous People by acknowledging their original place in this country that is now our shared home." [[Press Release](#), 10/7/21]

**Hank Stevens, Representative for the Navajo Nation and BEITC Co-Chair:** "Thank you President Biden for restoring Bears Ears National Monument to its original vision of protection by incorporating Antiquities Laws to dissuade vandalism and desecrations of our ancestral artifacts and homeland." [[Press Release](#), 10/7/21]

**Chairman Shaun Chappoose, Ute Indian Tribe Business Committee and BEITC Member:** "President Biden did the right thing restoring the Bears Ears National Monument. For us the Monument never went away. We will always return to these lands to manage and care for our sacred sites, waters and medicines. The Monument represents a historic opportunity for the federal government to learn and incorporate our tribal land management practices. Practices that we developed over centuries and are needed more now than ever. President Biden was right to reinforce the action taken by President Obama almost five years ago. We battled for this Monument because it matters." [[Press Release](#), 10/7/21]

**Clark W. Tenakhongva, Vice Chairman of the Hopi Tribe and BEITC Co-Chair:** "Thank you, President Biden and Vice President Harris for upholding your commitment to restore Honmuru (the Bears Ears monument), which is the birthplace of many Hopi and other Native peoples. Though this action, the history of our people, our culture, and religion will be preserved for future generations." [[Press Release](#), 10/7/21]

**Timothy Williams, Fort Mojave Chairman:** "The Fort Mojave Indian Tribe honors the decision from President Biden in restoring the National Monuments. It is a great day to see the land of our Indigenous people be protected." [Press Statement, 10/8/21]

**The Mountain Pact – Anna Peterson, Executive Director:** "Over 140 local elected officials in the Mountain Pact network across the West, including Utah mayors, council members, and county commissioners, are overjoyed that President Biden has finally restored protections for Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante national monuments." [[Press Statement](#), 10/7/21]

We pushed for this action through the years with [support from many local elected officials](#). Our efforts were covered in [CNN](#), [AZ Republic](#), [KSL Radio](#), [KSL](#), [Deseret](#), [Utah Policy](#), [Indian County Today](#), [KNBR](#), [KCTV](#), [KPCW Interview for Green Earth with Bluff Council Member Sayers](#), [Moab Sun News](#).

Southern Utah local elected officials also penned an opinion piece in support of the restoration.

**ANTIQUITIES ACT LETTER:** In December, we sent a [letter](#) to the Biden administration signed by over 115 Western state legislators, county commissioners, mayors, and council members from all eleven Western states. The letter thanks the administration for taking climate action and protecting our public lands through programs like the historic [America the Beautiful initiative](#). The letter applauds the administration's restoration of Bears Ears, Grand Staircase-Escalante, and Northeast Canyons and Seamounts national monuments and urges the President to use the Antiquities Act to protect more lands as national monuments. This was covered by [E&E](#), [KNAU](#), and [KUER](#).



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# Oil and Gas Leasing

As a follow-up to January's letter, many communities passed their own resolutions in support of the administration's pause to oil and gas leasing which was covered in the *Colorado Times Recorder*, *Aspen Times*, *Aspen Public Radio*, *Vail Daily*, and *Vail Daily on Passage*. An Aspen council member and Pitkin County Commissioner opined on their resolutions:

- Santa Fe County
  - Town of Ridgway
  - Town of Basalt
  - San Miguel County
  - Pitkin County
  - Town of Avon
  - City of Leavenworth, Washington
- The Mountain Pact was encouraged by the proposed 20-year drilling ban near Chaco Culture National Historical Park, which was covered by the *Gallup Sun*.
  - City of Reno Council Member Devon Resse penned an opinion piece calling for better management of public lands and fair returns for the taxpayers on the resources extracted.
  - Santa Fe County Commissioner Anna Hansen penned an op-ed calling for oil and gas reforms.
  - City of Las Cruces council member Gill Sorg urged oil and gas reforms to be included in the Bill Back Better Act.
  - We also supported Sen. Bennet's bonding reforms and public participation bills.

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## Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy (CORE) Act

The Mountain Pact praised the CORE Act reintroduction and called for its passage in 2021. Arizona and Colorado local elected officials as well as The Mountain Pact supported the passage of the Protecting America's Wilderness and Public Lands Act in the U.S. House of Representatives.

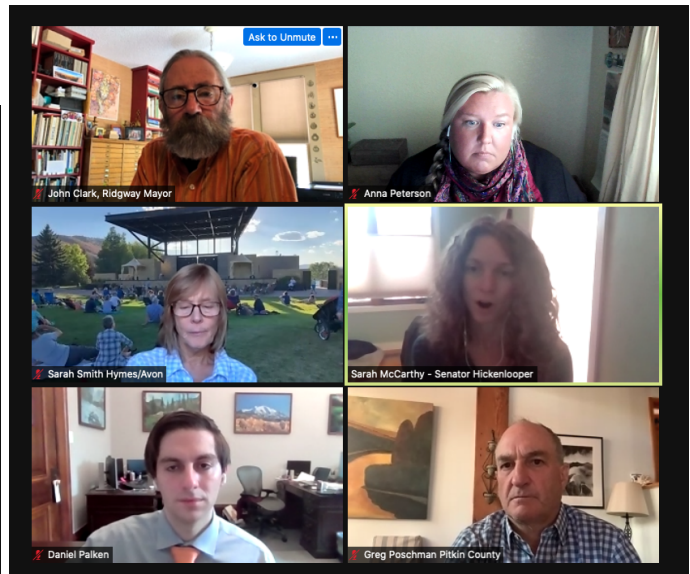
Some of the local elected leaders who work with The Mountain Pact also penned opinion pieces in support of the CORE Act including Ridgway Mayor John Clark, Pitkin County Commissioners and leaders, Pitkin County commissioners, and Steamboat Council Member Sonja Macys.

We also placed ads in many Colorado papers.



## Congressional Visits

We also had some meetings with some members of our congressional delegations!



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**Thank you for your participation in 2021!**

*Founded in 2014, The Mountain Pact mobilizes local elected officials in over 80 Western mountain communities with outdoor recreation based economies to speak with a collective voice on federal climate, public lands, and outdoor recreation policy.*

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