**The Conservation for Economic Growth Coalition**

**www.conserve4jobs.org**

April 11, 2017

Honorable Ryan Zinke

Secretary of the Interior

1849 C Street, NW

Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As you know from our previous correspondence, the Conservation for Economic Growth Coalition – which we lead – has argued consistently that the protection of national public lands -- and the designation of national monuments, in particular -- are important to the health and growth of entrepreneurial, innovative companies across America. Our employees work hard, and they play hard, and spectacular landscapes provide the inspiration which the best and brightest of our employees value so much when they take time off for family recreation. Access to these lands helps us recruit and keep the people we need to grow our companies, and increasingly, those employees come from a diverse set of communities.

We write you today to express our hope that we can work with you on several priorities for policies and programs that we hope you share. First, we want to urge you to protect the integrity of the Antiquities Act and the President’s prerogative under that law to preserve and expand public lands protections throughout the country. The century of Presidential designations under the Antiquities Act is one of which every American can be very proud. It is our fondest wish that President Trump add to that legacy in a way that will include him among the most forward-looking Presidents in the exercise of their powers under the Act.

As you know from our February 2 letter to you, we think an important step in that direction would be to preserve the integrity of Bears Ears National Monument. You and the President have an opportunity now to protect from partisan, political attack one of the most spectacular landscapes in the American West that will be managed in a way that for the first time elevates the role of Native American tribes alongside local residents in the management of public lands. We could not support more strongly the preservation of the Bears Ears in Utah as a national monument, and want to see it protected as it is currently designated.

Second, we would urge you to seek the permanent reauthorization and full funding of the Land & Water Conservation Fund, as you did so courageously when you served in the Congress.

Third, we urge you to stay steadfast in your opposition to transfers of national public lands to the states.

And finally, we urge you to take all necessary steps to ensure that energy production on national public lands is done responsibly. The previous Administration made great progress in ensuring that oil and gas development was done in appropriate places through careful planning that gave particular consideration to local impacts on outdoor recreation, landowners, wildlife habitat and more. We were pleased to hear about your strong support for the NEPA process, and encourage you to take into account the external costs of energy production including its effects on the environment, the climate, and their interaction with a growing renewable energy industry.

Thank you for your consideration, and we very much look forward to working with you to advance these policy priorities. In furtherance of that goal, several of our leading members will be flying into Washington on June 13. We would be honored to meet with you on that day and, we will follow up with your scheduler to arrange a convenient time for such a meeting.

Sincerely,

Tom Baruch and

Nancy Pfund

Co-Chairs of the Conservation for Economic Growth Coalition