



For Immediate Release

May 17, 2016

CONTACT:

Melissa Schwartz, 240-997-6251

New Utah Poll Shows Strong Support for Protecting Bears Ears Region
71 Percent Support National Monument Designation for
1.9-Million Acres of Existing Public Lands in Southeast Utah

Salt Lake City, UT – Creation Justice Ministries today released a statewide Utah poll showing strong statewide support amongst registered voters for protecting public lands in southeast Utah’s Bears Ears area as a national monument.

“This poll demonstrates that Utah voters strongly support designating the Bears Ears area as a National Monument,” said **Shantha Ready Alonso, Executive Director of Creation Justice Ministries**. “Voters value protecting cliff dwellings, Mormon pioneer artifacts, and other unique historic sites from looters. They want to continue enjoying recreational activities, conserve wildlife habitat, and provide opportunities for families and children to spend time together and explore nature.”

A detailed rundown of the poll, which was conducted by Public Opinion Strategies, is provided online in the poll summary document (bit.ly/BEfindings) and the poll interview schedule and responses (bit.ly/BE-QA).

“Voters throughout Utah overwhelmingly support increased protection for existing public lands in the Bears Ears region,” said **Lori Weigel, Partner with Public Opinion Strategies**. “Support for designating these public lands as a National Monument is broad-based across age, gender, religion, political party, and geographic regions of the state.”

Some of the key findings of the poll are:

- **Seven-in-ten Utah voters (71 percent) support designating the Bears Ears area as a National Monument versus 20 percent that oppose.** Support for designating these public lands as National Monuments is widespread with majorities of all key subgroups of the electorate statewide express this sentiment, including
 - 75 percent of voters in the Salt Lake area, 71 percent on the Wasatch front and 67 percent in the rest of the state;
 - 92 percent of Democrats, 73 percent of independents, and 63 percent of GOP voters; and
 - 65 percent of sportsmen.

- **Voters see a wide-range of benefits to increasing protections for the public lands in the Bears Ears area** to safeguard unique historic artifacts and sites (83 percent), for children to get outside and explore nature (83 percent), and to conserve natural areas and wildlife habitat (78 percent).
- **Utah residents express a strong affinity for the outdoors by reporting high rates of outdoor recreation and visiting national public lands.** A stunning 89 percent say they have visited national public lands in the last year. In addition, 84 percent regularly participate in at least one of a number of outdoor recreation activities with hiking (57 percent) and camping (57 percent) reported as the most frequent activities.

The strong statewide support for protecting Bears Ears as a national monument is consistent with the efforts of the [Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition](#), a partnership of five sovereign Indian nations—the Hopi, Navajo, Uintah & Ouray Ute, Ute Mountain Ute, and Zuni. This coalition has asked for President Obama to use the Antiquities Act to designate the [Bears Ears National Monument](#) and stem the tide of looting and other damage to these sacred lands and cultural sites.

“Utah voters know protecting Bears Ears is the right thing to do,” said **Episcopal Bishop of Utah, the Rt. Rev. Scott B. Hayashi**. “It is time we show reverence and recognition for the historical, cultural, and spiritual significance of the land in the proposed Bears Ears national monument.”

“Spending time in God's good creation nourishes the body, mind and spirit,” said **Baptist chaplain at University of Utah Hospital and Creation Justice Ministries board member Rev. Dr. Genny Rowley**. “Utahans understand how precious the integrity of creation is, as reflected in these poll numbers. The proposed Bear's Ears National Monument supports this widely held value.”

For this poll, Public Opinion Strategies conducted a telephone survey of 500 registered voters who are likely to vote in the November 2016 presidential election. The survey was conducted May 11-12 and 14, 2016. The margin of sampling error for this representative statewide sample is +/-4.38%.

###

About Creation Justice Ministries

Creation Justice Ministries (formerly the National Council of Churches Eco-Justice Program) represents the creation care and environmental justice policies of major Christian denominations throughout the United States. Creation Justice Ministries equips, educates and mobilizes faith communities to protect, restore, and rightly share God's creation. Learn more at <http://www.creationjustice.org>.

About Public Opinion Strategies

Public Opinion Strategies is the largest Republican polling firm in the country. Since the firm's founding in 1991, they have completed more than 10,000 research projects, interviewing more than five million Americans across the United States. Public Opinion Strategies' research is well respected, and prestigious media outlets such as The Wall Street Journal, NBC News, and CNBC rely on Public Opinion Strategies to conduct their polling. The firm conducts opinion research on behalf of hundreds of political campaigns, as well as trade associations, not-for-profit organizations, government entities, and industry coalitions throughout the nation.