



Rocky Mountain Conference United Church of Christ

Inspiring, challenging, and empowering generous faith and justice communities across the West.

June 6, 2016

The Bears Ears National Monument Proposal is a historic and exciting opportunity for the United States to take a step toward healing relationships among land and people.

I am grateful to the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition for their leadership. They have directly approached the Obama Administration with a national monument proposal that is the first of its kind, in which they will co-manage 1.9 million acres in southeast Utah. This area contains more than 100,000 archeologically significant treasures that merit our attention and care. Yet already in 2016, there have been four major incidents of irreversible damage to antiquities in Bears Ears. The desecration of these special places must stop now.

For far too long, too many people of the United States have disregarded tribes' history as well as traditional knowledge about stewardship of and relationship to God's creation. The Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition is offering their wisdom and resources to care for this land. Now, we have an unprecedented opportunity to officially recognize and draw upon the cultural, spiritual, and historical riches the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition can share with our nation.

National parks and monuments are sacred places where we take Sabbath – where we learn, play, and pray. Now is the time to accept the gifts of knowledge and stewardship being extended to us by the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition. Let's permanently protect Bears Ears through the establishment of a Bears Ears National Monument.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Rebecca Kemper Poos

Senior Pastor, Congregational United Church of Christ, Buena Vista, Colorado

Moderator, Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Church of Christ