



President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We are writing to encourage you to protect Greater Canyonlands – the magnificent 1.4 million-acre region of publicly-owned wildlands surrounding Canyonlands National Park in southern Utah – by proclaiming it a national monument.

Greater Canyonlands is without question a world class landscape deserving of the highest levels of protection. It is a place of unparalleled beauty, a geologic wonderland and a treasure trove of ancient cultural and archeological artifacts. Greater Canyonlands also offers superlative recreational opportunities that draw people from around the globe.

Many of us know and love the Greater Canyonlands area firsthand, and would like to see the area preserved because it is a premier part of our nation’s natural heritage. But as people who make their living in the outdoor industry, we also want to stress that preserving landscapes like Greater Canyonlands makes good economic sense. Wildlands are the foundational infrastructure for our industry.

A study recently released by the Outdoor Industry Association notes that outdoor recreation is “an overlooked economic giant,” generating \$646 billion in national sales and services in 2011 and supporting 6.1 million jobs, powering the economy in a manner comparable to the financial services and insurance industries or outpatient health care. As highlighted by the Western Governors Association, in western states alone outdoor recreation spending equaled almost \$256 billion (nearly 40% of the national total) and supported 2.3 million jobs.

The future of our outdoor recreation economy depends on protecting iconic landscapes – such as Greater Canyonlands – where people go to recreate. And monument proclamation is an important and effective way to provide the protection that is needed.

We also turn to you for action because unfortunately, Greater Canyonlands is endangered. Federal land use plans inappropriately open scenic and undeveloped land to drilling and mining and fail to address exploding off-road vehicle use that is damaging riparian areas, cultural sites, soils and solitude. Now, the state of Utah is demanding that the federal government turn over 30 million acres of federal land for potential development and/or privatization and is asserting the right to expand and pave 40,000 miles of dirt routes and trails that criss-cross Utah’s federally-owned wildlands. Both actions would result in the despoiling of Greater Canyonlands.

We hope you will act to protect Greater Canyonlands. Thank you for your vision and leadership.

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