



Contact:
Troy Honahnie, Jr., Staff Assistant
Office of Chairman
Phone: (928) 734-3105
Fax: (928) 734-6665
www.hopi-nsn.gov

For Immediate Release

December 29, 2016

Hopi Tribe Celebrates Bears Ears National Monument Proclamation

Kykotsmovi, Ariz. – Today Hopi Tribal Chairman Herman G. Honanie applauds President Obama’s designation of the Bears Ears National Monument (BENM) under the Antiquities Act of 1906. This is a landmark decision culminating a broad collaborative effort between conservation groups, federal and state governments and five tribal groups including Hopi, Zuni, Ute Indian Tribe, Ute Mountain Ute and The Navajo Nation.

For the Hopi Tribe, the Bears Ears represents a “cultural landscape” that contains pristine wilderness areas; canyons, mesas, deserts, forests, springs, streams and rivers. These lands provide much needed refuge for the flora, fauna and birds found here. All of which are inextricably connected to the longevity of Hopi history and ancestors in this region. This history includes the earliest inhabitants, the Archaic and Ancestral Puebloan cultures.

These Hopi ancestors, the “*Hisat’sinom*” (People of Long Ago), imbued this landscape with their presence in the hundreds of thousands of archaeological sites located within the new monument. These sites represent the “Footprints of Hopi Ancestors” and include ancient villages, migration routes, artifacts, petroglyphs and the physical remains of buried ancestors. All of which are remembered and maintained through oral tradition, pilgrimage, songs and prayer.

From the beginning, the Hopi Tribe has supported this endeavor through formal tribal resolution and consultation, sharing of traditional knowledge and educating decision-makers about the Hopi connection to this culturally important area. The President’s designation is a direct response to

the Hopi Tribe's desire to have this landscape protected and preserved for future generations of all to enjoy and learn from.

The Hopi Tribe is pleased to see that the President's Proclamation calls for direct tribal involvement with the long-term management of the monument. "The concept that Tribes will finally be afforded actual, substantive decision making authority versus mere consultation is unprecedented, We hope the Federal Government looks to this innovative model in the future when considering monument designations as they relate to other First Nations." said Chairman Honanie. This co-management will ensure that Hopi concerns, traditional knowledge and use of the area is maintained and respected. The Hopi Tribe is dedicated to ensure that there will be a continuation of the unprecedented collaborative efforts that lead to this positive step in public lands conservation.

The Hopi Tribe commends President Obama for setting a high standard of public lands policy, one that places priority on the preservation of wilderness, as well as priority of the values of groups who hold these lands with reverence. The Hopi Tribe moves forward with dedication and willingness to work with our tribal neighbors, conservation groups and federal and state agencies in the establishment of the Bears Ears National Monument.

Through these continued efforts, the Hopi Tribe hopes to ensure that future generations of Hopi people have their own cultural ground to stand upon; providing them the opportunity to interact with their ancestral past of the Bears Ears as we have done since time immemorial.

###