



**RESOLUTION OF THE  
NAVAJO UTAH COMMISSION  
OF THE NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL**

**NUCMAY-849-21**

**SUPPORTING WILDERNESS STUDY AREA DESIGNATIONS PURSUANT TO  
FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT § 202 TO COMPLY WITH  
PRESIDENT BIDEN'S CLIMATE CRISIS EXECUTIVE ORDER**

**Whereas:**

1. The Navajo Utah Commission (NUC) is a governmental subdivision of the Navajo Nation and is subject to oversight of the Navajo Nation Council – Naabik'iya'ti' Committee pursuant to Resolution No. NABIAP-21-15; and
2. The Navajo Utah Commission recognizes that for hundreds of generations native peoples have lived in the canyons and mountains and mesas in San Juan County and beyond in southern Utah; and
3. The Navajo Utah Commission recognizes the importance to the Dine' of the vast undeveloped lands and natural and cultural resources in San Juan County and surrounding areas in southern and eastern Utah, and also that these lands and resources are revered by, and sacred to, many Native Peoples; and
4. The Navajo Utah Commission is aware that President Biden issued an Executive Order "Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad" on January 27, 2021, which acknowledges the profound climate crisis, and sets forth his Administration's policy of making climate considerations an essential element in its decision-making process on a broad scale; and
5. The President's Executive Order further initiated a directive whereby 30 percent of the nation's lands and waters are to be conserved and preserved by 2030 ("30x30") in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and
6. The Navajo Utah Commission recognizes that conserving the undeveloped lands and resources now managed by the federal government in southern and eastern Utah will help in President Biden's effort to address climate change as well protect and preserve the cultural, prehistoric and historic records and legacy of Dine' and other Native Peoples, and also the cultural traditions and practices of Native Peoples that continue today; and

7. The Navajo Utah Commission understands that one of the best tools the U.S. Department of Interior can use to help meet the President's "30x30" goals is to designate undeveloped public lands as Wilderness Study Areas pursuant to § 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA); and
8. The Navajo Utah Commission recognizes that management of Wilderness Study Areas is one of the strongest and most protective designations available to public lands, and that FLPMA § 202 Wilderness Study Area designation will keep fossil fuels in the ground so that greenhouse gases and other pollution that exacerbates climate change will not be produced during exploration, development and eventual combustion of those natural resources; and
9. The Navajo Utah Commission is well aware of the significant negative long-term health impacts to our People, and the extensive environmental impacts to our lands and water that the Dine' have suffered from the exploration and development of oil, gas and uranium near our homes and communities, and that these fossil fuel resources and minerals, once put into production, have also caused broader climate change impacts; and
10. The Navajo Utah Commission understands that designating undeveloped lands as FLPMA § 202 Wilderness Study Areas will provide quantifiable carbon sequestration benefits, and importantly climate adaptation benefits to plants and wildlife, and will also serve to conserve scarce water resources and reduce fugitive dust emissions which exacerbate climate change effects; and
11. The Navajo Utah Commission recognizes that designating undeveloped public lands as FLPMA § 202 Wilderness Study Areas will significantly assist the Biden Administration in meeting its 30x30 goals.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

1. The Navajo Utah Commission hereby supports President Biden's January 27, 2021, Executive Order of "Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad" and specifically it's directive of conserving 30 percent of the nation's lands and waters by 2030.
2. The Navajo Utah Commission calls upon the U.S. Department of Interior to use one of the most effective tool it has to conserve undeveloped public lands by designating as FLPMA § 202 Wilderness Study Areas all qualifying public lands in southern and eastern Utah to help address the climate crisis as set forth in President Biden's Executive Order.

3. The Navajo Utah Commission supports FLPMA § 202 Wilderness Study Area designations in southern and eastern Utah to keep energy resources in the ground so that exploration, development and combustion activities related to those resources will not further contribute to the climate crisis.
4. The Navajo Utah Commission supports FLPMA § 202 Wilderness Study Area designations in southern and eastern Utah to provide time and places for plants and wildlife to adapt to the changing climate, and to better protect our scarce water resources.

### **CERTIFICATION**

We, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly considered by Navajo Utah Commission at a duly called meeting by teleconference at which a quorum was present and the same was passed by a vote of 5 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstention, this 11<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2021.



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Nathaniel Brown, Chairperson  
NAVAJO UTAH COMMISSION

MOTION: Kenny Victor  
SECOND: Brenda Brown

Chair not voting