

# REVIEWS

SUPPORT FOR MONUMENT DESIGNATION REFORM

“[The Nunes] bill would restore some balance to the preservation process, by limiting the amount of land made available for national monuments and by making a vague, closed-door designation procedure much more transparent through Congressional approval for all monuments.” - **NATIONAL TAXPAYERS UNION**

“[The] bill would ensure thoughtful congressional debate, input from the local stakeholders affected by the proposed designation, thorough economic analysis, and transparency throughout the process.” - **CITIZENS AGAINST GOVERNMENT WASTE**

“...it recognizes the role of local county governments and ensures review by local elected officials.” - **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES**

“We support the bill because it would establish a clear, effective, and transparent process through which monument designation would be created going forward.” - **AMERICAN MOTORCYCLIST ASSOCIATION**

“We have witnessed the damage caused to our rural community and the Forest Lands due to inappropriate Monument Designations. We support the Nunes bill so that the public may have a voice in the creation of future Monuments.” - **STEWARDS OF THE SEQUOIA**

## NATIONAL MONUMENT DESIGNATION REFORM

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# National Monument Transparency & Accountability



## NATIONAL MONUMENTS

In 1906, Congress created the Antiquities Act in response to concerns over theft from and destruction of archaeological sites. It authorizes the President to proclaim national monuments on federal lands that contain “historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest.”

- President Theodore Roosevelt first used the authority in 1906 to establish the Devil’s Tower in Wyoming. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt used the Act 28 times and President Carter bestowed monument status on 56 million acres in Alaska. Today, there are 71 monuments covering approximately 136 million acres.

## ABUSE OF POWER

Many National Monuments warrant protective status. For example, Montezuma Castle National Monument in Arizona represents one of the best preserved cliff dwellings in North America, while the Aztec Ruins National Monument in New Mexico protects the prehistoric remains of an ancestral Pueblo society.

The protection of these sites and others like them was in accordance with the intent of the Antiquities Act.

However, various White House Administrations have asserted that the Antiquities Act has provided the President with much greater power—a view upheld by the courts.

This has made the Antiquities Act an irresistible tool of radical environmentalists and their allies seeking to restrict access to public lands.

## ECONOMIC DESTRUCTION, ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE

National Monument designations result in largely unnecessary and draconian public land use restrictions that devastate rural economies and make the United States more dependent on foreign sources of important natural resources.

- Nearly 40 percent of all land in the Western states is owned by the federal government.
- When forests cannot be thinned of dead timber, they become tinder boxes. Over 30% of the Sequoia National Forest has been burned in wildfires since 1990. California’s National Forests have 7.5 million acres of forestlands at risk to wildfire.
- Since 1989, a total of 84 wood products mills and factories have closed in California alone. The forest products industry accounts for one in ten jobs in eleven of the northern counties and more than half the manufacturing employment in many.
- From 1990 – 2003 54,888 rural American jobs were lost due to mill closures associated with federal land use restrictions, largely thanks to Clinton-era National Monuments.

## THE SOLUTION: TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The National Monument Designation Transparency and Accountability Act restores Congressional oversight and public input to the National Monument designation process. It would also end the abuse of power currently associated with the Antiquities Act by:

- Limiting designations to the smallest area essential to ensure the proper care and management of the objects to be protected.

- Requires public notification 30 days before a designation, including economic impact reports to Congress, the Governor of each affected State, and local officials.
- Require that at least one public hearing be held within the boundaries of the monument.
- Require the President to report in one year the economic impact of the designation on the communities within the boundaries of the monument, the impact the designation will have on the Nation’s energy security, and impact of the designation on interests, rights, and uses associated with the parcels of land within the boundaries of the monument.
- Provides that unless approved by an Act of Congress within two years, a national monument designation proclamation shall cease to be effective.

## VOICES OF THE PEOPLE

“Our right to have a voice and take part in the decision making process is being completely circumvented.” said Rocky Leitzell, the Pyles Boys Camp Director. - *Business Wire* April 14, 2000

“You kind of feel hopeless and kind of like you’ve been run over” camp enthusiast Robert Johnson said of Clinton’s power to threaten the camps’ survival with a stroke of his presidential pen. “Like you’re in Castro’s Cuba, where you don’t have a whole lot to say.” - *Greenwire*, April 25, 2000

Following the Sequoia Monument designation, Sierra Forest Products was forced to shut down one of the two mills it operates. “What happened to democracy in this process?” asked company founder Glenn Duysen. - *The Fresno Bee*, April 15, 2000