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Preserving America's Heritage

April 28, 2017

The Honorable Ryan Zinke
Secretary of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Zinke:

Now that the President has directed you to undertake a review of National Monument designations made pursuant to the Antiquities Act, I wanted to offer the assistance of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) in your effort. At the outset, I would like to stress the importance of this foundational legislation, the first comprehensive national law to promote the preservation of irreplaceable historic and cultural resources on federal lands. The Antiquities Act has served the nation well in the 111 years since its enactment, ensuring the conservation legacy of Theodore Roosevelt lives on and enriches the lives of Americans today and in the future. It is important that the Administration continue the stewardship of this essential law as a viable tool for conserving the nation's patrimony.

One of the ACHP's principal duties is to oversee the process whereby federal agencies assess the effects of their projects on historic properties. Established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and known as the "Section 106 process," it shares the same goal as the Antiquities Act of advancing the preservation of significant historic properties. In that regard, we have five decades of experience in balancing the needs of contemporary society with preserving the significant aspects of historic properties across the nation. Indeed, the President's stated goal of ensuring the designations under the Antiquities Act "appropriately balance the protection of landmarks, structures, and objects against the appropriate use of federal lands and the effects on surrounding lands and communities" mirrors the ACHP's guiding principles in managing the Section 106 process.

To implement Section 106, the ACHP created a process based on consultation among federal decision makers and tribal, state, and local government, businesses, community groups, and citizens. The process has served the accommodation of preservation and development goals for 50 years. As the national manager of this consultative process, we offer our expertise as you develop a system to carry out the mandated review.

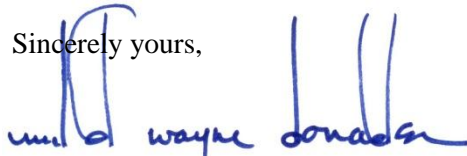
In our work with the Section 106 process, we have developed strong partnerships with State and Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, designated officials of their respective governments that are charged under federal law with representing state and tribal interests in the preservation of historic places of importance to their citizens. The ACHP could be a useful facilitator for engaging these essential stakeholders in the review process.

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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I understand the timeframes for action are short, but we stand ready to assist you as you conduct this review that can have significant consequences for the national historic preservation program.

Sincerely yours,



Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
Chairman