

ANTIQUITIES ACT

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument Photo credit: Ron and Patty Thomas

145

National monuments designated since 1906

Protect Teddy Roosevelt's Enduring National Park Legacy

72%

Percentage of national monuments managed by the National Park Service



800.628.7275

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The Antiquities Act of 1906 is one of the most important tools available for the preservation of federal lands and waters, and historical sites for all Americans to enjoy.

The Act was passed by a Republican-led Congress and signed by President Theodore Roosevelt. Since then, sixteen U.S. Presidents have declared 145 national monuments under the Act; eight Republicans and eight Democrats. The law is essential to maintain the integrity of critical natural and cultural resources, including:

- ◆ **Grand Canyon National Park:** Designated in 1908 by Theodore Roosevelt and later expanded by Herbert Hoover. When Theodore Roosevelt first visited the Canyon in 1903, he described the canyon as place that is unparalleled in the world, a wonder that should remain unharmed and unchanged in perpetuity.
- ◆ **Statue of Liberty National Monument:** Designated in 1924 by Calvin Coolidge, with later expansions to include Ellis Island by Franklin Roosevelt and Lyndon Johnson as a symbol of the role of the United States as a land of freedom and opportunity.
- ◆ **Pullman National Monument:** Designated in 2015 by Barack Obama in Chicago to honor the first planned industrial community in the United States, one that gave birth to both the sleeping rail car and the nation's first African American labor union.

For over one hundred years, the Antiquities Act has been used as a bipartisan conservation tool. With the exception of the Organic Act of 1916, no law has had more influence over the development of the modern National Park System.

The Antiquities Act allows the President to reserve or withdraw federal lands or waters containing objects of historic or scenic significance, as well as objects of scientific significance or research, to prevent them from potential harm, such as commercial development, looting, habitat preservation.

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Economic Benefits

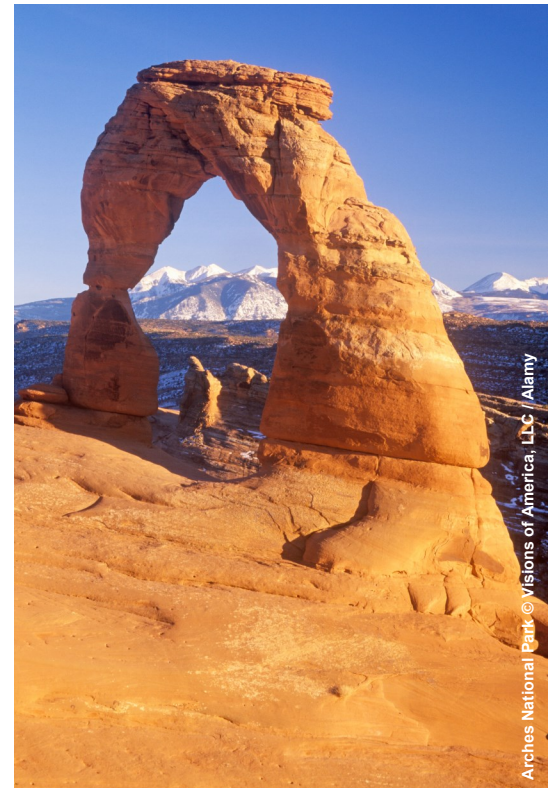
- ◆ Regions surrounding national monuments have seen continued growth or improvement in employment, personal income, and increased per-capita income after the monument designation.
 - ◆ Following the 2012 designation of the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument in New Mexico, visitation to the new monument area increased by 40% and local tax revenue in the gateway community of Taos increased by 21%.
- ◆ There are nearly 300 million visits to our national parks annually. National parks show a strong return on federal investment, supporting nearly \$30 billion in economic activity and 277,000 private sector jobs each year. Every dollar invested in park operations leverages about \$10 for local communities, and every two National Park Service jobs yield one job outside the park.
- ◆ Americans spend \$646 billion each year on outdoor recreation (hunting, fishing, hiking, and other outdoor recreation). This directly supports 6.1 million jobs and generates nearly \$80 billion in tax revenue.

Public Support

- ◆ The Obama Administration is to be commended for their recommendations made in the 2011 America's Great Outdoors Report to "Implement a transparent and open approach to new national monument designations tailored to engaging local, state and national interests" (Action Item 8.4a).
- ◆ Polls shows that 75% of Westerners believe our public lands, including monuments, help to attract high quality employers and jobs to their state.
- ◆ Nearly 80% of voters agree that public lands support their economy and enhance their quality of life.
- ◆ When considering National Parks, there is nearly unanimous (95% of voters) agreement, across party lines, that protecting and supporting National Parks is an appropriate role for the federal government.
- ◆ Efforts to undermine the Antiquities Act are out of step with public opinion and would defeat the purpose of the Act--which is, in part, to enable the President to act swiftly to protect sensitive federal lands from harm. Anti-Antiquities Act legislation opens the door to the claims of developers, mining operators, and others, leading to the degradation of unique federal lands and resources.

Impact

- ◆ The act was originally enacted to thwart looting of unique historic and cultural artifacts, especially from lands in the Southwest.
- ◆ In their use of the Antiquities Act, Presidents George W. Bush and Obama have helped to measurably diversify the National Park system.
- ◆ The act does not automatically authorize management plans, programs, or funds for designated monuments.
- ◆ While granting the president the authority to take swift action to protect federal lands or waters, the Antiquities Act leaves undisturbed Congress' authority to declare monuments, to determine the level of resources for the management and maintenance of presidentially proclaimed national monuments, and to re-designate any monument as a national park or other federal reserve.



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