

Decisions that affect public lands and future generations deserve careful deliberation—not reckless exploitation.

As leaders of faith, we urge members of Congress to oppose the use of the Congressional Review Act (CRA) to overturn the current management plan for Grand Staircase–Escalante National Monument. If revisions are needed, they should be pursued through dialogue, debate, and collaboration—processes that reflect prudence and respect for public participation.

The CRA would nullify the existing management plan and endanger any possible future protections. The current plan reflects years of scientific study, public comment, and Tribal consultation. The CRA, by contrast, would reverse that work through an expedited legislative end-run. This excuse for “legislation” is bad enough on its face; but even worse in the long run: By design it will render any good faith efforts to adopt future protections virtually impossible.

Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument was established in 1996 under the Antiquities Act. The national monument contains fragile desert ecosystems, rare species, and cultural sites sacred to Tribal nations – Diné (Navajo Nation), Hopi Tribe, Kaibab Band of the Paiute Indians, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Zuni Tribe and others. Its protection is a tangible matter of environmental stewardship, and sacred accommodation for the spiritual and cultural heritage of all Indigenous people.

As faith leaders in the American west, we urge the public and members of Congress to consider the wealth of history represented by this landscape and its name. *Escalante* is the eponym that honors Silvestre Vélez de Escalante, the Franciscan priest who traveled through the region in 1776 alongside Francisco Domínguez, and who authored the earliest accounts of their epic journey.

The monument’s name reflects an historical presence in this land 250 years ago and underscores the long-standing relationship between faith and our obligation as *people of faith* to care for creation. In *Laudato Si’*, Pope Francis reminded us that the Earth is “our common home” and that we have no right to ravage it for short-term gain. Weakening existing safeguards of the national monument risks long-term consequences for its fragile ecosystem.

We therefore urge Congress to reject this misapplication of the CRA, and to uphold a careful, participatory approach to managing Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. Stewardship requires patience, responsibility, and a commitment to the common good.

Signed,

Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City (est. 1776/1871)

The Most Reverend Oscar A Solis, DD, Bishop

The Very Reverend John Evans, Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia

The Very Reverend Langes J. Silva, STL, JCD, Judicial Vicar & Vice-Chancellor

Reverend André Sicard, JCL, Parochial Vicar at Cathedral & Assistant of the Judicial Vicar

The Very Reverend Christopher Gray, STL, STD (Cand.) Rector, Cathedral of the Madeleine

Reverend. Mr. Guillermo Mendez, Cathedral Assistant, Cathedral of the Madeleine

Reverend Richard Sherman, St Christopher's Catholic Church, Kanab

Reverend Samuel Dinsdale, St Vincent de Paul Catholic Church, Holladay

Reverend David Bittmenn, St George Catholic Church, St George

Reverend Martin Dias, Christ the King Catholic Church, Cedar City

Reverend Omar Ontiveros, St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, Orem

Reverend Arokia Dass David, Parish administrator, St. Mary's Catholic Church, Park City

Deacon Scott Dodge, D.Min., Director, Office of the Deaconate, Salt Lake Catholic Diocese

Catholic Ecclesiastical Provinces in the Southwest United States

The Most Reverend John C Wester, Archbishop of Santa Fe

Jewish Community (est. 1857)

Rabbi Samuel L Spector, Congregation Kol Ami, Salt Lake City

Episcopal Diocese of Utah (est. 1867)

The Right Reverend Phyllis A Spiegel, Bishop

Reverend Holly Huff, Priest-in-Charge, Cathedral Church of St Mark, Salt Lake City

Reverend David Sakrison, Priest-in-Charge, Episcopal Church of St Francis, Moab

Reverend Robert Willmann, Vicar, Grace Episcopal, St George & St Jude's Episcopal, Cedar City

Reverend Angela Chacón, Ascension St Matthew's Episcopal-ELCA, Price

Reverend Ashley Wright, Rector, St Luke's Episcopal, Park City

Reverend Dr. Shannon Burke, Vicar, Episcopal Church of the Resurrection, Centerville

The Venerable Robert Shoop, Archdeacon, Episcopal Diocese of Utah

Reverend Elizabeth Hunter, Deacon, Cathedral Church of St Mark, Salt Lake City

Reverend Anita Miner, Deacon, All Saints Episcopal, Salt Lake City

Presbyterian Church in Utah (est. 1871)

Reverend Dr Mirjam Haas-Melchior, Executive Presbyter, Presbyterian Church of Utah

Reverend Jamie White, Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Salt Lake City

Reverend Scott Wipperman, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Ogden

Baptist Church in Utah (est. 1871)

Reverend Dr. Curtis Price, Pastor, First Baptist Church of Salt Lake City

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Utah (est. 1881)

Rev. Brigitte Weier, Pastor, St Matthew Lutheran Church, Taylorsville

Greek Orthodox Church in Utah (est. 1904)

Reverend Protopresbyter Elias Koucos, Greek Orthodox Priest (retired)

Episcopal, Lutheran, Jewish & Congregational Leaders from across the West

Reverend Steve Keplinger, Grace St Paul's Episcopal, Tucson, AZ

Reverend Payton Hoegh, Chaplain for Disaster Resilience, Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles and
Program Director, The Center for Spirituality in Nature

Reverend Robert Rose, Priest, St John's Episcopal Church, Ouray and
St Michael's Episcopal Church, Episcopal Diocese of Colorado, Telluride

Reverend Debbie Metzgar Shew, St. Mark's Episcopal, Episcopal Diocese of Colorado, Durango

Reverend Teri Shecter, Southwest Region Missioner, Office of the Bishop,
Episcopal Diocese of Colorado

Reverend John Bellaimey, St John's Church in Minneapolis, Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota

Reverend Rebecca Johnson Ardahl, Evangelical Lutheran Church (retired)

Reverend Amy Schifrin, President Emeritus, North American Lutheran Seminary, Ambridge, PA

Rabbi Chaplain Dr. Susan Conforti (Ret.) Auburn, CA

Reverend Dr. Kenneth Moore, First Congregational Church UCC, Auburn, CA