

The Antiquities Act and America's National Monuments

A timeline of milestones

Overview

The Antiquities Act, which became law in 1906 after years of debate, has played a rich and enduring role in protecting our nation's history and heritage. In 1976, Congress reaffirmed its intention to provide the president with land protection authority when it passed the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. The Antiquities Act has been used by 17 presidents from both parties and, more than 100 years after it was created, continues to be a landmark law to safeguard special places for the use and enjoyment of current and future generations.

1936

President Franklin D. Roosevelt establishes the 825,340-acre Joshua Tree National Monument, CA

1915

President Woodrow Wilson reduces the **Mount Olympus National** Monument by 313,280 acres¹

Congress passes the Antiquities Act, giving presidents the power to designate national monuments (1906)

1908

President Theodore Roosevelt

establishes the 808,120-acre Grand

Canyon National Monument, AZ

President Roosevelt designates

the 221,000-acre Jackson Hole

National Monument, WY (1943)

1976

Congress passes the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA) and leaves the Antiquities Act untouched⁴

1978

1976

The U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska holds that the National Environmental Policy Act does not apply to a president's actions under the Antiquities Act (1978)

1980

1996

President Bill Clinton establishes the 1,700,000-acre Grand Staircase-**Escalante National Monument, UT**

2001

President George W. Bush requests that the Interior Department review all national monuments designated by President Clinton

Federal legislation to limit the president's authority under the Antiquities Act fails in Congress (1996)

2006

President Bush designates the 582,578-square-mile Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument in the Pacific Ocean



2004

President Bush designates the 13,436-square-mile Rose Atoll National Monument in the Pacific Ocean (2009)

2009



2016

President Obama designates the 1,600,000-acre Mojave Trails **National Monument, CA**

2018

President Trump designates **Camp Nelson National Monument** in Kentucky



President Obama establishes the 1,350,000-acre Bears Ears National Monument, UT (2016)

1906

1909

1920

President Roosevelt designates the

639,200-acre Mount Olympus

National Monument, WA (1909)

1933

The U.S. Supreme Court upholds

President Roosevelt's designation of

Grand Canyon National Monument

in Cameron v. United States² (1920)

1943



1925 President Calvin Coolidge establishes the 1,379,316-acre **Glacier Bay National Monument, AK**

President Herbert Hoover designates the 1,601,800-acre **Death Valley National Monument, CA** (1933)



The U.S. Supreme Court finds that the Antiquities Act gives the president authority to protect species and habitat as "objects of scientific interest" in Cappaert v. United States (1976)



1945

A U.S. District Court upholds the establishment of Jackson Hole National Monument in Wyoming v. Franke³

The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) provides additional conservation for many lands protected by President Carter under the Antiquities Act (1980)

1996

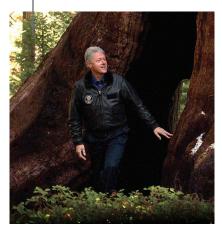


President Jimmy Carter uses the Antiquities Act to create 17 national monuments, providing interim protection for 56 million acres of public land in Alaska

2000

President Clinton establishes the 327,769-acre Giant Sequoia National Monument, CA

Federal legislation to limit the president's authority under the Antiquities Act fails in Congress (2000)



2000

President Barack Obama establishes the 496,330-acre **Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks** National Monument, NM

Federal court upholds designation President Obama designates the of Grand Staircase-Escalante 704,000-acre Basin and Range National Monument⁶ (2004) National Monument, NV (2015)

2015

2002

Interior Secretary Gale Norton

recommends no changes (2001)

reviews Clinton monuments,

2001

Federal court upholds President Clinton's designation of the Giant Seguoia National Monument in Tulare County v. Bush⁵

2014

Zinke releases final report of review of monument designations

President Trump announces significant reductions to Bears Ears and **Grand Staircase-Escalante** national monuments in Utah (2017)

2017

2017

2016

President Donald Trump directs Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to review 27 land and marine monuments designated since 1996

Endnotes

- 1 The courts were never asked to rule on the president's authority to reduce the national monument.
- 2 The decision established that the Grand Canyon is an object of scientific interest and confirmed the use of executive authority to protect it.
- 3 The Supreme Court upheld President Franklin D. Roosevelt's designation of Jackson Hole National Monument and found that courts have "limited jurisdiction to investigate and determine" whether a presidential proclamation under the Antiquities Act is unreasonable.
- 4 The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) repealed the executive branch's public lands withdrawal authority in 29 statutes. Congress also prohibited the secretary of the interior from modifying or revoking any monuments created by executive action under the Antiquities Act.
- 5 The federal court held that the protection of ecosystems and scenic vistas is an appropriate use of the president's Antiquities Act authority, which "is not limited to protecting only archeological sites."
- 6 The federal court rejected claims that the monument was too large and that the Antiquities Act was intended to be limited to protecting man-made objects.

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