

Senator Mitt Romney Is In Lock-Step With Donald Trump On Gutting National Monuments Protections For Bears Ears

SUMMARY: *Mitt Romney, despite his differences with Donald Trump, agrees with the twice-impeached president on one thing: Illegally gutting protections for public lands like Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante. Romney also has a history of working with oil-backed, special interest to oppose national monument designations.*

Mitt Romney Has A History Of Opposing National Monument Protections And A Cozy Relationship With Several Anti-Public Lands Special Interest Groups

Mitt Romney Opposes National Monument Protections For Sacred Sites Like Bears Ears National Monument

Mitt Romney Praised Donald Trump For Unilaterally Gutting Bears Ears And Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments. “Romney has applauded President Donald Trump for his recent order to shrink the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante national monuments, and argued Monday that he thinks the Antiquities Act, the federal law that grants presidential authority to designate such monuments, needs significant revisions, voicing support of a new law to require any large monuments over a certain acreage to first be approved by state legislatures.” [The St. George Spectrum, [03/05/18](#)]

- **And Romney Doesn’t Want National Monument Protections In Utah Restored.** “A group of Utah politicians, including Gov. Spencer Cox, and Senators Mike Lee and Mitt Romney, are opposed to one of President Biden's first moves in office. One of the executive orders Biden signed just hours after being sworn in Wednesday will review the boundaries of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante monuments in Utah.” [Salt Lake City Fox 13, [01/20/21](#)]

Mitt Romney Signed Onto A Bill That Would Ban New National Monuments In Utah. “Sen. Mitt Romney signed onto the Protect Utah's Rural Economy (PURE) Act as introduced by Utah's Sen. Mike Lee, a bill that excludes Utah from the Antiquities Act. [...] The Protect Utah's Rural Economy (PURE) Act hands the power to proclaim land as a federally protected monument from the federal government to Utah's government.” [KUTV, [01/12/19](#)]

Mitt Romney’s Northern Utah Director Used To Work For A Koch-Funded Dark Money Group To Undermine National Monument Designations

Mitt Romney Hired Matt Anderson, A Former Sutherland Institute Employee, To Be His Northern Utah Director. “Matt Anderson serves as the Northern Utah Director for Senator Mitt Romney. He is a sixth generation Utahan and was born and raised in Bountiful, Utah. Matt graduated from Utah State University in 2014 with a bachelor’s degree in political science and is pursuing a master’s of political science. He graduates this spring. Before joining Senator Romney’s staff, Matt worked as the director of Sutherland Institute’s Coalition for Self-Government in the West.” [Utah State University, accessed [01/21/21](#)]

- **The Sutherland Institute Is A “Non-Profit, Non-Partisan Utah-Based Public Policy Research Organization.”** “The Sutherland Institute is a non-profit, non-partisan Utah-based public policy research organization whose goal is to encourage public policy solutions that allow individual initiative to flourish, and that support limited government, private property rights, and personal responsibility.” [Sutherland Institute, archived [06/09/00](#)]
- **The Sutherland Institute Has Received Millions From “Dark Money Funds Tied To The Billionaire” Koch Brothers.** “Today’s land seizure movement, which would deprive millions of Americans of their rightful claim to the public domain, was born in Utah. Finally, a brief nod to the Sutherland Institute, a Utah-based think tank and policy shop that has received more than \$1.5 million from dark money funds tied to the billionaire brothers Charles and David Koch and their allies.” [Pacific Standard, [07/13/17](#)]
- **Matt Anderson’s Role At The Sutherland Institute Included Representing An Advertising Campaign And Website Called “Rescind Bears Ears” Through A Front Group Called “Stewards Of San Juan County” To Oppose Bears Ears National Monument.** “A website and advertisement campaign launched this week is taking aim at rescinding Bears Ears National Monument, emphasizing the impact the monument has on San Juan County residents. The website, [rescindbears.org](#), created by the Stewards of San Juan County and the Sutherland Institute, focuses on how the monument negatively impacts those living near it. ‘Local voices are the most important voices in this debate because no one has to live with the land management decisions that are made around the monument like the people who actually live in the area have to,’ said Matt Anderson, a policy analyst at Sutherland Institute.” [KSL, [05/22/17](#)]

Mitt Romney Spoke At An Event Hosted By An Anti-Public Lands Group That Made Headlines For Misusing Public Funds

Mitt Romney Was Featured At An Event Hosted By The Foundation For Integrated Resource Management (FIRM), A Taxpayer-Funded, Anti-Public Lands Group. “Mitt Romney and U.S. Reps Chris Stewart and Rob Bishop talked tough on public lands during a visit to St. George on Tuesday. The three Republicans, all of whom are running for election this year, discussed weakening the Antiquities Act and Endangered Species Act, dropping the filibuster rule in the U.S. Senate and rewriting federal public lands policy to require state approval of new regulations. The push for such Utah-style policy proposals — taking advantage of a Republican Congress and the willingness of President Donald Trump’s administration to go along with those plans — drew mostly applause from the small audience gathered at Dixie State University for the conference of a conservative advocacy group called the Foundation for Integrated Resource Management.” [The St. George Spectrum, [03/27/18](#)]

- **At The Event, Candidates Spoke Before A Backdrop Printed With The FIRM Logo.** [The St. George Spectrum, [03/27/18](#)]

FIRM Would Later Make Headlines For Allegedly Misusing Tax Dollars. In 2016, the Utah Legislature opened up its wallet to a nonprofit called the Foundation for Integrated Resource

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Management (FIRM), one of several groups that have received millions in taxpayers dollars in recent years to push greater local and state control over Utah's large expanses of federal land and imperiled wildlife. But FIRM's taxpayer-supported charge was specific: File lawsuits against the federal government on behalf of Utah counties. The goal was to reverse restrictive land-use policies as a way to promote "integrated" use of natural resources. Four years and \$400,000 later, FIRM has yet to pursue a single legal action, according to ethics complaints filed Tuesday with the IRS, the Utah Division of Consumer Protection and Utah's state auditor." [*Salt Lake Tribune*, [06/23/20](#)]