

CLINTON GORE 96

*President Clinton
Protecting Our Environment
September 19, 1996*

President Clinton continues to help Americans meet their challenge to leave our environment safe and clean for the next generation. Yesterday he proclaimed 1.7 million acres of southern Utah's most picturesque canyons and cliffs and desert plateau region a national monument -- the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.

Providing Responsible Leadership on the Environment

- The President will preserve the land under the 1906 Antiquities Act, the same law President Theodore Roosevelt used on January 11, 1908 to preserve the Grand Canyon.
- By proclaiming the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, the President is protecting this vast area of unspoiled wilderness from commercial development -- and preserving it for grazing, hunting, and fishing for our children.
- This land will now be open for all Americans and tourists to visit and enjoy.

Preserving America's Natural Heritage

- The Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument contains significant portions of a vast geologic stairway, named the Giant Staircase, which rises 5,500 feet to the rim of Bryce Canyon in an unbroken sequence of greater cliffs and plateaus.
- The President is protecting a unique landscape that includes: outstanding rock formations that showcase some four billion years of geology; thousands of dwellings, rock art, and other artifacts from three prehistoric cultures; and world-class fossil sites, including remarkable specimens of petrified wood, dinosaurs, turtles, crocodiles, and mammals.
- This new monument holds many arches and natural bridges, including the 130-foot high Escalante Natural Bridge, with a 100 foot span, and Grosvenor Arch, a rare "double arch."
- Over 200 species of birds, including bald eagles and peregrine falcons live within the monument; mountain lion, bear, and desert bighorn sheep roam free; 1,700 year old trees continue to grow.
- The President's plan creates a significant opportunity for archeological study: the monument was home to two ancient Native American cultures, the Anasazi and Fremont Indians.

"On this remarkable site, God's handiwork is everywhere in the natural beauty of the Escalante Canyons and in the Kaiparowitz Plateau, in the rock formations that show layer by layer of billions of years of geology, in the fossil records of dinosaurs and other prehistoric life, in the remains of ancient American civilizations..."

President Clinton, September 18, 1996.

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