

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 26, 2023

The Honorable Deb Haaland
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland:

We write to you today in support of a national monument at Bahsahwahbee (Swamp Cedars) in Eastern Nevada. Throughout our time in Congress, one of our top priorities has been to engage with Tribal nations to understand and advance their priorities, including the protection and commemoration of places of cultural and historic importance. This includes a recent proposal for a national monument at Bahsahwahbee (Swamp Cedars) in Eastern Nevada. For Bahsahwahbee, Tribal nations seek to preserve this holy site as a national monument, and we ask for your support for this proposal.


For the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation, the Ely Shoshone Tribe, and the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe, Bahsahwahbee is an area unlike any other in the world. It is a place of memory, where nearly 1,000 of their indigenous Newe ancestors were killed during three 19th-century massacres that took place during religious gatherings. Bahsahwahbee is also home to the sacred and globally unique grove of shallow-rooted Rocky Mountain juniper trees known as the “swamp cedars”, which the Newe people believe to be the spiritual embodiment of their perished ancestors. To this day, the Newe continue to hold this area in deep reverence, where they pass down traditional knowledge, pray, and hold ceremonies. The Tribes wish for their stories to be known and memorialized, and for the natural beauty of this area to be permanently protected. While we are pleased that the majority of this proposed monument is already listed as a Traditional Cultural Property on the National Register of Historic Places, we urge you to further protect and celebrate this area by designating it as a national monument.

The Tribes have engaged and led conversations with numerous stakeholders in support of the Bahsahwahbee National Monument. In 2021, the Nevada Legislature passed AJR4, a bipartisan resolution which calls on Congress and the President of the United States to establish the Bahsahwahbee National Monument. All three Tribes have also passed resolutions in support of the designation.

We understand that several existing land management issues and potential land-use conflicts will require further consideration through ongoing engagement with all impacted stakeholders, including those with interests in energy development and transmission, grazing, mining, water rights, and outdoor recreation. That is why, over the coming months, we look forward to working closely with you and having meaningful and productive conversations with the Tribes, state and local communities, and all relevant stakeholders to ensure this proposal includes input from all interested parties and moves forward as part of a collaborative process.

We would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you about this proposal and also encourage you to engage with local stakeholders, state and local government officials, and representatives from the Tribes to further discuss the proposed monument. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator

Cc:

Amos Murphy, Vice-Chairman of the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation
Diana Buckner, Chairwoman of the Ely Shoshone Tribe
Warren Graham, Chairman of the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe
Board of Commissioners, White Pine County, Nevada