

The Mountain Pact encouraged by late 2021 proposal of 20-year drilling ban near Chaco Culture National

Written by By Anna Peterson Executive Director The Mountain Pact
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The Mountain Pact is thrilled with the administration's action ... to institute a 20-year ban on oil and gas leasing within a 10-mile radius around the Greater Chaco Landscape. Chaco Culture National Historical Park is a UNESCO world heritage site and the sacred ancestral homeland to many Indigenous communities. We are grateful to the Biden administration for working to protect the cultural and spiritual importance of this landscape from short-term extraction and development.

Through the America the Beautiful initiative, the Biden administration promised to collaborate on locally-led projects to conserve America's lands and waters that honor Tribal sovereignty and support Tribal nations. Today's [Nov. 15] proposal does just that. We are encouraged by the administration's Tribal-Nations Summit and commitment to elevate Indigenous knowledge, as well as [to] strengthen Nation-to-Nation relationships, Tribal sovereignty, and co-stewardship of public lands and waters.

Addressing the climate and loss of biodiversity crises will require the administration to act quickly and use every possible tool at its disposal. Mineral withdrawals like the one proposed today are an important mechanism to protect local communities and safeguard irreplaceable resources. We look forward to working with the Biden administration to continue to protect more

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