

UNDERMINING THE ANTIQUITIES ACT

Passed: 60-33

SUMMARY:

The Senate tabled an amendment that would have prohibited the president from designating national monuments in Utah. (*February 7, 2019, Roll Call No. 20*).

BACKGROUND:

The Antiquities Act is one of our nation's most important tools for preserving federal lands and waters. The Act, which was signed into law by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1906, allows the President to designate national monuments on public lands and waters that contain objects of historical, cultural or scientific significance. Seventeen presidents, both Republican and Democratic, have used the Antiquities Act to designate more than 150 national monuments, including the Grand Canyon and Statue of Liberty. The diverse array of places safeguarded under the Act are essential for conserving our rich biodiversity and protecting native wildlife from threats like oil and gas development and habitat destruction.

Senator Mike Lee (R-Utah) offered an amendment to S. 47, the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act, that would have undermined the Antiquities Act by prohibiting the President from designating or expanding national monuments in Utah. This provision would have restricted the ability of the President to set aside land in Utah without approval from Congress, threatening the survival of the fish, wildlife and plants that depend upon these special places.

OUTCOME:

On February 7, 2012, the Senate passed a motion to table the Lee amendment, 60-33. "Yes" was the pro-conservation vote.