Greetings Bears Ears community, and Happy Native American Heritage Month! Although we celebrate Indigenous cultures and heritage all year long, we are glad that this is a time to center and focus on Indigenous peoples, voices, art, activism, literature, beauty, and more. We hope that this attention will carry on into the future so that we may all continue to learn more about Native heritage and expand our efforts to support Native communities. Following us on social media is the best way to discover more content that centers Native perspectives, voices, and projects. A lot has happened over the past couple of months, so we are excited to update you on our latest activities, and what we hope to accomplish as we close out this year. Thank you for all of your continued support as we move forward with our work to protect our homelands and cultural sites in the sacred Bears Ears region.

For many of us, this is normally the time of year that we gather together and spend time with family and friends. However, the recent surges of COVID-19 outbreaks around the nation, and at home, have shown us that the best way to stop the spread of the virus is to remain vigilant about how our actions affect others - especially those closest to us. As the colder weather rolls in, we will be spending more time indoors and in close quarters, making transmission of the virus much easier. In the spirit of caring for our loved ones, we
continue to encourage you to stay home, wear a mask, practice social distancing, and follow CDC guidelines. By doing our part to keep ourselves and others safe, we can work together to mitigate the impacts of this pandemic on our communities and healthcare personnel. Let's celebrate the holidays from home this year, and look to better days ahead when we can all gather together once again in a safe, and uninhibited setting. We hope that you and yours are safe and healthy at this time.

RESTORING PROTECTIONS TO BEARS EARS

Following the outcome of the U.S. presidential election, the Coalition Tribes released a joint statement which addressed the incoming Biden-Harris administration and affirmed their commitment to protecting the Bears Ears landscape for generations to come. Below is an excerpt from the press release:

"The Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition, comprised of the Hopi Tribe, the Navajo Nation, the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, the Ute Indian Tribe, and the Pueblo of Zuni, looks forward to working with the incoming Biden administration to restore protections for the sacred landscape known as Bears Ears. On December 28, 2016, we celebrated President Obama's establishment of the Bears Ears National Monument ("Monument"). The Monument was established following more than two decades of grassroots work, including efforts by our Coalition Tribes to help others understand the importance of Bears Ears' to our history, traditions and culture. We greatly appreciated the hard work that the Obama administration did leading up to the Monument's creation.

A year later we were shocked by the Trump administration's abrupt and illegal action purporting to drastically change the Monument's boundaries, reducing by some 85% the area protected. We immediately filed a legal challenge to Trump's action, along with a number of other interested groups. At present, these consolidated lawsuits are pending in federal district court. The Trump administration's politically motivated decision removed national monument protections for thousands of significant cultural and natural objects, landmarks, structures, and places, including ancient burial grounds. As anyone who has visited this spectacularly unique area knows, the Bears Ears landscape is extremely fragile, and thus it and its numerous cultural antiquities were placed in jeopardy. And when special places like Bears Ears are damaged, or its cultural resources lost, the traditions and practices that are tied to them often suffer the same fate."

To read our full press release, which includes quotes from Tribal leaders, please visit: https://bearsearscoalition.org/working-together-restoring-protections-for-the-sacred-bears-ears-region-alongside-the-new-biden-harris-administration/
Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our Fall 2020 Fundraiser: we are more than 95% of the way to reaching our $30,000 goal! This event was created to support the creation and development of our Native Land Management Plan. We are grateful for all the donations thus far, and it gives us hope to see that the movement to protect sacred lands like Bears Ears continues to gain support each and every day.

Congratulations to both of these leaders, and we wish them and their nations all the best in guiding the Coalition into the future! Additionally, we would like to thank Lt. Governor Carleton Bowekaty of Zuni Pueblo, and Uncompahgre Representative and Member of the Ute Indian Tribal Business Committee Shaun Chapoose for their leadership as previous Co-Chairs. With their help, we have made incredible progress in spreading awareness about the Bears Ears movement, in our advocacy for protecting Indigenous homelands, and in developing our Native Land Management Plan.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW CO-CHAIRS

This fall, the Coalition went through the process of electing new Co-Chair representatives to our organization. Each officer serves for one year before the next election; their terms hold great responsibility as both work to promote the vision of the five Tribes uniting to protect Bears Ears. We are happy to announce that Vice Chairman Clark Tenakhongva of the Hopi Tribe (pictured below) and Hank Stevens, representative for the Navajo Nation, (pictured below) will be our new Co-Chairs.

WE HAVE ALMOST REACHED OUR FUNDRAISING GOAL!

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To find out more information please visit: https://bearsearscoalition.org/donate-to-the-bears-ears-inter-tribal-coalition/
MERCHANTISE AND OTHER UPDATES

Thank you to those who supported our store re-opening in August - we sold out of our most popular items fast! While there are still some stickers available, we are looking to restock our store before the end of the year. In addition to our original t-shirts and long sleeves, we will be adding more variety to our clothing collection, including additional colors and items. Stay tuned to learn when you can get your Bears Ears gear for the holiday season. Also, the Coalition is looking to hire an IT Systems Contractor for 2021.

STAY INFORMED THROUGH THE WINTER

Although we are working remotely to keep our staff and fellow associates of the five Coalition Tribes safe, we still have a lot going on! Stay in the loop on our latest posts and virtual activities by following us on social media and signing up for email updates.

@bearsearscoalition
@savebearsears
Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition

Thank you - Elahkwa - Ahéhee’ - Tog’oiak’ - Kwakwhay - Askwali