

Obama expected to designate more national monuments

Interior Secretary Sally Jewell recommended that President Obama take executive action to create new national monuments . In the next few months, Jewell said she will be meeting with communities to locate public lands deserving of protection as national monuments. The Department of the Interior plays a role in the stewardship of 20% of the nation's lands, including national parks and national wildlife refuges.

In response to Jewell's announcement, dozens of Republican lawmakers wrote a letter to the Secretary urging for the disclosure of locations considered for national monument designations. The letter also requested that the Obama administration contact members of Congress representing the state at least 90 days prior to announcing a monument. The request comes after former President Clinton's controversial decision to designate the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in Utah, putting one of the nation's largest coal reserves off limits. So far, President Obama has established nine national monuments, which were all locally supported. The president has the authority to designate national monuments without congressional approval under the Antiquities Act of 1906.

Sources: Department of Interior, National Park Service, Rep. Crawford website
