



Office of the Governor

**MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Governor applauds Biden Administration decision to create buffer around Chaco Canyon**

SANTA FE - Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham issued a statement following the Department of Interior decision to create a 10-mile buffer at the Chaco Culture National Historical Park:

“President Biden, Secretary Haaland, and the Bureau of Land Management made history today by protecting the Greater Chaco Landscape. This decision speaks loud and clear: tribal voices must be involved, must be heard and must be valued. Thousands of archaeological sites too important to be put at risk by mining and drilling are now protected for generations to come.”

“The New Mexico Indian Affairs Department joins the Governor in applauding the federal administration for imposing a 20-year ban on new oil and gas leasing within 10 miles of Chaco Culture National Historical Park,” said Indian Affairs Department **Secretary-Designate James R. Mountain**. “Chaco Canyon remains a significant part of New Mexico’s sacred history for the tribes and our people. The threat to these sites by oil and gas extraction in and around Chaco Canyon must be met with actions like those taken by the President today to preserve the history and spirit of our tribal way of life.”

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the park is considered sacred to many tribal communities in New Mexico, and state and national leaders have worked in conjunction with the Bureau of Land Management to curtail oil and gas extraction for the last decade.

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