



NEWS RELEASE

Feb. 6, 2024

Utah leaders reject exchange of School and Institutional Trust Lands

SALT LAKE CITY (Feb. 6, 2024) – Gov. Spencer J. Cox, President J. Stuart Adams and Speaker Mike Schultz released the following statement regarding the governor’s withdrawal of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the U.S. Department of Interior and the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Legislature's joint resolution rejecting the proposed land exchange of state school and institutional trust lands and mineral interests for federal lands and mineral interests.

“Utah has sought for a collaborative, inclusive approach to managing our public lands, including in the management of the Bears Ears National Monument, yet the Biden administration continues to ignore our good faith input. The federal government has signaled that it once again plans to adopt a restrictive land management plan that will harm recreational access, grazing, and other traditional public uses of these lands. When the administration is prepared to have a serious and good faith collaborative discussion about land management, we stand ready to renew discussions of a land exchange.”

[H.J.R. 26](#), sponsored by Rep. Casey Snider, accomplishes the following:

- Rejects the proposed exchange of state SITLA and mineral interests in and around the Bears Ears National Monument for United States government lands.
- Recognizes the state would better manage and administer the lands in the proposed exchange for the benefit of the state's trust land beneficiaries and economy than the federal government.
- Rejects the federal government's proposed land management plan.

Please find the letter from Gov. Cox withdrawing the MOU attached.

###