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Kayci Cook Collins  
Acting Superintendent  
Southeast Utah Group

Superintendent Cook,

Thank you for your communication during this COVID-19 pandemic.

As you may be aware, the San Juan County Public Health Department declared a public health state of emergency on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Subsequently, The President of the United States, The Governor of the State of Utah, and myself, Health Officer of San Juan County, have all issued recommendations to the public to avoid leisure travel and to avoid group gatherings.

While San Juan Public Health has not taken as drastic measures as other counties in the area, we nonetheless express concern that visitors are still drawn to our area national parks, namely Canyonlands National Park, Hovenweep National Monument, and Natural Bridges National Monument, during this pandemic event and against the current recommendations of Federal, State, and Local officials.

We support a decision from the National Park Service to temporarily close National Parks in our area in an effort to protect both the public at large, and National Park Service staff and employees.

I recognize that we are currently experiencing something that is unprecedented in our lifetimes, and the decisions that need to be made may be difficult. I appreciate your dedication to do what is necessary to protect your staff, their loved ones, and our communities as you make decisions regarding the closure of these parks.

Sincerely,

Kirk Bengé

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