



NEWS RELEASE

IPANM Issues Statement on Chaco Canyon 10-Mile Buffer Declaration

IPANM (June 2, 2023) - The following statement has been released by Jim Winchester, Executive Director of the Independent Petroleum Association of New Mexico regarding the Department of Interior's decision to enforce a 10-mile buffer zone drilling moratorium around Chaco Canyon:



“The arbitrary 10-mile boundary imposed around Chaco Canyon announced today is discompassionate to generations of Navajo Allottees -- many living in poverty -- who will now lose out [an estimated \\$194 million in potential royalties](#); is indifferent to [the pleas of the Navajo Nation](#) against a blatant government taking; is complete capitulation [to pressure from outside environmental groups](#) who simply want to outright ban all oil & gas drilling; and, is highly unethical due to [Secretary Deb Haaland's own family conflict of interest](#) due to her daughter's local political activism.

IPANM has [long supported](#) responsible oil & gas development around culturally sensitive sites, including support for a 5-mile buffer around Chaco Canyon which offers a natural geologic barrier of environmental protection, recognizes the culturally sacred nature of the site, and safeguards historic structures against potential physical damage.”

--Jim Winchester

Executive Director, Independent Petroleum Association of New Mexico



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