



July 12, 2013

The Honorable Rob Bishop, Chairman

The Honorable Raúl Grijalva, Ranking Member

Subcommittee on Public Lands and  
Environmental Regulation  
House Committee on Natural Resources  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop and Ranking Member Grijalva,

The Society of American Archaeology (SAA) writes in strong support of H.R. 2497, the Casa Grande Ruins National Monument Boundary Modification Act of 2013, recently introduced by Reps. Kirkpatrick and Gosar, and referred to the subcommittee. This important bill provides needed increased protections for one of the most important archaeological areas in North America, to the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.

SAA is an international organization that, since its founding in 1934, has been dedicated to the research about and interpretation and protection of the archaeological heritage of the Americas. With more than 7,000 members, SAA represents professional archaeologists in colleges and universities, museums, government agencies, and the private sector. SAA has members in all 50 of the United States, as well as many other nations around the world.

The Casa Grande Ruin was first protected in 1889, and designated a National Monument in 1918. As the oldest archaeological unit of the National Park Service (NPS), it is the only one that is specifically dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of the physical remnants of the ancient Hohokam people, who lived for more than 1000 years in what is now central and southern Arizona. As valuable as the existing Monument is, many archaeological sites—identified in a 2007 NPS resource study—are located just beyond its boundaries, on properties owned by a diverse range of landholders, both public and private. Development in the area is threatening some of these sites. With a sizable portion of the Hohokam culture's archaeological heritage at risk, the effectiveness of the Monument in preserving its priceless cultural resources could be compromised.

H.R. 2497 remedies this problem by authorizing the transfer to NPS of two parcels of land from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Land Management. It also allows NPS to acquire, by donation or purchase from willing private and state sellers, three nearby properties

containing important Hohokam archaeological resources. The new lands, totaling approximately 417 acres, would be managed as part of the Monument.

Expansion of the Casa Grande Ruins National Monument would greatly add to its value as an interpretive center of Hohokam culture, encourage economic growth in the area through increased heritage tourism, and better protect these irreplaceable sites so that future generations of Americans and international tourists may learn more about the history of the continent and those who came before them.

SAA respectfully encourages the subcommittee to approve H.R. 2497 as soon as possible. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeffrey H. Altschul". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Jeffrey H. Altschul, Ph.D., RPA  
President

CC: Rep. Anne Kirkpatrick  
Rep. Paul Gosar