



SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY

October 18, 2021

The Honorable Joe Manchin III
Chairman
Senate Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Barrasso
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Manchin and Ranking Member Barrasso,

The Society for American Archaeology is pleased to support President Biden's nomination of Charles Sams III as Director of the National Park Service (NPS). We urge your panel to approve the selection of Mr. Sams as quickly as possible.

The SAA is an international organization that, since its founding in 1934, has been dedicated to research about and interpretation and protection of the archaeological heritage of the Americas. With nearly 7,000 members, SAA represents professional and avocational archaeologists, archaeology students in colleges and universities, and archaeologists working at Tribal agencies, museums, government agencies, and the private sector. SAA has members in throughout the U.S., as well as in many nations around the world.

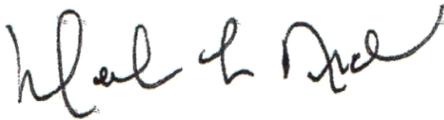
Mr. Sams, who is currently a Council Member to the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, possesses a broad range of experience and a valuable skillset. An enrolled member, Cayuse and Walla Walla, of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Tribes, he holds a bachelor's of science degree in Business Administration, as well as a master's of legal studies in Indigenous Peoples Law. A veteran of the U.S. Navy, he has worked in both state and Tribal governments, as well as natural resources and conservation non-profits for more than 25 years.

This is an important nomination that comes at a critical time for the NPS, the cornerstone federal agency for the preservation of our natural and cultural heritage. Mr. Sams' work on natural resources conservation and energy issues gives him key insights on the nexus between environment, energy development and climate change, arguably the most important issue facing our public lands.

It is our hope that he will bring a fresh point of view to management that will reinvigorate morale in the agency, and that he will advocate for badly-needed increases in funding and staff. Finally, as a Native American leader, he will bring a voice and perspective to the NPS that have been underrepresented in the past.

The SAA strongly supports the nomination of Charles Sams III for NPS Director. Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah L. Nichols". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Deborah L. Nichols, Ph.D., RPA
President