

VF Corp Shareholder Meeting
Justin Danhof, Esq., General Counsel and Free Enterprise Project Director
The National Center for Public Policy Research, April 24, 2018

I'm Justin Danhof of the National Center for Public Policy Research.

I want to discuss North Face President Arne Arens' recent comments regarding President Trump's restoration of lands that were unconstitutionally seized by the Obama and Clinton Administrations.¹

Just before leaving office, President Obama orchestrated a massive federal power grab by designating millions of acres of land, including Bears Ears in Utah, as national monuments under the 1906 Antiquities Act.² President Clinton did the same with the Grand Staircase-Escalante. However, the Antiquities Act was designed to allow Presidents to protect areas of significance to native communities under an imminent threat of theft of artifacts or damage to significant natural items such as fossils. Clinton and Obama went well beyond that scope by going around Congress to create *de facto* wilderness areas. However, under the Wilderness Act of 1963, it's up to Congress to approve such designations.³

My colleague, Dr. Bonner Cohen, has noted that the Trump "administration is making sure that local communities have a voice by restoring traditional 'multiple use' activities on these lands. This will make hard-pressed local communities more competitive by allowing grazing, logging, commercial fishing and, in some cases, mineral development."⁴ Why would the company oppose these local communities and seek to deprive them of needed economic resources?

In using his company title and resources to oppose the Trump Administration on national monuments as well as the Paris Climate Accord,⁵ Mr. Arens puts the company squarely in the middle of a political and legal debate that is not germane to the company. In doing so, he has alienated conservatives, constitutionalists and many in these local communities – including farmers and ranchers. This obviously includes many current and potential customers.

If North Face wants to be a brand for only far-left environmentalists, that's its prerogative. However, they shouldn't do so under the banner of VF Corp. and risk the profitability of the company and its other brands. Do you think it's appropriate for one of your brands to engage in political and legal causes that have nothing to do with the company at the expense of VF Corp's reputation and potential profitability?

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¹ <https://qz.com/1061616/the-north-face-president-bears-ears-grand-staircase-escalante-and-what-we-have-lost/>

² <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/12/28/statement-president-designation-bears-ears-national-monument-and-gold>

³ <https://nationalcenter.org/2016/12/29/bears-ears-and-gold-butte-national-monument-designations-statement-by-bonner-cohen/>

⁴ <http://dailycaller.com/2017/12/06/finally-president-trump-kicks-off-the-rollback-of-national-monument-abuse/>

⁵ <http://footwearnews.com/2017/focus/athletic-outdoor/outdoor-brands-speak-against-president-donald-trump-climate-change-north-face-keen-lowa-365749/>