

Erin Nelson

From: Stewart Aitchison <swaitchison@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 28, 2023 3:15 PM
To: Office
Subject: Disconnect Comments

Dear Mayor Ann Leppanen & City Council Members,

Here are my comments on the Disconnection Petition:

As others have said, transparency has been lacking in this disconnection petition. SITLA instead of doing “backroom deals” with abusive Mr. Baird, the state agency should be considering trading their sections with the BLM to create a more continuous and logical Bears Ears National Monument boundary.

Currently the SITLA property line cuts along one side of Cottonwood Wash, which then excludes Spring Canyon and Upper Calf Canyon, places that contain rare, endemic species such as Cave Primrose (*Primula specuicola*). Furthermore, the east side of Cottonwood Wash contains important archaeological sites important to our Indigenous neighbors. Especially with the recent purchase of the west side of Cottonwood Canyon by the Wildlands Conservancy, it would only make ecological sense to include the east side of Cottonwood Wash as well.

My feeling is if the Actons don't want to be good neighbors and be part of our wonderful community, then disconnect THEIR property. However, including the SITLA land as part of the disconnect is ridiculous. SITLA could better fill their state mandate by trading with the BLM for land that would consolidate their holdings and at the same time benefit Bears Ears National Monument. Plus, being within Bluff's town boundary, any future development by Bears Ears National Monument could be regulated wisely.

Good luck with making your decision. It's a tough one!

Stewart Aitchison
220 E. Black Locust
Bluff, UT 84512