

September 27, 2019

The Honorable David Bernhardt  
Secretary of the Interior  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C St. N.W.  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The undersigned hunting and angling businesses write to you concerning the position of Bureau of Land Management director and to offer suggestions for filling this position that is vital to the health of America's public lands.

As you know, the BLM administers 245 million acres of America's public lands and waters in the western United States and is largely responsible for most development decisions on those lands. As an industry, companies like ours drive an \$887 billion economy each year and a 2018 study by Southwick Associates indicates that total direct spending for just hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing on BLM lands and waters accounted for more than \$2 billion in economic activity. Recreational activities like hunting and fishing are big business for us in BLM country.

Throughout President Trump's term, the Senate-confirmed position of BLM director has remained unfilled and a nomination has yet to be put forth by the Administration. Instead, a series of acting directors has served in the role. Most recently, an amended Secretarial Order 3345 delegated the authority of BLM director to William Pendley. Mr. Pendley's unlikely and rapid rise to BLM's top leadership position has given pause to hunters, anglers, businesses and local communities in the West that have responsibly stewarded our unique legacy of public lands for generations.

Mr. Pendley has regularly expressed views supporting the sale or transfer of Western public lands, an opinion in direct conflict with BLM policy established in the Federal Land and Management Policy Act that "public lands be retained in Federal ownership". While we are well aware that the wholesale transfer or sale of BLM lands would take an act of Congress, it is imperative that the person leading the BLM is fully invested in keeping public lands in public hands.

The BLM director has tremendous influence over the management of our public lands and waters, setting the operational tone, hiring career staff who align management guidance and establishing policy that can influence land management for decades. Recognizing that the temporary delegation of authority to Mr. Pendley will expire on September 30, 2019, we ask that any candidate under consideration for BLM director -- either temporarily through another secretarial order or as a presidential nomination -- be an individual who exhibits the following qualifications:

- The BLM director must be an ardent supporter of public lands and oppose efforts to divest Federal lands, either through sale or transfer;
- The BLM director must carry out the BLM’s mission with integrity and strive for balanced management of our public lands that does not prioritize resource development and extraction over the interests of fish, wildlife and intact habitat;
- The BLM director must utilize the best available science, encourage transparency, and facilitate public input when making management decisions;
- The BLM director must prioritize the safety, wellbeing and job satisfaction of the 10,000 public land stewards who work for the Agency;
- The BLM director must value collaboration and bring together all public land stakeholders to work toward a common goal for the common good;
- The BLM director must prioritize increasing public access to the nearly 9 million acres of BLM lands that are currently landlocked;
- The BLM director must prioritize ecological restoration of our forests, rangelands and waters;
- The BLM director must provide management that increases public access and opportunities for quality hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation.

As companies dedicated to the future of hunting and angling, we are proud to be a driving economic force deeply connected to our public lands and waters. It is important that we work together to set a strong example of stewardship to the generations that follow us so that this uniquely American legacy of public lands and waters can be handed down intact. We respectfully ask you to consider these qualifications as a baseline for any candidate being considered to lead the BLM. Further, we urge you to initiate a transparent congressional appointment process in order to recruit a dynamic leader committed to bringing people together around the BLM’s mission and values. Our country needs unity more than ever. We are committed to working with you to achieve it.

Sincerely,

**Alpacka Raft**

**Hunt To Eat**

**Scott Fly Rod Company**

**Angling Trade Media**

**Maven**

**Stanley-PMI**

**basin + bend**

**Mayfly Outdoors**

**Tight Line Media**

**DUN Magazine**

**MeatEater Inc.**

**Weatherby Firearms Inc.**

**First Lite**

**Patagonia**

**Scott Fly Rod Company**

**goHUNT.com**

**RepYourWater**