

◆ WESTERN WATERSHEDS PROJECT ◆ CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY ◆
◆ WILDEARTH GUARDIANS ◆

January 10, 2018

Secretary Ryan Zinke
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240
feedback@ios.doi.gov

Re: The urgent need to remove trespass cattle from Gold Butte and surrounding areas

Dear Secretary Zinke,

Our organizations wrote to Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in May 2016 and again in November 2016 to urge the resolution of ongoing trespass livestock on BLM and NPS managed lands of southern Nevada. We are writing again today because recent events have made such prompt and decisive action more important.

As you are aware, the lands in and around the area now known as Gold Butte National Monument, including adjacent portions of Lake Mead National Recreation Area, have been closed to authorized livestock grazing for over two decades. Cliven Bundy has been defiant of government authority to manage these lands and has been breaking the law since he refused to sign his grazing permit in 1993. Three court decisions have found in favor of BLM's authority over these lands and the most recent, in 2013, explicitly entitled BLM to round-up Mr. Bundy's stray cattle if he failed to remove them in forty-five days. The BLM's attempts to comply with this order, in April 2014, failed due to the agency's legitimate concerns over public safety.

Since the standoff in 2014, BLM has apparently been deferring any action on the trespass livestock in Gold Butte until the resolution of the criminal complaints against the Bundys. Now that the court has dismissed charges against the Bundy's, there is no further cause for delay for BLM enforcing the law and rounding up the trespass cattle.

There is no further evidence to be gathered or court action necessary to proceed: Mr. Bundy's cattle are trespassing on public land, and BLM is failing to follow the law unless it acts to remove them. We urge Interior not to leave this business unfinished. Time is of the essence. Interior must round up these cattle, to ensure that a pattern of lawlessness backed up by violence does not perpetuate itself across the public lands of the Western U.S.

We look forward to your prompt action in this matter.

Sincerely,



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cc: **U.S. Senator Catherine Cortez Masto**
Nevada 4th Congressional District Representative Ruben Kihuen
Nevada Assembly Natural Resources Committee Chair Heidi Swank
Nevada State Senate Natural Resources Committee Chair Yvanna Cancela