

January 11, 2020

President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr  
Biden-Harris Transition  
1401 Constitution Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear President-elect Joseph R. Biden, Jr.,

We, the scientific and conservation community, are writing to request that you direct the Department of Interior to take urgent and decisive action to immediately protect Tiehm's buckwheat (*Eriogonum tiehmii*) under the Endangered Species Act. Tiehm's buckwheat is an extremely rare plant species that is only known from a single population entirely on federal lands in the Silver Peak Range of Nevada, and it is currently facing severe threats. If no action is taken by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service within the next few months, then this species will be on a perilous path towards extinction.

Tiehm's buckwheat faces extinction due to a proposed lithium mine called the Rhyolite Ridge Lithium-Boron Project. It is also experiencing catastrophic loss in the only known population, due to causes which are still under investigation but may be anthropogenic in nature. As a result, over 50% of all known Tiehm's buckwheat plants have been either partially or completely destroyed and/or removed in the last 3 months, placing this species on a trajectory towards imminent extinction.

Under the Trump administration, the Bureau of Land Management has ignored the warnings of scientists that the lithium-boron mine would eliminate over 60% of the living plants and over 30% of its known habitat. Despite presenting substantial evidence that outline the severe impact of the mining project, including that the long-term project footprint encompasses the *entire* global range of the species which is entirely on federal lands, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has taken no action.

Because more than 50% of the species has been partially or completely destroyed due to recent events, Tiehm's buckwheat is now one of the plant species most at-risk of extinction in the United States. We ask you to take the following actions upon taking office in January to prevent its extinction. First, we ask that you direct the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to immediately list Tiehm's buckwheat as endangered under the Endangered Species Act using the temporary emergency listing provision. Second, we ask that you direct the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to complete its 12-month review of the species within 30 days and make the emergency endangered species protections permanent. And third, we ask that you direct the Bureau of Land Management to immediately take corrective measures to address the ongoing destruction of the species, including fencing, security, habitat restoration, and other measures.

We are currently faced with a global extinction crisis. A recent global assessment found that there have been at least 600 known recent plant species extinctions, and that we are losing plant species at a rate 500 times higher than the background extinction rate. Plant conservation is essential to preserving our

natural heritage. By protecting Tiehm's buckwheat we can ensure that Nevada's and the United States' irreplaceable biological diversity is preserved for future generations.

On behalf our organizations and the many people who study, work with, and love plants everywhere, we urge you to take the necessary steps to save Tiehm's buckwheat from extinction.

Signed,

Nevada Assemblywoman Sarah Peters  
Former Nevada State Legislator (1998-2012) Sheila Leslie  
Former Nevada State Legislator (1991-2006) & Clark County Commissioner (2007-2019) Chris Giunchigliani

Basin and Range Watch  
Botanic Garden Conservation International  
California Botanical Society  
California Native Plant Society, Bristlecone Chapter  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Great Basin Resource Watch  
Northern California Botanists  
Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada  
Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility  
Sierra Club Toiyabe Chapter  
Southern California Botanists  
Sunrise Movement Las Vegas  
Sunrise Movement Reno  
Western Watersheds Project  
WildEarth Guardians

Naomi Fraga, Ph.D.  
Director of Conservation  
California Botanic Garden

Peter H. Raven, Ph.D.  
President Emeritus  
Missouri Botanical Garden

Janet Franklin, Ph.D.  
Distinguished Professor  
University of California, Riverside

Jennifer Gee, Ph.D.  
Director, James San Jacinto Reserve  
University of California, Riverside

Rikke Reese Naesborg, Ph.D.  
Tucker Lichenologist  
Santa Barbara Botanic Garden

Heather Schneider, Ph.D.  
Rare Plant Biologist  
Santa Barbara Botanic Garden

Glenn R Hicks, Ph.D.  
August T Larsson Fellow  
University of California and SLU Biocentrum,  
Uppsala, Sweden

Loralee Larios, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
University of California, Riverside

Emma Aronson, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor  
University of California, Riverside

Kenneth J. Halama, Ph.D.  
Director, Motte Rimrock Reserve  
University of California, Riverside

Joshua P. Der, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
California State University, Fullerton

Murphy Westwood, Ph.D.  
Director of Global Tree Conservation  
The Morton Arboretum

Katie Heineman, Ph.D.  
Vice President of Science and Conservation  
Center for Plant Conservation

Susan Fawcett, Ph.D.  
Research Botanist  
University of California, Berkeley

Amy Litt, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor  
University of California, Riverside

Lauren Ponisio, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
University of Oregon

Joan Dudney, Ph.D.  
Postdoctoral Scholar  
University of California, Davis

Marko J Spasojevic, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
University of California Riverside

Hollis Woodard, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of Entomology  
University of California, Riverside

Erin Questad, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor  
California State Polytechnic University,  
Pomona

Nick Jensen, Ph.D.  
Lead Conservation Scientist  
California Native Plant Society

Thomas Huggins, Ph.D.  
Herbarium manager

Bruce MacBryde, Ph.D.  
BioConservation Support

Norman Douglas, Ph.D.  
Lecturer  
University of Florida

Leif Richardson, Ph.D.  
Ecologist

Eric Snyder, Ph.D.  
Botanist

Jeremie Fant, Ph.D.  
Conservation Scientist  
Chicago Botanic Garden

Kurt Anderson, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of Biology  
University of California-Riverside

Lindsay Chiono, Ph.D.  
Restoration Ecologist  
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian  
Reservation

Seema Nayan Sheth, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
North Carolina State University

Gregory Russell, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor  
Riverside City College

J. Travis Columbus, Ph.D.  
Research Scientist/Professor of Botany  
California Botanic Garden

Carrie Kiel, Ph.D.  
Research Asst. Professor and Postdoctoral  
Researcher  
California Botanic Garden

Emily Roberson, Ph.D.  
Director  
Native Plant Society of the U.S.

Denise Knapp, Ph.D.  
Director of Conservation & Research  
Santa Barbara Botanic Garden

Edith B. Allen, Ph.D.  
Professor Emerita, Plant Ecology  
University of California, Riverside

C. Matt Guilliams, Ph.D.  
Tucker Plant Systematist and Herbarium  
Curator  
Santa Barbara Botanic Garden

Eugene N. Anderson, Ph.D.  
Professor Emeritus, Anthropology  
University of California, Riverside

Josephine Lesage, Ph.D.  
Applied Ecologist  
Santa Barbara Botanic Garden

Guy Nesom, Ph.D.  
Research Associate  
Academy of Natural Sciences, Drexel  
University

Benjamin R. Grady, Ph.D.  
President, Eriogonum Society & Assistant  
Professor of Biology  
Ripon College

Joel L. Sachs, Ph.D.  
Professor of Biology  
University of California, Riverside

Loraine K. Washburn, Ph.D.  
Conservation Botanist  
Unity College

Jason Stajich, Ph.D.  
Professor  
University of California-Riverside

Rachel W. Martin, Ph.D.  
Professor of Chemistry  
University of California, Irvine

Christopher Moore, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of Biology  
Colby College

Janelle Burke, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor  
Howard University

J. Mark Porter, Ph.D.  
Research Scientist (ret.)  
California Botanic Garden

Tanisha Williams, Ph.D.  
Bucknell University

Dr. Marc A Baker, Ph.D.  
Owner  
Southwest Botanical Research

Kelli Elliott, M.S.  
Ecology Professor  
Orange Coast College

Sarah Ratay, M.S.  
Preserve Steward  
University of California, Los Angeles

Steve Boyd, M.S.  
Herbarium Curator Emeritus  
California Botanic Garden

Karen Nelson, M.S.  
California Naturalist

Elizabeth Newton, M.S.  
Trust for Nature

Richard Davis, M.D.  
Trustee  
California Botanic Garden

Diana Cosand, MA.  
Professor of Biology  
Chaffey College

Kristen Van Dam, M.S.  
Ecologist  
University of California, Berkeley

Imeña Valdes, M.S.  
Northwestern University/Chicago Botanic  
Garden

Margo Yousse, M.S.  
Natural History Collections Assistant  
Denver Botanic Gardens

Richard A. Levy, M.S.  
Database Associate  
Denver Botanic Gardens

Kylie Etter, M.S.  
Conservation Technician  
Santa Barbara Botanic Garden

Christina Varnava, M.S.  
California Botanic Garden

Joy England, M.S.  
Rare Plant Botanist  
California Botanic Garden

Steve Schoenig, M.S.  
Chief, Biogeographic Data Branch (ret.)  
CA Dept. Fish & Wildlife

Evan Frost, M.S.  
Terrestrial Ecologist / Botanist  
Wildwood Consulting LLC

Samantha Seabrook-Sturgis, M.S.  
Botanist

Therese Edwards, M.A.  
Loyola Marymount University

Jared Meek, M.A.  
Columbia University

Tom Baugh, M.A., M.S.  
Biologist

Sarah Canham, M.S.  
Botanist

Alexandra Seglias, M.S.  
Seed Conservation Research Associate  
Denver Botanic Gardens

Emily Schumacher, M.S.  
Morton Arboretum

Christina Feng, M.S.  
Natural Heritage Biologist  
Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Isaac H. Lichter Marck, M.A.  
Ph.D. Candidate  
University of California, Berkeley

Keir Morse, M.S.  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Claremont Graduate University

Diane Wong-Kone  
Otis Bay Ecological Consultants

Margaret Horner  
Biologist  
National Park Service

Eleanor Bales  
Environmental Scientist  
California Military Department

Isabel Rivera  
Botany technician  
Santa Barbara Botanic Garden

Erin Berkowitz  
California Botanic Garden

Aaron Echols  
Restoration Ecologist

Amy Byrne  
Global Tree Conservation Coordinator  
The Morton Arboretum

Brittany E Burgard  
Horticulturalist  
Boyce Thompson Arboretum

Erin Fitz  
Botany Field technician  
Chicago Botanic Garden

Zach Tanner  
Landscape Architect  
Anza Landscape Design

Michelle Cloud-Hughes  
Sole Proprietor  
Desert Solitaire Botany and Ecological  
Restoration

Daniel R. Patterson  
Ecologist  
Bureau of Land Management (ret.)

Margaret Hughes  
Retired

Erin Mundorf  
Environmental Engineer

Raphaella Floreani Buzbee  
University of California, Berkeley

Sophia Winitsky  
Ph.D. Student  
Montana State University

Eli Kallison  
Ph.D. student  
Washington University in St Louis

Nina House  
M.S. student  
California Botanic Garden

Martin Purdy  
M.S. student  
California Botanic Garden

Jane Fawke  
M.A. Student  
University of California, Riverside