



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF INYO

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January 21, 2014

Secretary Jewell
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

Re: Cumulative Socioeconomic Impacts Associated with Proposed Endangered Species Listings

Dear Secretary Jewell:

On behalf of the Board of Supervisors, I am writing to express our deep concern regarding the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife's proposals to list as a result of the settlement agreement established in *Center for Biological Diversity v. Salazar* multiple species as threatened or endangered in Inyo County, as well as additional species proposed in each of our neighboring counties with impacts to Inyo County. The ramification of this action on our communities is considerable.

Inyo County is the second largest county in California, with a population of just over 18,000 people; our communities are rural, and our heritage and economic livelihood are strongly tied to public lands. Less than two percent of Inyo County is privately held and available for development; the remainder of Inyo County is managed by Federal and State agencies, and the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. Our base economic contributors are tourism, agriculture and mining, each of which will be severely impacted by increased regulatory burdens associated with Federal land use management.

Currently, eight species are being proposed to be listed as endangered or threatened in Inyo County, with hundreds of thousands of acres anticipated to be proposed as critical habitat. These species include: the Armagosa Tryonia, Mohave Ground Squirrel, Mojave Fringe-Toed Lizard, Nevares Spring Naucorid Bug, Mono Basin Sage Grouse, Sierra Nevada Yellow Legged Frog, Yosemite Toad, and Western Billed Cuckoo. There are over a dozen additional species being proposed for listing in adjacent counties which threaten our regional grazing leases, mining permits, resource harvesting, recreational access and regional economy. Each of these critical habitat designations will impose substantial costs on land use, ownership, and opportunity. The cumulative impacts of these proposals could present significant limitations on our economy and way of life.

The Inyo County Board of Supervisors believes it is inherent in the Constitution of the United States, and in all federal land use statutes, that considerations of local populations be incorporated in public land use decisions. These proposals are a result of a litigious rather than scientifically based process,

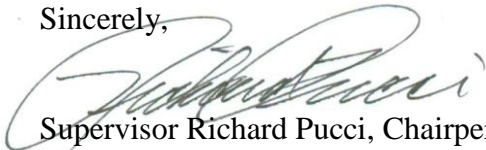
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which have been developed without consultation and coordination with local communities. The cumulative socioeconomic impacts associated with multiple forthcoming endangered and threatened species listings and critical habitat proposals in Inyo County must be understood in order to make a fair determination of the actual consequences of the multiple endangered species proposals to our economy, heritage, and way of life.

The Board seeks to understand the cumulative socioeconomic consequences these listings will impose on our communities, and we request you to direct Fish and Wildlife staff to meet with us to discuss the how the sum of these listings will affect the culture and economy of the County. We suggest the Fish and Wildlife service meet with the Board in a special meeting in order to provide the opportunity for the greatest number of our constituents to listen, learn and become engaged in the development of these proposals. This interchange is vitally important to us, and we offer to work with you and your staffs to make any necessary arrangements and assist in meeting logistics.

Thank you. If you have any questions, please contact the County's Administrative Officer, Kevin Carunchio, at (760) 878-0292 or kcarunchio@inyocounty.us.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Richard Pucci, Chairperson
Inyo County Board of Supervisors

cc: Board of Supervisors
County Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Planning Director
Senator Barbara Boxer
Senator Diane Feinstein
Representative Col. Paul Cook
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California State Association of Counties
National Association of Counties
Fresno County
Tulare County
Mono County
Kern County
San Bernardino County
Clark County
Nye County
Esmeralda County
Ren Lohofener, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Jen Norris, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Carl Benz, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service