



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

FEB 21 2018

The Honorable Ron Wyden
United States Senate
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Wyden:

Thank you for your letter of November 14, 2017, cosigned by your colleagues, to the U.S. Department of the Interior's (DOI) Secretary Ryan Zinke and me regarding Representative Rob Bishop's interest in withdrawals, including the Southwestern Oregon Mineral Withdrawal. I apologize for the delayed response.

The Southwestern Oregon Mineral Withdrawal is supported by language in the proposed Southwestern Oregon Watershed and Salmon Protection Act. It was accomplished through a deliberative process, culminating in the publication of Public Land Order 7859 on December 30, 2016. Through this Order, DOI withdrew approximately 5,200 acres of public domain and re-vested Oregon and California Railroad lands, and approximately 95,800 acres of National Forest System lands. The withdrawal removes these lands from settlement, sale, location, and entry under the public land laws; location and entry under the U.S. mining laws; and operation of the mineral and geothermal leasing laws for a period of 20 years. This allows members of Congress time to consider a permanent withdrawal should one prove necessary or desirable. As always, this withdrawal is subject to valid existing rights.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service is implementing the current Administration's efforts to evaluate all proposed withdrawals, consistent with law, regulation, and policy. However, with publication of Public Land Order 7859, the Southwestern Oregon Mineral Withdrawal moved from a proposed withdrawal to a completed one. Therefore, the Forest Service has no plans to revisit it prior to its expiration, or absent Congressional direction otherwise. We will continue to coordinate closely with DOI's Bureau of Land Management on all proposed withdrawals consistent with applicable regulations and policies.

Again, thank you for writing. If you have further questions, please have a member of your staff contact the Office of Congressional Relations at (202) 720-7095. A similar letter is being sent to your colleagues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sonny Perdue". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

FEB 21 2018

The Honorable Jeffrey Merkley
United States Senate
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Merkley:

Thank you for your letter of November 14, 2017, cosigned by your colleagues, to the U.S. Department of the Interior's (DOI) Secretary Ryan Zinke and me regarding Representative Rob Bishop's interest in withdrawals, including the Southwestern Oregon Mineral Withdrawal. I apologize for the delayed response.

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Secretary



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The Honorable Peter DeFazio
U.S. House of Representatives
2134 Rayburn Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman DeFazio:

Thank you for your letter of November 14, 2017, cosigned by your colleagues, to the U.S. Department of the Interior's (DOI) Secretary Ryan Zinke and me regarding Representative Rob Bishop's interest in withdrawals, including the Southwestern Oregon Mineral Withdrawal. I apologize for the delayed response.

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