

AMERICAN STEWARDS!

of Liberty

July 6, 2016

Dear Friend,

The federal government has finally targeted our coordination process we've been using to win major battles against them.

It's taken years for the government to make such a bold move, but this past February, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) issued new proposed planning rules that dilute, erase, and even eliminate their statutory obligation to coordinate with local governments.

Why?—Because when local governments have a seat at the table through coordination in the BLM's planning process, the agency is held accountable and they can't stand transparency. Coordination creates the best possible scenario where common sense can actually prevail.

The key aspect to coordination is that the local government's responsibility to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens *is equal, not subordinate* to the federal agency's responsibility to manage the federal lands.

This is troubling to the agency because it requires them to consider the local government's policies, plans and programs and work to achieve consistency with those plans.

The statute that governs the BLM's planning process requires this. But through the agency's proposed planning rules, they are attempting to rewrite the planning process in such a way to ensure that they never have to fulfill the statutorily required coordination process.

This must be stopped. **We cannot afford to lose this battle!**

Immediately after the BLM issued their proposed rules for public comment, we organized a coalition of local governments, led by a select group of local government representatives that have successfully used coordination to win key victories in their communities.

We hired attorney Norman James with Fennemore Craig, P.C. in Arizona to draft a thorough and substantive set of comments for the coalition and develop the arguments necessary to prevail in court in the event the BLM does not withdraw their proposed rules.

We had over 37 local government entities sign the comments with us and submit them within the limited 90-day time frame. Included were counties, conservation districts, water districts and associations, all of which came together for the sole purpose of ensuring the BLM was alerted that local governments would not allow them to write coordination out of existence.

In addition to preparing the comments, we also sent a letter to the Director of BLM, Mr. Neil Kornze, and requested he "coordinate" their proposed rules. The letter was signed by seven counties and two conservation districts representing seven different states.

Ironically, the very statutory obligation to coordinate that Mr. Kornze and his agency are trying to extinguish through their new rulemaking process, requires them to “coordinate” those new rules with local governments prior to their issuance. But, they refused to do so.

That fact is a clear violation of the Federal Land Management and Policy Act (FLPMA). In other words, Mr. Kornze and his agency violated federal law.

As we expected, Mr. Kornze denied our coordination request and offered the local governments a phone conference call where we could inform them of our concerns. However, that is not coordination.

Fortunately, we’ve filed substantive comments and raised key issues and we are confident we can prevail in court. Additionally, we’ve given the Director the opportunity to fulfill his coordination responsibility by withdrawing the rules and starting over by working with the local governments as required by law.

It is now clear that we are going to have to win this one in court. The Obama Administration is trying to get these in place before leaving office and we do not anticipate they will withdraw their rules, forcing us to bring suit.

We’re fine with that because just as we have approached every other battle we have faced, we made sure we laid the proper foundation and are prepared to win this one as well.

We are asking you to support our efforts because you are essential to our success.

Since the rules were released, we have been working overtime to organize our partners and develop the strategy to stop the new rules. We are in the best possible position right now to do so, but we need your help.

Would you make a contribution to this fight today? \$25, \$50, \$100, \$250, or whatever you can afford would be greatly appreciated. We need all hands on deck to win this one, and that includes you.

Over the years, you have heard us relay the many victories we have earned and shared together using this powerful tool known as “coordination.” It has proven to be the most effective tool we have, or anyone has, to stop federal overreach and regain local control.

Coordination simply works for local governments and that is why the federal government wants to get rid of it before there is a new administration. We simply cannot allow this to happen if we are going to retain our liberties and freedoms in this nation.

We need to prepare our case and be ready to file by August 1st. That is why we’re asking for your support today!

Respectfully yours,



Dan Byfield
CEO