

**U.S. House of Representatives**  
**Committee on Natural Resources**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 28, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write in strong opposition to Ms. Tracy Stone-Manning's nomination to serve as Director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and request that you withdraw her from consideration.

Since her nomination, Ms. Stone-Manning's ties to eco-terrorism have given us grave concerns over her ability and qualifications to serve as BLM Director. These concerns have only multiplied as more information about Ms. Stone-Manning's extremist activities came to light and some of her supporters rescinded their endorsement, including former Obama Administration BLM Director Bob Abbey.<sup>1</sup>

The primary reason we oppose Ms. Stone-Manning's nomination is because of her connections to tree spiking incidents. As you are well aware, tree spiking is an especially vicious eco-terrorist tactic by which a metal rod is hammered into a tree trunk with the intent of jamming loggers' or firefighters' saws. Spiked trees can also end up in mills and cause costly damage to mill equipment, as well as injury or death to mill operators. At its worst, tree spiking is lethal to loggers, firefighters, mill workers and land managers, and at its best, causes life-altering injuries. Those who employ these tactics know exactly what they are doing. Ms. Stone-Manning is no exception.

During her confirmation process, Ms. Stone-Manning was required to complete a background questionnaire under oath. In it, she claimed she had "never been arrested or charged and to my knowledge . . . the target of such an investigation." However, a retired U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service special agent challenged her assertion and wrote to the U.S. Senate that Ms. Stone-Manning was aware she was under investigation in connection with eco-terror tactics such as tree-spiking in Clearwater National Forest in 1989.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Valerie Richardson, *Obama's BLM Director Pulls Support for Tracy Stone-Manning Over Tree-Spiking Incident*, THE WASHINGTON TIMES (June 20, 2021), <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2021/jun/20/obama-blm-director-tracy-stone-manning-should-with/>.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Michael W. Merkley, Special Agent (Ret.), Forest Service, U.S. Dep't of Agriculture to Sen. Joe Manchin III, Chairman, S. Comm. on Energy and Nat. Res. and Sen. John Barrasso, Ranking Member, S. Comm. on Energy and Nat. Res. (July 14, 2021).

Furthermore, Ms. Stone-Manning has advocated for other deeply disconcerting ideologies. Just last year, she tweeted<sup>3</sup> an article written by her husband, Richard Manning, in which he wrote that firefighters should simply let homes and property in or near forests burn. “There’s a rude and satisfying justice in burning down the house of someone who builds in the forest . . .” he wrote.<sup>4</sup> Ms. Stone-Manning termed the article a “[c]larion call.”<sup>5</sup>

There is no doubt that someone with this history of extreme, violent views should not be in a position of authority at an agency responsible for managing 245 million acres of federal lands and 700 million acres of mineral estate.<sup>6</sup> The BLM operates under a multiple-use mandate, requiring it to manage land in a way that promotes energy development, timber harvesting, grazing, and recreation, as well as conservation.<sup>7</sup> The objective ability of the BLM Director to assess land use opportunities for the agency’s multiple-use mission is a critical function of the position. Given the available evidence, we do not believe Ms. Stone-Manning is the right fit for the role.

Disappointingly, despite Ms. Stone-Manning’s extremist views, your administration continues to support her nomination. Just nine days ago, even after further evidence of Ms. Stone-Manning’s inadequacies, when White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki was asked about your views on Ms. Stone-Manning’s nomination, she replied, “[President Biden] stands by his nominee and looks forward to her getting confirmed.”<sup>8</sup>

In light of Ms. Stone-Manning’s extremist views, we find her unfit to serve the American people, and your continued backing of her nomination is deeply troubling. Therefore, in advance of the U.S. Senate’s vote on her confirmation, we urge you to withdraw your nomination of Ms. Stone-Manning to lead the BLM and place someone with the right qualifications and experience in this critical position.

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<sup>3</sup> @StoneManning, TWITTER (Sept. 15, 2020, 5:50 PM), [https://twitter.com/StoneManning/status/1305987494026989568?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1305987494026989568%7Ctwgr%5E%7Ctwcon%5Es1\\_&ref\\_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.usatoday.com%2Fstory%2Fopinion%2F2021%2F07%2F19%2Fstone-manning-eco-terrorism-biden-must-pull-blm-nomination%2F7980898002%2F](https://twitter.com/StoneManning/status/1305987494026989568?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1305987494026989568%7Ctwgr%5E%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.usatoday.com%2Fstory%2Fopinion%2F2021%2F07%2F19%2Fstone-manning-eco-terrorism-biden-must-pull-blm-nomination%2F7980898002%2F).

<sup>4</sup> Richard Manning, *Combustion Engines*, HARPER’S MAGAZINE, <https://harpers.org/archive/2018/08/lolo-peak-rice-ridge-mega-fires>.

<sup>5</sup> *Supra* note 3.

<sup>6</sup> *How We Manage*, BUREAU OF LAND MGMT., U.S. DEP’T OF THE INTERIOR, <https://www.blm.gov/about/how-we-manage>.

<sup>7</sup> *Our Mission*, BUREAU OF LAND MGMT., U.S. DEP’T OF THE INTERIOR, <https://www.blm.gov/about/our-mission>.

<sup>8</sup> White House Press Briefing by Press Secretary Jen Psaki (July 19, 2021), *available at* <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/press-briefings/2021/07/19/press-briefing-by-press-secretary-jen-psaki-july-19-2021>.

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Sincerely,



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Republican Whip



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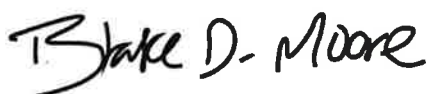
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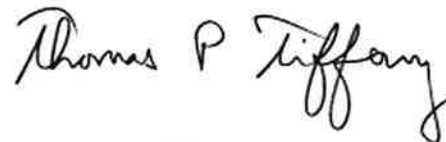
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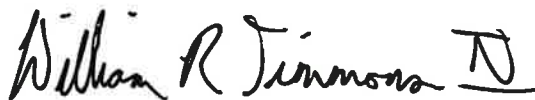
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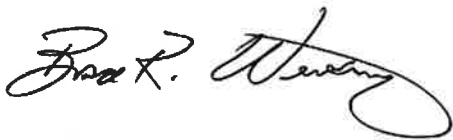
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Daniel Webster  
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Brad Wenstrup  
Member of Congress



Robert J. Wittman  
Member of Congress



Don Young  
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable Steny Hoyer, Majority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable Raúl Grijalva, Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources  
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader, U.S. Senate