



Public Lands Foundation

P.O. Box 7226 Arlington, Virginia 22207

For America's Heritage

April 5, 2021

The Honorable Debra Haaland
Secretary of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Secretary Haaland:

On behalf of the Public Lands Foundation (PLF), I am writing to encourage you to nominate a professional natural resource manager as the next director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

The PLF is a national non-profit membership organization incorporated in 1987 that advocates and works for the retention of America's Public Lands in the public's hands; professionally and sustainably managed for the responsible use and enjoyment of American citizens. PLF endorses and embraces the multiple use mission of the BLM as prescribed by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA). Our members are predominantly retired employees of the BLM and as such have spent their careers dedicated to the sound management of these valuable lands and resources. The members represent the broad spectrum of knowledge needed for public land management.

The FLPMA gives guidance on the qualifications for the BLM director position. Section 301(a) of the Act provides that "*Appointments to the position of Director shall hereafter be made by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Director of the Bureau shall have a broad background and substantial experience in public land and natural resource management.*" Professional BLM employees as well as other natural resources professionals satisfy these qualifications, and we encourage you to consider them.

The new BLM director needs not only political savvy, but also the skills and competencies in natural resource management to lead the agency through the complicated decisions that he or she will be required to make. One of the first challenges a new director will face is addressing the BLM's organizational issues resulting from the relocation of the Bureau's Headquarters from Washington, D.C. to Grand Junction, Colorado and the loss of many senior-level professionals.

As the new Secretary, you know well the many issues facing management of these lands and the complex trade-offs that need to be made. You have a difficult job in balancing the many demands on these lands. The PLF is eager to assist you in any way we can to place the best possible nominee for this position before the Senate.

Thank you for your consideration. The PLF looks forward to working with you on the many issues that face management of the public lands administered by the BLM.

Sincerely,

Edward W. Shepard
President