



November 13, 2018

Bureau of Land Management
Oregon State Office,
P.O. Box 2965
Portland, OR 97208-2965
Attention: Methow Headwaters Mineral Withdrawal

Re: *Support the 20-year Methow Headwaters Mineral Withdrawal*

To: Secretary of Interior Ryan Zinke and Bureau of Land Management

Conservation Northwest is writing to support the 20-year mineral withdrawal of 340,079 acres of U.S. Forest Service land in the Methow Valley, Washington, as recommended by the U.S. Forest Service.

We urge you to complete the review process and approve the withdrawal within the remaining six weeks of the two-year review period, to ensure that there is no new mining until the natural resource-based economy of this valley is permanently protected.

The withdrawal area supports 1,800 recreation-related jobs in the county, contributing more than \$150 million to the local economy that relies on pristine water and natural resources to support an outdoor recreation industry. The Methow Valley was designated as one of fourteen Treasured Landscapes by the National Forest Foundation, and contains a major migration corridor for the state's largest mule deer population, habitat for seven federally protected fish and wildlife species and Critical Habitat for five species. The Methow Headwaters landscape is world-renowned for hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, Nordic skiing, mountain biking, climbing, wildlife watching, and horseback riding, and offers two national scenic trails—the Pacific Crest Trail and the Pacific Northwest Trail

Conservation Northwest is dedicated to protecting our natural heritage for future generations by connecting big landscapes and restoring iconic wildlife. We work through partnerships and collaboratives to address issues crucial to wildlife, wildlands and people. We are an affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation, which recently passed a resolution supporting the withdrawal.

We endorse the 20-year withdrawal because it would protect vital habitats for fish and wildlife that would be irreversibly harmed by large-scale industrial mining. The withdrawal would preserve existing mining rights and land uses, while precluding large-scale industrial or open-pit mining. There is strong bipartisan and business support for the withdrawal and essentially no opposition within the Methow Valley.

Web and email

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Thank you for making the decision to approve the withdrawal by December 29, 2018. The withdrawal will help to protect cherished landscapes and wildlife that help define and shape our national character and identity for generations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'George Wooten'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'George' being more prominent than the last name 'Wooten'.

George Wooten, Conservation Associate
Conservation Northwest

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