

January 5, 2015

The Honorable Loretta Lynch
United States Attorney General
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Attorney General Lynch:

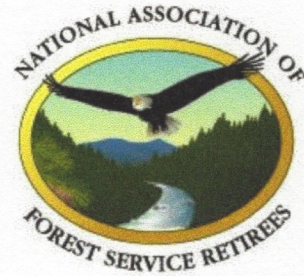
We are writing on behalf of the Public Lands Foundation (PLF) and the National Association of Forest Service Retirees (NAFSR) to seek your commitment to resolve a serious long-standing law enforcement and safety issue impacting Federal land managers across the West.

As organizations comprised of professionals who have successfully led the management of the public lands in the United States, the PLF and NAFSR have a deep and thorough understanding and appreciation for the challenges you face in light of the illegal actions by the Bundy family culminating in 2014. We are writing to express our well-considered concerns and to support you in taking actions we believe must be initiated as soon as possible.

For decades, the Bundy family has violated federal laws and flagrantly defied federal authorities that were enforcing the orders of the Federal Court and the law. These highly publicized actions included pointing powerful weapons at federal law enforcement officers and threatening to shoot. A recent article in the *Oregonian* quoted activist Ryan Payne as saying (referring to the Bundy standoff) "We had counter-sniper positions on their sniper positions. We had at least one guy - sometimes two guys - per BLM agent in there. If they made one wrong move, every single BLM agent in that camp would have died." The threats to public land managers and federal law enforcement have continued, with no consequences. Since the Bundy issue was made prominent in 2014, there have been other confrontations in Nevada, Utah, and Oregon. The current issue in Oregon involves the armed occupation of a National Wildlife Refuge headquarters.

As you know, the F.B.I. defines "domestic terrorism" as actions which have three characteristics: (1) Involve acts dangerous to human life that violate federal or state law; (2) Appear intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and (3) occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the U.S. The Bundy actions have these three characteristics.

Theodore Roosevelt, a champion of the public lands, said it best, "In a moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing to do, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing." In the current circumstances, doing nothing has allowed these domestic terrorists to act with impunity. It puts public land managers and Federal law enforcement officials at risk and has created an environment in which the American people are being cheated from the use and enjoyment of their public lands. The Rule of Law has been completely undermined by the lack of prosecution in these cases.



No one appreciates how difficult it is to deal with people of this type of mentality more than we do. Collectively, we have dealt with similar extremists throughout our careers. We remind you that this is not a new phenomenon. We have dealt with similar types during the so-called Sagebrush Rebellion, from the Posse Comitatus, the sovereign citizens, environmental extremists and a multitude of others who have abused the public lands and threatened public land managers. In our experience we have learned that lawbreakers must be held accountable in a timely manner or they will gain power and become more dangerous. We are very concerned that the longer that no action is taken, the current situation will deteriorate and become more and more dangerous for the dedicated people protecting the public lands and the public legally using these lands.

The PLF is a 501(c)(3) national non-profit, all volunteer membership conservation organization founded in 1987. Its mission is to advocate and work for the retention of America's National System of Public Lands in public hands, professionally and sustainably managed for responsible common use and enjoyment. PLF is an advocate for professional multiple use management and protection of the public lands administered by the BLM. Most of PLF's members are retired former BLM employees, and the Board of Directors serve as volunteers without compensation.

The National Association of Forest Service Retirees is a private, independent, non-partisan, non-profit association, whose members believe in the U.S. Forest Service and its Mission! Members dedicated their careers to protecting, developing and managing the nation's National Forest System lands and advising and cooperating here and around the world on such matters.

We appreciate that you face challenges, but we implore you to take action appropriate against those who are making a mockery of the U.S. law.

Sincerely,

Edward W. Shepard, President
Public Lands Foundation

C.L. Newman, Jr.

Corbin L. Newman Jr., Executive Director
National Association of Forest Service Retirees

cc: The Honorable Daniel G. Bogden, USA for NV
The Honorable Billy J. Williams, interim USA for OR
The Honorable Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior
The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture
Mr. Neil Kornze, Director, Bureau of Land Management
Mr. Tom Tidwell, Chief, U.S. Forest Service
BLM State Directors
U.S.F.S. Regional Foresters