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BLM ACTING DIRECTOR WILLIAM PERRY PENDLEY REAPPOINTED WITHOUT CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL

Posted by [Jan Wondra](#) | Jun 9, 2020

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Acting Director William Perry Pendley has been reinstated for the fifth time, again without congressional approval. Opponents of the reappointment point out that it is being done in defiance of congressional oversight and approval and represents a threat to the management of America’s public lands.

The method of appointment circumvents the required United States Senate congressional approval of every federal executive appointment. By reappointment as an acting director, versus a congressionally-approved director, it completely avoids congressional oversight.



The Arkansas Hills to the east of Salida and Tenderfoot Mountain could become a target of development if the BLM “preferred” plan D is selected. Photo EcoFlight.

“The continued reappointment of William Perry Pendley as the Acting Director of the Bureau of Land Management, in defiance of Congressional oversight and approval, threatens our public lands. And now indefinitely?” said the Executive Director of The Mountain Pact Anna Peterson. “Simply put, in direct opposition to what nearly three-

quarters of Americans say that the agency should do, Mr. Pendley prioritizes increasing oil and natural gas development and selling off America's public lands more than he does conserving and expanding our natural wild spaces.”

According to Peterson, William Perry Pendley is not qualified to lead the Bureau of Land Management. Together with the Director of the Department of the Interior David Bernhardt, she says that he has already demonstrated a clear preference to open public lands to oil and gas exploration for commercial profit which is in conflict with the preservation role of the BLM.

“It sets a dangerous precedent in allowing an individual in a temporary, non-Senate confirmed position to make permanent and detrimental decisions about the management of America's public lands,” said Peterson. “Mr. Pendley's continued role as Acting Director and the absence of an official presidential nomination is an egregious abuse of the Federal Vacancies Reform Act, and he must be removed.”

Readers may be interested in just how cozy the relationship is between the “acting” leadership of the BLM and oil and gas producers. After it was announced in Sept. 2019 that the BLM would move its headquarters to Grand Junction, it was then announced that [the BLM would share office space in a building at 760 Horizon Drive; a building filled with oil and gas producers](#). It is energy leases for these very companies that the BLM will regulate.

“To say it's concerning is an understatement,” said the Colorado Director of the Wilderness Society Jim Ramey the day the BLM's new location was announced. “It really struck me that on the same day as an international climate change strike, the BLM has no shame announcing that it's going to set up shop with fossil fuel companies.”

Colorado Senator Cory Gardner, who it is reported to have orchestrated the BLM relocation, continues to support the move and affirm that there is nothing untoward about the BLM's recent announcements. But he has ties to many oil and gas sponsors, including Chevron, the Colorado Petroleum Council, the American Petroleum Institute, Caerus Oil and Gas, and Trapper Mining.

The Mountain Pact that Peterson leads was organized in 2014, works with more than fifty mountain communities across eleven western states. Their emphasis: building resilience in the face of economic and environmental stresses, representing a shared voice on federal policy related to climate, public lands, and outdoor recreation.