



WYOMING STOCK GROWERS ASSOCIATION

Guardian of Wyoming's Cow Country since 1872

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February 27, 2018

The Honorable Ryan Zinke
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

RE: Policy Recommendations and Guidance Concerning Private Surface and National Historic Preservation Act Compliance

Dear Secretary Zinke:

The Wyoming Stock Growers Association (WSGA) has represented the state's ranching industry since 1872. In light of our own strong history, we are strong advocates for the preservation of the history of our state and the multi-generational properties of our member ranchers. We respect the history of those who inhabited these lands prior to our arrival. However, it is important to us that laws and policies directed toward historic preservation are implemented in an efficient and effective manner that fosters collaboration and respect among all interests.

WSGA has reviewed the February 2nd letter and accompanying white papers sent to you by the Petroleum Association of Wyoming (PAW). While WSGA as a surface landowner representative examines these issues from a different perspective than PAW, we share their frustrations with the current implementation of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and, in particular, Section 106. WSGA fully supports PAW's recommendations and requests for clarification.

WSGA's members are respectful of tribal history and supportive of reasonable protections for landscape features that represent that history. We seek equal respect for our private property rights. In Wyoming large areas of private surface are underlain by federal minerals. Surface owners in good faith negotiate surface use agreements with mineral developers that honor the dominant mineral estate while meeting their needs for surface protection and reclamation. In far too many instances, they are later advised that BLM will not issue an APD to the mineral developer unless they allow tribal entry onto their lands. The extent of this requirement varies widely among BLM offices in the state.

WSGA is confident that the requirements of the NHPA can be met in a manner that respects the rights of all parties and fosters collaboration. We urge you to provide appropriate guidance to BLM field offices to achieve this outcome.

Sincerely,

Jim Magagna
Executive Vice President

"Shaping and Living The Code of The West"

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