

- **I would like to welcome everyone to this hearing and thank the witnesses for making the time to join us today.**
- **We're here today to discuss what is being called a "reorganization" of the Bureau of Land Management.**
- **In reality, given the lack of transparency, analysis, and consultation this appears to be nothing more than a poorly veiled attempt to dismantle a federal agency.**
- **The BLM manages 245 million surface acres, and 700 million acres of subsurface mineral interests, all of which belong to the American people. The agency employs more than 9,000 people and has an annual budget of \$1.2 billion.**
- **Just try to imagine a \$1.2 billion private corporation deciding to move across the country without any clear timelines, reasonable analysis, or concrete goals.**
- **And yet, this is exactly what is happening with the Bureau of Land Management, and the BLM's shareholders—the American public—should be deeply concerned.**

- **The Department of the Interior has done nothing to alleviate concerns that this move has been hastily planned, poorly researched, and questionably motivated.**
- **In fact, one of the few responses we received from the Department, was an admission that no tribal consultations have been performed, a clear neglect of DOI's trust responsibilities.**
- **There is no doubt this plan fits this administration's pattern of trying to sell out our environment and natural resources.**
- **Recent comments made by the President's Acting Chief of Staff, Mick Mulvaney, at a gathering of wealthy donors shed light on what is really going on.**
- **At that event, Mr. Mulvaney spoke about the decision to relocate two bureaus from Washington, D.C. to Kansas City.**
- **More than half of the experienced scientists and economists at those bureaus chose to quit instead of uprooting their families.**

- Referencing that, Mr. Mulvaney said: “Now, it is nearly impossible to fire a federal worker, I know that because a lot of them work for me...but by simply saying to people we’re going to take you outside the bubble...outside this liberal haven of Washington, D.C...and they quit. What a wonderful way to streamline government.”
- It is hard to consider anything this administration does in good faith when they are so transparent about their true motivations.
- Taking BLM staff out of D.C. won’t help customer service, but it will make it harder for the agency to work with anyone other than the oil and gas industry.
- It will push many career staff to leave their roles, destroying institutional knowledge and hampering the Department’s ability to meet its mandates.
- This isn’t a close call, or a partisan issue.
- This move is being strongly opposed not just by the Public Lands Foundation, made up largely of bipartisan BLM retirees, which is represented here.

- **The National Association of Forest Service Retirees, said this move would, quote, “hamstring the agency. That much is clear to almost any leader who has spent his or her career managing public lands.”**
- **Jim Caswell, the most recent confirmed BLM Director in a Republican Administration, sent in testimony saying, “If implemented, the reorganization will functionally dismantle the BLM.”**
- **Hundreds of former land managers, former leaders, former agency heads, Republicans and Democrats alike, with thousands if not tens of thousands of years of combined experience being raised, living, and working in the American West, are speaking with one voice, and they are saying as clearly as possible: this is a terrible idea.**
- **On the other side, we have Senator Cory Gardner and the people of Grand Junction – who, admittedly, do quite well under this plan.**
- **With all due respect to the people of Grand Junction and the endangered Senator, I put more faith in the voices of the experts.**

- **It's no coincidence that at the same time this reorganization was announced, the administration appointed William Perry Pendley, an avowed opponent of public lands, as the acting head of BLM – and they have even sent him before us today to testify.**
- **What better way to eliminate the BLM than to push out its staff and to replace them with a man whose writings and speeches over three decades suggest that he thinks the agency shouldn't exist in the first place.**
- **If this BLM reorganization goes through, it would represent a major win for this administration and their two-year long campaign to undermine America's public lands heritage.**
- **The BLM plays an essential role in managing our public lands and protecting our public trust resources. We cannot let Secretary Bernhardt and Acting Director Pendley turn it into a one stop shop for companies looking to knock down public land protections on a quest to drill, mine and graze every acre of public land.**