

From: **GOAL Tribal Coalition** <[goaltribalcoalition@gmail.com](mailto:goaltribalcoalition@gmail.com)>

Date: Tue, Jul 5, 2016 at 3:08 AM

Subject: STOP the RACISM

To: [d\\_m\\_ashe@fws.gov](mailto:d_m_ashe@fws.gov)

Cc: [Secretary\\_jewell@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Secretary_jewell@ios.doi.gov), [secretary of the interior@ios.doi.gov](mailto:secretary_of_the_interior@ios.doi.gov), [nrdems@mail.house.gov](mailto:nrdems@mail.house.gov), [karen\\_diver@whitehouse.gov](mailto:karen_diver@whitehouse.gov)

Dear Director Ashe,

## **RE: TIME FOR THE RACISM TO STOP**

On behalf of GOAL Tribal Coalition and those associated with it, I am calling upon you to issue a statement denouncing the appalling racist comments about "Manifest Destiny" and reservations being described as "cesspools," made to the press by a grizzly delisting and trophy-hunting advocate in Cody, Wyoming who is tied to your "valued partner," the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD), through the organization Wyoming Sportsmen for Fish & Wildlife. As I will demonstrate, his most recent public pronouncement can only be interpreted as an incitement to violence against the tribal people who are unified in opposition to the delisting and trophy hunting of this sacred relative.

While this individual is not, to my knowledge, on the government's payroll, he is carrying USFWS's message in the Yellowstone area media, and is consistently promoting your grizzly delisting talking points; to the degree that he is financing billboards in the area with photographs of trophy hunters alternately with dead grizzlies and wolves, with the slogan: "Wolf. Griz. Delist. Hunt."

He is consistently referring to meetings he attended hosted by your USFWS employees and former employees, such as Matt Hogan and Chris Servheen, and your associates and allies in this delisting endeavor at the WGFD, as the basis for his actions. Last week, in response to GOAL Tribal Coalition having an anti-delisting billboard raised in Cody, this individual, Scott Weber, made overtly racist comments that were published and posted by the *Cody Enterprise*. Weber described GOAL Chairman, David Bearshield, as "delusional," and insulted all Native people by describing traditional spiritual beliefs and ceremonies as "ramblings," before celebrating "Manifest Destiny" with the following pronouncement in the context of his pro-delisting anti-Native diatribe:

"For Manifest Destiny to reach its goals, four entities had to be taken off the very land where your home sits: 1. Indians 2. Grizzly 3. Buffalo 4. Wolves. Never can any regain their ground. Never, ever."

If you do not denounce this statement, I wonder what it will take for you to denounce anything? I remind you, this individual is carrying your message and your talking points to the public, not just in the local media, but also on billboards. Like it or not, he is associated with USFWS by consistently promoting your agenda, making your message and his one and the same in the public's perception of this issue. You may confirm all of this with the editor of the *Cody Enterprise*, Mr. Vin Cappiello ([vin@codyenterprise.com](mailto:vin@codyenterprise.com)), who received Weber's reprehensible rants. As previously indicated, your unofficial messenger, Mr. Weber, has previously described Indian reservations as "cesspools."

Following the publication of an interview with GOAL Chairman, David Bearshield, in the *Cody Enterprise*, Weber posted on a blog: "The antis want a fight, then let's roll," followed by a meme of Clint Eastwood pronouncing, "Too many assholes, not enough bullets." If you do not interpret that as an incitement to violence, please explain to me, and the public, what that is?

I contend that this is occurring and has escalated to this degree because you ignored previous disgraceful incidents. Delisting the grizzly bear from the ESA against the advice, appeals, cultural, and legal arguments of some 700 federally recognized Indian Tribes and Canadian First Nations is your choice and your initiative, therefore the buck stops with you.

You consistently refer to Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) as one of your valued “partners” in the delisting (and trophy hunting) of the grizzly, and so it is time for you to take responsibility and finally reign in your partner. In April, at WGFD’s delisting and trophy hunting meeting in Cody, WY – a meeting sanctioned by your agency as part of this process – a Park County Commissioner announced, **“If we aren’t going to control these bears we may as well give the land back to the Indians and sail back across the ocean.”**

Unsurprisingly, neither Brian Nesvik nor Dan Thompson of WGFD said anything to counter this racist comment, and remained silent so that the Park County Commissioner who spewed it could soak up the adulation. The KULR8 TV reporter present said she was “surprised” that the crowd “laughed and clapped.” Nesvik, your former Chair of the IGBC, did and said nothing, and let it continue. You will recall that it was Nesvik and Thompson who were the culprits in the disgraceful James Walks Along incident in the same venue the previous year. In case you have forgotten, here is the video: [https://youtu.be/F\\_67s7JbfVU](https://youtu.be/F_67s7JbfVU)

The story of the event, the subsequent USFWS so-called public comment meeting in Cody shortly thereafter, was reported in the Native media. Your point man on delisting, USFWS’ Matt Hogan, silenced tribal voices at that meeting and in Bozeman, as the article details. These are facts, not opinions.

<http://nativenewsonline.net/currents/feds-gag-tribal-voices-including-longmire-star-spiritual-leaders-public-grizzly-meetings/>

Because previously you did nothing to censure Nesvik, or your former Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator, Chris Servheen, who sat on his hands throughout the whole thing, this shameful display of racism continues. This is your responsibility; please do not try and pass it off as Wyoming’s alone – these people work for you (Hogan), or worked for you (Servheen), or work in concert with you (Nesvik as Chair of the IGBC). You should be aware that uncut footage of the Walks Along incident was shown to law enforcement who said it qualified as common assault. Mr. Walks Along chose not go that route, in hopes of establishing a working relationship with you and the IGBC – a move by a man of great character that was clearly in vain.

Similarly, you did nothing when the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council called for Servheen’s removal due to what was perceived as his racist attitude. The links to those press articles are here:

<http://nativenewsonline.net/currents/tribal-leaders-concerned-that-feds-grizzly-bear-czar-is-belittling-tribal-opposition-to-delisting-the-great-bear/>

<http://www.indianz.com/News/2015/017854.asp>

<http://www.indianz.com/News/2015/017492.asp>

It is time for this to end and for you to set the tone going forward, which includes halting this delisting process and putting a moratorium in place (as first suggested by the Navajo Nation, and repeated by many other tribes) so that MEANINGFUL pre-decisional consultation can take place with tribal nations as mandated by President Clinton and President Obama; not the lip service that was promoted during the public comment period. I will not reprise our arguments and objections to

delisting here, from cultural to scientific concerns, as we will continue to wage a campaign of ideas and alternatives, and fight in the appropriate venue, the courtroom. Unlike your fellow delisting and trophy hunting advocate, Mr. Weber, we have never suggested or incited violence toward you, your colleagues, or those who support delisting – and rest assured, nor would we. The fact that I even have to raise this with you is, frankly, appalling – something that I hope we might agree upon.

This, Sir, is an absolute disgrace in Twenty-first Century America. Please distance yourself from Weber's racist comments by denouncing them, or many will consider you complicit by your continued silence.

On behalf of GOAL Tribal Coalition:

## **Don Shoulderblade**

**Founder.**

cc. Hon. Sally Jewell, Secretary of Interior.

Karen Diver, Special Assistant to the President–Native American Affairs.

Attachments area

Preview YouTube video DISRESPECT! Northern Cheyenne James Walks Along is thrown off the stage



