



Josephine County, Oregon

Daniel E. DeYoung, Herman E. Baertschiger Jr., and Darin J. Fowler

Josephine County Courthouse
Board of Commissioners' Office
500 NW 6th Street, Dept 6
Grants Pass, OR 97526
(541) 474-5221 #2

September 8, 2021

To all members of the U.S. Senate and to all members of the U.S. House Natural Resources Committee

Re: Please Remove Josephine County from Senator Ron Wyden's proposed Land Lockups

Dear Honorable Members of Congress,

On June 3, 2021 we sent you the attached letter describing how the voters of Josephine County, Oregon disapprove of the kind of land lockups described by H.R. 803 and S.192. As a follow-up, we are now forwarding relevant correspondence from American Mineral Research, Inc (AMR). AMR's letter describes how Senator Ron Wyden mischaracterized the level of local support for his proposal when he testified before the National Parks Subcommittee on June 23, 2021.

Please remove Josephine County from Senator Wyden's proposed land lockups. Based on its mineral research in Josephine County and Southwest Oregon, AMR believes it can contribute to the domestic supply of the rare critical mineral Tellurium, which is used in making high-efficiency thin-film solar panels. Prohibiting access to minerals that are necessary for creating green energy runs counter to the principals of conservation. In that respect, Senator Wyden's proposal is fundamentally anti-environmental.

Senator Wyden's proposals are also contrary to Presidential executive orders requiring research, development and protection of domestic critical minerals and supply chains. Critical minerals such as those located in Southwest Oregon can boost America's manufacturing and defense capabilities. Hundreds of thousands of acres should not be locked up in Josephine County and Southwest Oregon now that we have preliminary research about significant mineral deposits that are critical to creating green energy. These deposits can be developed with modern, environment-friendly methods and without negatively impacting our beautiful natural surroundings.

Thus, removing Josephine County from Senator Wyden's proposed land lockups is extremely important to the long-term success of our nation and our planet.

Board of County Commissioners

Herman E. Baertschiger Jr., Vice Chair

Daniel E. DeYoung, Chair

Darin J. Fowler, Commissioner



Josephine County Board of Commissioners

Daniel E. DeYoung, Chair • Herman E. Baertschiger Jr., Vice Chair • Darin J. Fowler, Commissioner

June 3, 2021

To all members of the U.S. Senate and to all members of the U.S. House Natural Resources Committee

Re: Josephine County Objects to the proposed Permanent Mineral Withdrawal (HR 803) and Expansion of Wild and Scenic Territory

Dear Honorable Members of Congress,

On behalf of most residents of Josephine County, Oregon the Board of Commissioners objects to the permanent mineral withdrawal described in HR 803, and to the proposed expansion of Wild & Scenic designations in Southern Oregon. As evidenced by the attached nonbinding ballot questions (Exhibit A), the voters of Josephine County generally oppose locking up natural resources. Additionally, now that large-scale wildfires have become a routine occurrence, maintaining ready access to responsibly managed federal land is essential to the safety of the Americans who reside in this region.

Through the Federal Mining and Mineral Policy Act of 1970, Congress has declared that it is the continuing policy of the federal government to foster and encourage private enterprise in the development of a stable domestic minerals industry, and to promote the orderly and economic development of domestic mineral resources. The act includes all minerals. The proposed permanent mineral withdrawal runs directly counter to Congress's longstanding policy.

Please enter this letter and its attachments, including our formal Resolution of objection (Exhibit B), into the official record for HR 803, and into the record of all bills that propose expanding Wild & Scenic, Wilderness or National Monument designations within Josephine County, Oregon.

Sincerely,

Board of County Commissioners


Daniel E. DeYoung, Chair


Herman E. Baertschiger Jr., Vice Chair


Darin J. Fowler, Commissioner

COURTHOUSE

500 N.W. Sixth Street, Dept. 6, Grants Pass, Oregon 97526 • Phone: (541) 474-5221 Fax: (541) 474-5101

Exhibit A
“Non-binding Ballot Questions”

May 17, 2016

In your opinion, should the federal government designate 63 additional miles of the Rogue River as Wild and Scenic?

Yes....8,560 (31.38%)
No....18,720 (68.62%)

November 6, 2018

In your opinion, should federal agencies administering public lands in Josephine County create, improve and maintain a navigable road system?

Yes....32,917 (84.24%)
No....6,159 (15.76%)

November 6, 2012

In your opinion, is the practice of forest management to produce timber revenue an appropriate funding source for County services?

Yes 25,407 71.50%
No. 10,127 28.50%

May 20, 2014

In your opinion, should federal agencies maximize salvage harvesting of dead and dying timber and replant areas damaged by wildfires?

Yes....24,430 (89.15%)
No....2,972 (10.85%)

Exhibit B

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR JOSEPHINE COUNTY
STATE OF OREGON**

In the Matter of Objecting to) **RESOLUTION No. 2021-027**
Federal Land Lockups)

WHEREAS, Oregon's delegation to the U.S. Senate has endorsed currently pending proposals to withdraw massive tracts of Josephine County from mineral extraction, and to inappropriately designate vast swaths of property as Wild and Scenic; and

WHEREAS, the intentions of Oregon's two U.S. Senators run directly counter to the stated values of the Americans who are most directly affected by their proposals, and to the local elected representatives thereof, as well as to those of Congressman Cliff Bentz of the Oregon delegation who opposes the proposed mineral withdrawal and Wild and Scenic designation; and

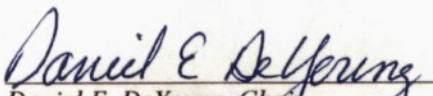
WHEREAS, we are hereby contacting every member of the U.S. Senate and of the U.S. House Natural Resources Committee in an attempt to set the record straight as to where most Americans in this part of the nation stand on the proposals of Oregon's two U.S. Senators; now therefore

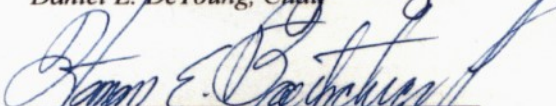
IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that Josephine County, by and through its Board of County Commissioners, officially objects to any expansion of federal mineral withdrawals, and to any expansion of the Wild and Scenic designation.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, and requested that this Resolution, and the letter attached to it, be entered into the official record for all currently pending bills pertaining to mineral withdrawals and Wild and Scenic designations that are relevant to Southwest Oregon, to include H.R. 803 which is presently pending before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

DATED this 3rd day of June, 2021.

**JOSEPHINE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**


Daniel E. DeYoung, Chair

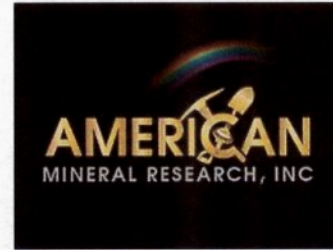

Herman E. Baertschiger Jr., Vice-Chair


Darin J. Fowler, Commissioner

June 23, 2021

Op-Ed

Wyden Misrepresented Oregon to the World on June 23



www.AmericanMineralResearch.com

Senator Ron Wyden made multiple misrepresentations when unveiling S.192 the 2021 River Democracy Act in front of the National Parks Subcommittee Legislative Hearing on June 23, 2021. Found on the Senate's committee website, Wyden's comments start at 23 minutes into the video recording.

Wyden and his hand-picked witness referenced a couple small towns near NE Oregon, but failed to make known the opinions throughout the majority of Oregon's rural areas as to these federal land-grabs and the nature of the land attempted to be grabbed by this bill, H.R. 803, and the Oregon Recreation Enhancement Act (ORE) all which currently reside in the Senate.

For example, SW Oregon where we live is unlike anywhere else in Oregon or North America...unique and rich geology, mountains, rivers, natural views, and small scale environmentally friendly green energy mineral development opportunities that would not conflict with any recreation. We at American Mineral Research have worked with DOGAMI and OSU and world famous geologists to document the rare critical minerals such as tellurium that we have in our part of the state (most rare element on the Department of Interior Critical Mineral List and used to manufacture high-efficiency thin-film solar panels).

Wyden claims in this hearing he has "always tried to throw open the doors of government...The River Democracy Act is another such effort to listen to the people of my home state in every nook and cranny of Oregon." Senator Wyden, we've polled County Commissioners in Josephine County, Jackson County, and one of the county leaders in Douglas County. According to them, you've never reached out to any of them before writing this bill. And these are the counties most adversely affected by the bill...particularly Josephine County. One Josephine County Commissioner has requested a map of the acreage that would be locked up under this proposal months ago...with no success from our Senators' offices that are supposed to represent all of Oregon. Wyden repeats this misrepresentation about going "to the people in every part of my state."

If he had checked, he would have learned about ballot measure 17-72, May 2016 election in Josephine County: Advisory Question on the Rogue River's Proposed Federal Designation. QUESTION: In your opinion, should Congress designate 63 additional miles of the Rogue River as a Wild and Scenic River? And 68.6% of Josephine County voters said NO. Senator Wyden, this is a landslide NO.

Perhaps voters and residents in Josephine County, where 2/3rds of the land is federally managed land, and SW Oregon (much of the same) understand that because of how our federal land is managed, rural Josephine County had less law enforcement than most third-world countries from 2012-2017? We're not out of this law enforcement funding crisis yet, because now Congress wants to lock up even more of our lands.

Senator Wyden mentions the Rough & Ready Creek in relation to river guides in Southern Oregon. This creek and watershed area is dry the majority of the year, every year. You couldn't raft in this creek even if you wanted to. We produced a 21 minute mini-documentary about this area that Wyden, Merkley, and

Rep. DeFazio are trying to take away from us in SW Oregon and posted it on YouTube on June 3, 2021. **Just go to YouTube and search for American Mineral Research to see this documentary and the actual truth behind these federal proposals.** Not only will you see the truth, but you'll see a professional that worked for the US Forest Service for over 40 years show that environmental protections are already in place in these proposed mineral withdrawal and wildland expansion areas.

Had Senator Wyden actually checked with us in SW Oregon, perhaps he would have learned we have green energy critical minerals like Tellurium and incredible small scale environmentally friendly mineral development (read small business) opportunities in SW Oregon, recreation is already strong and wouldn't be affected in absence of these proposals, catastrophic fire risk can be lessened by avoiding these federal land lockups, and the vast majority of people in the most affected areas like SW Oregon do not support these federal bills.

Senator Wyden, this bill does not come from "the people of Oregon, the Oregon Way" as you stated. Wyden stated later in the hearing, "throwing open the doors of government, in my view is a prime responsibility for a western Senator," however from our perspective in SW Oregon, there is a locked vault door a foot thick to the doors of government.

Jay Meredith, CPA
CFO and Board Chair
American Mineral Research, Inc.
www.AmericanMineralResearch.com