

January 9, 2019

Mr. Adam Mendonca, Forest Supervisor, Gila National Forest amendonca@fs.fed.us

Ms. Victoria Christiansen, Chief of the Forest Service vcchristiansen@fs.fed.us

Dear Mr. Mendonca and Ms. Christiansen,

On behalf of our organizations and thousands of members, we are writing to thank and support you in your decision to cancel the Canyon del Buey allotment on the Quemado Ranger District of the Gila National Forest formerly permitted to Craig Thiessen. It is our understanding Mr. Thiessen is appealing this decision and we strongly urge you to remain firm in your decision.

Mr. Thiessen plead guilty to trapping and killing a Mexican gray wolf. There is no uncertainty that he is guilty of the crime. Frankly, he got off easy in our opinion. He has benefitted from hundreds of thousands of dollars in tax payer subsidies, yet was only fined \$2300. That amount does not begin to cover the costs related to the Mexican gray wolf recovery program.

Mexican gray wolves were listed under the ESA back in 1976 – Yet 43 years later, there are only 114 wolves in the wild and the primary reason for that is illegal killing of wolves by those in the livestock industry.

Not only do our organizations and members support your decision to cancel Thiessen's allotment, but we encourage you do the same to other ranchers that violate their permits under the authority of 36 CFR 222.4(a) (6):

222.4 Changes in grazing permits.

(a) The Chief, Forest Service, is authorized to cancel, modify, or suspend grazing and livestock use permits in whole or in part as follows:

(6) Cancel or suspend the permit if the permit holder is convicted for failing to comply with Federal laws or regulations or State laws relating to protection of air, water, soil and vegetation, fish and wildlife, and other environmental values when exercising the grazing use authorized by the permit.

Western lands throughout the west are degraded due to the actions of irresponsible livestock ranchers. Wolves are not the only victims of assault or death. Entire books, papers published in peer reviewed journals, legal cases and photographs, etc. have documented the extensive and ongoing damage to water quality, soils, riparian areas, sensitive plants, native bunchgrass and wildlife from domestic livestock grazing. Many of our organizations are working to document these assaults on our public lands. Often they are ignored by agencies and permittees are allowed to continue grazing livestock. The Forest Service has the law on its side in revoking grazing permits and we encourage you to use it.

We are thankful to the Forest Service for cancelling the Canyon del Buey allotment, and encourage you to cancel others if permittees are killing TES species and allowing the continued degradation of our public lands.

Sincerely,

Denise Boggs, Conservation Congress, CA and MT

Larry Campbell, Friends of the Bitterroot, MT

Frank Robey, Stoneham, ME

Jeff Juel, Missoula, MT

George Nickas, Wilderness Watch, MT

Keith Hammer, Swan View Coalition, MT

Rachel Fazio, John Muir Project, CA

John Carter, Yellowstone to Uintas Connection, UT and ID

Ara Marderosian, Sequoia ForestKeeper, CA

Davis Mounger, Tennessee Heartwood, TN

Ernie Reed, Heartwood, VA

Mike Bader, Missoula, MT

Ron Mitchell, Idaho Sporting Congress, ID

Paul Sieracki, Priest River, ID

Michael Garrity, Alliance for Wild Rockies, MT

Matthew Koehler, Wild West Institute, MT

Dr. Brian L. Horejsi, MT and BC

Gary MacFarlane, Friends of the Clearwater, ID

Lori Andresen, Save Our Sky Blue Waters, MN

Arlene Montgomery, Friends of the Wild Swan, MT

Rick Meis, Halfway, OR