

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 9, 2023

The Honorable Deb Haaland  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland:

We last wrote to you on August 23, requesting the Department of the Interior initiate and complete the process to implement a 20-year administrative withdrawal from operation under the Mineral Leasing law for federal land as described in S. 706, the Ruby Mountain Protection Act. These lands include approximately 39,926 acres in the Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge and 309,272 acres in the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. Please see the attached maps of the region outlining the areas pertaining to this request.

We are writing today to further emphasize that this issue continues to be an ongoing matter of high importance to us and our constituents. It also continues to have broad local and national support, including local tribes, conservationists, recreationists, and businesses that support the outdoor economy. As you know, this area is the ancestral homeland of the Te-Moak Tribe of the Western Shoshone Indians of Nevada, who have inhabited the region for centuries. The Ruby Mountains, the Ruby Marshes, and their surrounding environment are cherished by all Nevadans for its scenic landscapes, high recreational value, and numerous wildlife.

Protecting these lands will not only ensure this delicate ecosystem is preserved for future generations to explore, it will also protect the livelihoods of local communities and cultural heritage of local indigenous communities.

We request that you and your staff give this matter your immediate and personal attention, and we strongly urge you to expedite the withdrawal of these areas from oil and gas leasing. We are proud to carry the voice of Nevadans and the Te-Moak Tribe forward so special places like the Ruby Mountains and adjacent areas can be enjoyed by generations to come.

Sincerely,



Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator

Cc:

Martha Williams, Director, United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Tracy Stone-Manning, Director, Bureau of Land Management

Cynthia Martinez, Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System

Randy Moore, Chief of the United States Forest Service

Matt Lee-Ashley, Chief of Staff at the White House Council on Environmental Quality