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STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



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September 25, 2018

Elizabeth Meyer-Shields  
(Acting) Field Manager  
Mother Lode Field Office  
Bureau of Land Management  
5152 Hillsdale Circle  
El Dorado Hills CA 95762  
Fax: 916-941-3199

**RE: Letter of Urgency for Increased Funding for Law Enforcement Services in the Mother Lode Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management**

(Acting) Field Manager Meyer-Shields,

Nevada County is uniquely positioned in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range that receives an estimated 700,000 to 800,000 visitors annually to our various public parks and open lands. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages approximately 17,349 acres in Nevada County alone through its Mother Lode Field Office with an estimated one-third of this area residing in the South Yuba River Corridor which is as a State Wild and Scenic Designated Corridor. The public lands in and around the South Yuba area are some of the most visited lands in Nevada County that attract people from all over the world. Since 2012, there has been a steady annual increase of visitors 6-8 times the population of the entire County. While the sheer number of visitors each year contributes to the County's economy, they bring other impacts and risks, such as increased fire dangers from illegal camping, homelessness and campfires.

As we understand, the Mother Lode Field Office only has three (3) full-time Ranger positions that cover an area stretching from Nevada County in the north to Mariposa County to the south within the Sierra Nevada foothills that provide a critical management role to ensure public safety on BLM lands that includes law enforcement services. Recently it has come to our attention that one of the full-time Ranger positions within the Mother Lode Office may become vacant in the near future, thereby leaving your office with only two (2) remaining filled Ranger positions for the entire resource area. This raises a strong concern that should the Ranger position remain vacant, or even worse remain un-filled indefinitely, the public's safety, not to mention the stewardship responsibility to the public's lands, would be in jeopardy and at risk.

As outlined in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, BLM is charged with the dual mandate of managing public land for multiple uses while conserving natural, historical and cultural resources, which include protecting the quality of the scientific, scenic, historical,

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ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archaeological values. We believe that given the high volume of visitors on public lands in Nevada County, that there is a need for a designated full-time ranger for Nevada County alone.

Additionally, BLM has been participating with Nevada County by attending a regular multi-agency workgroup called the Yuba River Public Safety Cohort that includes Federal, State and local agencies and departments with the purpose of coordinating public safety and law enforcement efforts in the South Yuba River corridor. As one of the outputs of the workgroup's efforts, a joint-agency taskforce was established in May 2018 to conduct periodic law enforcement sweeps in various areas within the corridor that includes representatives of local, state and federal agencies including BLM, California Department of Parks and Recreation, Nevada County Sheriff's Office, California Highway Patrol, CAL FIRE and Nevada County Consolidated Fire District. The need for the joint-agency taskforce underscores the need for increased enforcement on public lands in Nevada County and further highlights the necessity for a full-time BLM Ranger position in Nevada County to ensure the public safety of visitors and locals alike.

It is imperative to the safety of residents and visitors alike that law enforcement agencies are present on BLM lands within Nevada County with particular emphasis on the South Yuba River Corridor. Therefore, on behalf of the Nevada County Board of Supervisors, I am submitting this Letter of Urgency urging you to ensure any Ranger vacancies are filled as quickly as possible and that sustained and/or increased resources are properly dedicated to any and all of the public lands that BLM has responsibility for within Nevada County. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 530-265-1480.

Sincerely,

Edward C. Scofield  
Chair, Board of Supervisors

Copied to:  
California State Parks  
USFS Tahoe National Forest  
Congressman Doug LaMalfa  
CA Assemblyman Brian Dahle  
South Yuba River Citizens League