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**United States Department of the Interior
Office of Hearings and Appeals
Board of Land Appeals**

Washington County, Utah; City of)	
St. George, Utah; and Washington)	REF:#DOI-BLM-UT-Co30_2015-1-EIS
County Water Conservancy District,)	
Appellants,)	
)	DECLARATION OF PHILLIP J.
)	HANCEFORD
v.)	
)	
Bureau of Land Management,)	
Respondent,)	
)	
and)	
)	
Conservation Lands Foundation,)	
Conserve Southwest Utah, and the)	
Wilderness Society,)	
Proposed Respondent-)	
Intervenors.)	

DECLARATION OF PHILLIP H. HANCEFORD

I, Phillip H. Hanceford, declare under penalty of perjury as follows:

1. My name is Phillip H. Hanceford, and I reside at 2825 W. 41st Ave, Denver, CO 80211. I am over 18 years of age and competent to testify. This declaration is filed in support of The Wilderness Society's motion to intervene in the administrative appeal filed by Washington County, Utah *et al.*, challenging the Bureau of Land Management's approved Resource Management Plan on the Red Cliffs National Conservation Area and

the Beaver Dam Wash National Conservation Area (“NCA”). I have personal knowledge of each of the facts set forth below, and if called upon to do so, could and would testify regarding the following.

2. I am both a member and an employee of The Wilderness Society (“TWS”). I am Assistant Director of Agency Policy and Planning for TWS, a position I have held since April of 2007. This work entails engaging in land use planning and National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) processes by reviewing, commenting and making recommendations on agency documents, meeting with the Bureau of Land Management (“BLM”) and other agencies on a regular basis, and educating TWS members and the public on planning and NEPA processes and agency policies. The work also includes routine and regular site visits with other TWS staff and members, conservation partner groups and experts to the areas that TWS has dedicated time and resources protecting. These site visits generally consist of educating myself and others about the resources on-the-ground, how they are or may be threatened and discussions about potential solutions to protecting the conservation values of the land from threats of development such as roads, oil and gas development, mining and other infrastructure.

3. As a result of my experience in this position, I am personally familiar with TWS’s legal and advocacy work concerning the protection of public lands in Utah. I have also witnessed the negative impacts that roads and other development have on wilderness-quality landscapes. I submit this declaration on behalf of TWS and myself.

4. I first learned of Washington County’s appeal and statement of reasons on February 23, 2017 via an email from a colleague at another conservation organization. I understand and believe this colleague received an email on this same day alerting him to

the existence of the appeal and Statement of Reasons, and attaching Washington County's Statement of Reasons.

Background Concerning The Wilderness Society

5. TWS is a not-for-profit corporation incorporated in the District of Columbia with approximately 125,000 members, including more than 1,300 in Utah.

6. TWS' mission is to protect Wilderness and inspire Americans to care for our wild places. Our goal is to ensure that future generations will enjoy the clean air and water, wildlife, natural beauty, opportunities for recreation, and spiritual renewal that pristine forests, rivers, deserts, and mountains provide.

7. Since 1935, TWS has worked to protect wilderness-quality lands across the United States. It was instrumental in advocating for and achieving passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964, and in the designation of millions of acres of wilderness across the Nation since then. TWS also has a continuing interest in ensuring the protection of wilderness-quality and high conservation value lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, through the agency's land management planning processes and has an established team dedicated to influencing BLM planning and policy called the "BLM Action Center."

The Wilderness Society's Advocacy for Designating BLM Land in Southwest Utah for Conservation

8. For more than three decades, TWS has worked to protect wilderness character lands in Utah. In 1985, TWS joined with other national, regional, and local groups to form the Utah Wilderness Coalition ("UWC") to develop a citizens' BLM wilderness proposal for Utah. On July 16, 1985, the newly formed UWC announced a 5.1 million-acre BLM wilderness proposal for Utah.

9. In 1989, legislation supported by TWS and the UWC (H.R. 1500) to designate 5.7 million acres as wilderness was introduced in the 101st Congress. In 1990, the UWC, with support from TWS, published “Wilderness at the Edge, A Citizen Proposal to Protect Utah’s Canyons and Deserts,” which described the UWC’s proposal as embodied in H.R. 1500. H.R. 1500 proposed to protect and preserve many areas within Washington County ultimately protected by P.L. 111-11 (March 30, 2009), 123. STAT. 991

10. P.L. 111-11, known as the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, protects and preserves the Beaver Dam Wash and Red Cliffs National Conservation Areas as well as Bear Trap Canyon, Canaan Mountain, Cottonwood Canyon, Cougar Canyon, Deep Creek, Deep Creek North, Doc’s Pass, Goose Creek, LaVerkin Creek, Red Butte, Red Mountain, Slaughter Creek and Taylor Creek Wilderness Areas.

11. The president of TWS at the time, Bill Meadows, as well as many TWS staff were greatly involved in efforts by Senator Robert Bennett to negotiate the Washington County Growth and Conservation Act, which led to the designation of the Beaver Dam Wash and Red Cliffs NCAs in the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009. Bill Meadows testified on behalf of TWS on the Washington County Growth and Conservation Act on April 22, 2008 before the Senate Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests stating that the bill before the Senate (S. 2834) “requires the BLM to identify one or more options for the placement of a ‘northern transportation’ corridor in the County. We understand that Senator Bennett has agreed not to require any study of a transportation route through sensitive desert tortoise habitat. The current language needs work in order to more clearly effectuate this intent.”

12. TWS was also instrumental in passage of the National Landscape

Conservation System Act as part of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 and has worked to ensure that BLM abides by the System's mission to "conserve, protect, and restore these nationally significant landscapes that have outstanding cultural, ecological, and scientific values for the benefit of current and future generations." The Beaver Dam Wash and Red Cliffs NCAs are both part of that National Landscape Conservation System.

The Wilderness Society's Involvement in BLM's Resource Management Planning Process

13. After passage of the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act, TWS committed to engaging with its local partners in BLM's planning process for the Beaver Dam Wash and Red Cliffs NCA Resource Management Plan. More specifically, TWS committed to review and submit detailed comments on BLM's scoping notice, draft environmental impacts statement, final environmental impact statement and proposed resource management plan. Once the final RMP was approved, however, TWS intended to allow local conservation groups and partners to engage in implementation levels decision-making, to a large extent, and redirect its staff time and resources to other areas in the American west where BLM has commenced a planning-level decision-making process.

14. For the past six years, TWS has been executing this decision, and TWS has been actively engaged in the resource management planning process for the Beaver Dam Wash and Red Cliffs from the very beginning. Between 2010 and 2016, TWS met at least thirty times with BLM staff at either the BLM's state office, the Color Country District Office, or the St. George Field Office to urge BLM to avoid identifying a northern transportation route through the Red Cliffs NCA, and TWS submitted other specific

proposals for the conservation and protection of the natural and cultural resources of Beaver Dam Wash NCA. TWS participated in the drafting of extensive comments, proposals and recommendations during every possible opportunity for public comment throughout the process. Specifically, TWS submitted scoping comments for this process on July 19, 2010 and comments on the draft RMP on October 16, 2016. TWS also submitted written testimony on February 1, 2016 for a field hearing held on January 22, 2016 in St. George, UT, by the House Natural Resources Committee Subcommittee on Federal Lands “On Ensuring Local Input, Legal Consistency and MultiUse Resource Management in St. George BLM Planning.”

15. During the planning processes for the Beaver Dam Wash and Red Cliffs NCAs, TWS spent numerous hours attending public meetings regarding the resource management plans, speaking with media about the natural, cultural, scenic, and other values at issue in the resource management plans, drafting fact sheets and summaries of the BLM’s plans and environmental impact statement, and educating its members about the issues surrounding the RMPs through its website, and electronically.

16. TWS also attended a State BLM Resource Advisory Committee meeting in March of 2010 where the topics for presentation and discussion were centered around the NCAs and included field trips into the NCAs.

17. TWS coordinated multiple stakeholder workshops to help train partner groups and others about the planning process and effective public engagement in the process. One workshop was at the start of the planning process, or scoping, and was held in March, 2010. Another workshop was coordinated prior to the release of the draft RMP and EIS in June, 2015. TWS was invited by the BLM and participated in multiple collaborative meetings convened by The Nature Conservancy in 2012 to engage in

“Landscape Conservation Forecasting,” or map out the main forms of vegetation in the NCAs and assess the risk and potential treatment options in order to inform the resource management plans.

18. TWS provided funding for the Colorado Plateau Archaeological Association, a professional Utah-based archaeological group, to survey a portion of the Red Cliffs NCA for cultural resources that had been proposed by Washington County for building the northern transportation corridor.

19. The actions taken by TWS to actively participate in the planning process were part of a multi-year effort to ensure that the Beaver Dam Wash and Red Cliffs NCAs were protected as intended by the language we helped negotiate in the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009. We deliberately spent hundreds of hours of staff time and funding on these plans with the ultimate goal of seeing these conservation gains realized in the Records of Decision, or final agency action for these plans. We believe that BLM ultimately struck the right balance in the Approved RMPs/RODs for the NCAs.

20. Once BLM issued the final approved Resource Management Plan for the Red Cliffs NCA and Beaver Dam Wash NCA, the Wilderness Society’s site-specific work was complete in this area, and TWS is poised to redirect my time and other staff time to other areas in the American west where BLM has commenced a planning-level decisionmaking process. For example, I am scheduled to work on the planning process for the Mojave Trails National Monument, which was established on February 12, 2016.

21. If the Appellants are successful in making the BLM take another look at these decisions on appeal, we will have to commit much more unplanned staff time and funding to this effort where we would be otherwise be spending those resources on other

important priorities that are essential to the mission of TWS and vital to our members and supporters. Specifically, TWS would have to divert its time and resources from other efforts to engage staff and members in a new NEPA process to consider the northern transportation route. TWS would also have to spend time and resources otherwise spent elsewhere on challenging a decision reversing protective measures in the RMP for new rights-of-way. For example, TWS will have to devote additional resources appearing at any BLM planning and scoping meetings, additional public meetings, and TWS will have to re-engage and educate the local community about the issue on remand. In addition, TWS will have to divert staff and resource for additional site visits, examination and analysis of the new environmental reviews and other analysis and documentation. This activity will be a drain on TWS's resources, and again require hundreds of hours of staff time, time that TWS fully scheduled and planned would be devoted the helping other BLM planning efforts in the American west. If my resources were diverted to focus on another planning process for Beaver Dam Wash and Red Cliffs NCA, I would not be able to completely focus on the Mojave Trails National Monument planning process, which is a priority of TWS and supposed to be the focus of my time.

The Actions that the Appellants Request the IBLA to Overturn Will Harm TWS, Its Members and Me Personally

22. TWS has worked and will work to protect the Beaver Dam Wash and Red Cliffs NCAs because of its wilderness, wildlife preservation, cultural resources and scenic values.

23. TWS members and staff use the lands within the planning area for recreation and for an escape to natural places. I have personally visited the lands in

question in this case multiple times over the past eight (8) years. During these visits, I have hiked and enjoyed the aesthetic, recreational, and scenic resources of the NCAs. I have visited the Red Cliffs NCA at least a dozen times and have hiked in the area where the Washington County's preferred alternative for the northern transportation route would be sited. I have also visited, hiked or driven through the Beaver Dam Wash NCA at least four times.

24. For example, on a trip to the Beaver Dam Wash NCA in June, 2010, I explored the old Woodbury Hardy Desert Study Area, which was set aside in the 1940s for the observance and scientific study of the Mojave desert tortoise. While I was too late in the season to see a desert tortoise on that trip, I did enjoy a gorgeous hike wrapping around the side of cliffs and leading to scenic vistas around each bend.

25. During another trip in April, 2012, I visited the northwest portion of the Red Cliffs NCA that overlaps with the Red Mountain Wilderness Area in search of solitude and time away from cities and people to enjoy the quiet of the wilderness. I did not come upon anyone else for the majority of my trip to that portion of the NCA and was able to peacefully explore the canyons, waters and wildlife, including signs of a cougar who had been by recently.

26. For our recreational, aesthetic and other uses of public lands, I and other TWS members and staff seek out and prefer to use those federal public land that are more wild; in other words, those lands that are not burdened by development, such as roads, invasive species, unnatural structures and other human developments that tend to mar the landscape, fragment and degrade wildlife habitat, and generally detract from an experience of the areas in a remote and unspoiled state.

27. I intend to regularly visit these particular NCAs as often as possible in the

future to continue my use and enjoyment of the area. I plan to visit the St. George area in late April or early May, 2017, and intend to visit the Beaver Dam Wash and Red Cliffs NCAs while I'm in the area.

28. If the Appellants are successful in overturning the RMPs, and converting the majority of the public lands in the NCAs from unavailable and closed to new roads, utility corridors and other development to open to these industrial and commercial uses, my use and enjoyment of these pristine landscapes would be greatly diminished. For example, additional construction and fragmentation of these NCAs would disturb important wildlife habitat and spoil the scenic, aesthetic, and recreational resources of these areas that I, and TWS's members, use and enjoy. An increase in roads will fragment wildlife habitat and lead to greater mortality in the NCAs, which would decrease my opportunity to view wildlife, such as desert tortoise, in these areas. An increase in utility corridors and other development will obstruct the viewshed, increase the unnatural sounds, and decrease a feeling of solitude that I currently experience in the areas. Thus, my and TWS members' health, recreational, scientific, spiritual, educational, aesthetic, informational, and other interests would be directly affected and harmed by the development that may be permitted if the Appellants win their appeal.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I declare, under penalty of perjury, that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 22nd day of March, 2017 in Denver, Colorado.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phillip H. Hanceford", is written over a horizontal line.

Phillip H. Hanceford