

Mike Crapo
United States Senator
239 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

James E. Risch
United States Senator
483 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510



Mike Simpson
Member of Congress
2084 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

Russ Fulcher
Member of Congress
1520 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

September 4, 2024

The Honorable Sara Bronin
Chair
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
401 F Street NW, Suite 308
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Chair Bronin,

We write today to express our continued concern regarding the proposed Lava Ridge Wind Project in southern Idaho. It has come to our attention that the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) consultation with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) was formally terminated by the Idaho SHPO on August 9, 2024. This termination followed the Idaho SHPO's finding that it was not in the State of Idaho's best interest to sign the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement due to "overwhelming opposition to the project demonstrated by area residents, local elected officials, the Idaho State Legislature, Idaho's Congressional Delegation, Idaho's Native American tribes, and constituent communities, including the national voice of the Japanese American Community."

As the BLM consults with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), it is our sincere hope your agency will recognize and consider the findings of the Idaho SHPO, the organization designated by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 to evaluate cultural significance in such situations. The concerns and opposition of Idahoans, Native American tribes, and the broader Japanese American community—including Minidoka survivors, descendants, and allies and Japanese Alaskan families, which have both Japanese and Alaska Native heritage—have been enumerated to the BLM during each step of this process.

As you may recall, you were even asked about the impact of the proposed Lava Ridge project on the Minidoka National Historic Site during your confirmation process, to which you responded that "the Advisory Council would urge the lead federal agency to carefully consider the views of these stakeholders as part of its consulting process."

Unfortunately, the views of these stakeholders—Minidoka survivors, descendants, and allies, along with the vast majority of Idahoans—have been largely disregarded. Maintaining the sanctity of Minidoka is not a matter that can be mitigated elsewhere. If constructed, the Lava Ridge project would irreparably alter this site. Given these concerns, we request that ACHP terminate its consultation on the development of a Section 106 agreement with the BLM. Further, we request you use all mechanisms available to prevent a Record of Decision from being published by the BLM until the ACHP has had ample opportunity to evaluate, respond to, and address the concerns of constructing such a project near the Minidoka National Historic Site.

We appreciate your attention to this important matter and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of James E. Risch in blue ink.

JAMES E. RISCH
United States Senator

Handwritten signature of Mike Crapo in blue ink.

MIKE CRAPO
United States Senator

Handwritten signature of Mike Simpson in blue ink, with "M.C." at the end.

MIKE SIMPSON
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Russ Fulcher in blue ink.

RUSS FULCHER
Member of Congress