



Western Mining Alliance  
PO Box 33218  
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Secretary Ryan Zinke  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington DC 20240

14 December 2017

Dear Secretary Zinke;

The Solicitor General of the United States recently filed a reply brief in a case pending U.S. Supreme Court review. The case is *Rinehart v. California* (No. 16-970).

The Solicitor General filed a briefing which opposed Supreme Court review of what is likely the most important mining case to reach this level in over 40 years. The issue at stake is whether a state may ban any type of mining equipment, and for any reason rendering federal mining claims worthless.

The California Supreme Court ruled the state could ban any type of equipment they chose, for any reason they chose and this decision was petitioned for U.S. Supreme Court review.

The author of the Solicitor General brief is the same author who submitted a briefing under the Obama administration in the California Supreme Court case (*Rinehart*).

The Solicitor General's briefing is wrong and needs to be withdrawn immediately.

The impact to American mining will be profound. With over 500,000 mining claims on federal land it is urgent your office appeal to the Attorney General to withdraw this brief and re-submit a brief supporting mining.

For 150 years miners have operated under the 1872 Mining Law (and subsequent legislation). The rights granted by Congress to prospect, locate and perfect a mining claim have been interpreted by the state of California to mean only a possessory interest in the mining claim and the state argues there is no right to mine that claim.

You have shown your support of mining and this is an opportunity to reverse a California Supreme Court ruling which held environmentalism is more important than mining and the state may prohibit activities on federal land.

We urge you to get involved in this case. It is the most important mining case to reach the steps of the Supreme Court in over 40 years.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Craig A. Lindsay". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "C" and "L".

CRAIG A. LINDSAY  
President, Western Mining Alliance