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Courtesy of attorney Rollie Wilson, Fredericks Peebles & Morgan

Joseph Holley, tribal council member of the Battle Mountain Band of the Te-Moak Western Shoshone, views collapsed plastic fencing surrounding a mining vent in the Tosawihi Quarries, a Shoshone sacred site in Nevada. The white stone visible is the type used by Holley's ancestors for more than 10,000 years. "The fencing has turned into trash," said Band attorney Rollie Wilson, who called this evidence of the mining company's disrespect for the hallowed surroundings.

Lost Bones, Damage and Harassment at Ancient Sacred Site

Stephanie Woodard **1/13/16**

“Horrifying” is how Lydia Johnson described the ordeal her Shoshone community has faced in recent weeks. Johnson chairs the Battle Mountain Band of the Te-Moak Western Shoshone, which has taken the lead in protecting the Tosawihi Quarries, a tribal sacred site in north-central Nevada, from destruction by gold mining.

The Shoshone have used the Quarries for more than 10,000 years, going there to collect their sacred white flint, fashion it into weapons and use it in ceremonies. They hunted there, gathered medicine plants, buried their dead and more. *Tosawihi* means “White Knives,” an ancestral tribal name that acknowledges the importance of the place and its revered white stone to the Shoshones, said tribal council member and former Band chair Joseph Holley.

Gold lies in veins beneath the Quarries, though, and safeguarding the place from mining-related damage and pollution has been a multi-generational struggle, Holley said.

The most recent trouble erupted on December 12, 2015, when three bone fragments were unearthed. The mining company’s contract archaeologist examined them and wrote in his notes, “there was not enough present for me to give a species identification.” If they turned out to be human and Native, laws protecting Native burials would have kicked in, leading to further evaluation, tribal involvement, reburial—and inconvenience for the mining company.

Most of the Tosawihi Quarries are on federal land administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and subject to the federal Native American Graves and Repatriation Act, or NAGPRA. However, this discovery happened to be on privately owned land, so is subject to Nevada law and the authority of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Since the discovery, SHPO has deferred to BLM, which has waved off the Band’s concerns.

On December 23, BLM district manager Jill Silvey claimed that the archaeologist had, in fact, found that “the bone did not appear to be human.” As recently as January 7, BLM spokesperson Gregory Deimel repeated that claim. In addition, Deimel wrote in an email, a local sheriff looked at a photo of the fragments and “agreed” they were “non-human.” The contract archaeologist, Perry Lown, with Western Cultural Resource Management, would not comment, citing potential client-confidentiality issues.

Meanwhile, the Band has been told at various times that the bone fragments were “processed correctly,” “lost in the snow” and “hidden under a bush,” according to Band attorney Rollie Wilson, of Fredericks, Peeble & Morgan.

“Our people and ancestors deserve better, and the law requires better,” Johnson wrote to the Nevada SHPO and the National Park Service’s office overseeing compliance with NAGPRA. The fragments may, in the end, turn out not to be Native, but the Shoshones’ longtime high degree of activity in the area means they should be presumed so until proven otherwise, according to Johnson.

On January 8, BLM and SHPO finally agreed to “recover” the fragments and have an expert evaluate them, Wilson said.

Starting in 2014, the Tosawihi Quarries have echoed once more with the sounds of gold mining. At the urging of an international consortium with offices in Toronto, Nevada and the Cayman Islands, BLM approved a permit to re-open a defunct mine there. Though BLM and [consortium](#) documents show that the mining group wanted a quick approval in time to dress up its quarterly report to investors, the [BLM has claimed](#) that the permitting process was “robust” and “not hurried.”

Since then, drilling, road-building, and other activities have damaged sacred-stone gathering places, ancient hunting blinds and other traditional cultural properties deemed eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, said Holley.

The BLM has designated the Quarries an Archaeological District, according to Wilson. However, the Band feels “cultural landscape” is more accurate. This phrase better represents the density of the resources and the range of pursuits that took place there—and still do—said Jewel Vance, one of several site monitors designated by the Band to observe the mining company at work.

“People engaged in many activities in the Quarries,” said Vance. “When you walk around, you see tools, arrowheads, scrapers, pestles and flakes [chips left by weapons making] everywhere. They *lived* there.”

Numerous tribes used the Quarries, which was revered as hallowed ground. “Different styles of objects can be found, including from my people,” said Vance, who is Lakota and married to Holley. “It’s a beautiful place for praying and ceremonies.”

Leading up to the scandal over the bone fragments, mining-related problems had multiplied. The Environmental Protection Agency objected to the lack of required water-monitoring wells, which would warn of pollution to creeks and sacred springs from the highly toxic gold-mining process. When elders visited to pray and assess the condition of traditional cultural properties, miners from Carlin Resources, the Nevada arm of the international consortium, stood nearby, rolling their eyes and snickering, said both Holley and Vance.

In October 2015, Vance filed a job-harassment complaint with Carlin, reporting that one of its employees had made doing her work impossible. He would hang around outside bathrooms, use his vehicle to block her from driving down a road and more, she said. Because the Quarries are isolated and lack consistent cellphone coverage, she was concerned for her safety. Vance said Carlin told her the situation was a “personality conflict.” The company did not respond to a request for a comment, and an effort to reach the employee was unsuccessful.

The Battle Mountain Band has pursued several avenues to protect the Quarries. In September, the Interior Board of Land Appeals, an Interior Department administrative court, turned down the Band’s request for an order to stop mining temporarily while the various parties worked on improving protection for traditional cultural properties.

The Band then appealed to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP). It is a party to the agreement governing mining in the Quarries and oversees the federal government's handling of historic properties, including tribal cultural resources. The agency's opinion isn't law but "carries a great deal of weight," said Reid Nelson, director of ACHP's Office of Federal Agency Programs. ACHP recently supported the successful cancellation of controversial oil and gas drilling leases in the Badger-Two Medicine wilderness, sacred to the Blackfeet.

RELATED: [Collective Sigh of Relief as Interior Cancels Badger-Two Medicine Drilling Lease](#)

In late December, ACHP weighed in cautiously on the Tosawihi Quarries dispute, saying BLM's agreement with the mining company "may lack certain specificity." ACHP advised the BLM to meet with the Band and the mining company to clarify it; the group offered to send a team to Nevada to facilitate discussions.

Wilson was dubious. "The agreement doesn't need to be clarified, it needs to be implemented," he said. "The document, signed by ACHP, requires ongoing evaluation of specific areas as mining exploration is considered. BLM is not doing that. It is relying on old and generalized surveys of the entire area, which makes no sense. The document and the law require current evaluations for project-specific proposals."

BLM spokesperson Jeff Kraus has disagreed, calling consultation with the Band "ongoing." Kraus added, "the BLM will protect sacred sites and...prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the lands."

The Battle Mountain Band's fight has resonated with other tribes that call the Tosawihi Quarries sacred. "Our fight for the Quarries has spanned decades," said Alice Tybo, council member of the South Fork Band Council of the Te-Moak Tribe of Western Shoshone. "It is my hope that our voice will finally be heard."

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2016/01/13/lost-bones-damage-and-harassment-ancient-sacred-site-163037>





10,000+ Years of Paiute Homelands

The New York Times is weighting in with an editorial and they suggest that the militia is misreading history. Yet in the article there is not one mention of the fact that this is Paiute Land for ov... ndnhistoryresearch.wordpress.com

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### **79-Year-Old Bird Watcher Takes Down Oregon Militant With Old High School Wrestling Move -- THE...**

A grandfather of four was just out checking on some young burrowing owls early this morning when he was confronted by a "red-faced pudgy man with a big gun". [thelapine.ca](http://thelapine.ca)

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OR standoff crew depart from federal building to use federal equipment to destroy federal fence

Ammon and Ryan Bundy left the comfort of the federal buildings they are occupying and headed out with equipment owned... dailykos.com

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### **Oregon Judge Plans to Bill the Bundy Militia \$70,000 a Day to Cover County Security Costs**

The free ride ends here. [usuncut.com](http://usuncut.com)

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Transfer ownership of the Malheur Wildlife Refuge in Oregon to the Burns Paiute Tribe. | We the...

The occupation of the administration building of the Malheur Wildlife Refuge building by armed...

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### Is the Oregon Occupation Being Stage-Managed? -

US and international media have been abuzz in recent days with the ongoing armed occupation at the headquarters of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon. The social media space has been, quite predictably, polarized with many on the... [stopimperialism.org](http://stopimperialism.org)

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From: Secretary Jewell

Subject: **Update on Malheur National Wildlife Refuge**

I wanted to provide you with a brief update on what is happening in Eastern Oregon, where a group of armed individuals are occupying the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge.

Over the course of my career, I have personally traveled on multiple occasions to Harney County and have met with ranchers who are working these lands. As recently as last year, I was in Oregon to celebrate the collaborative relationship between ranchers and public land managers, both of whom value these lands and are partnering to sustain working western rangelands for future generations.

The successful partnership in Harney County is just one example of our work with local communities across this great Nation, and those important efforts continue – even as the situation remains extremely tense, unsettling, and frustrating for all Department of the Interior employees, other Federal agencies, and the local community.

We continue to cooperate with Federal, State, and local law enforcement authorities to peacefully resolve this situation as quickly and safely as possible. The FBI is the lead Federal investigatory agency on scene and we are grateful for their leadership and support.

Because of the active and ongoing nature of the situation, there have been periods when we wish we could be more communicative with our employees or the public. I ask for your patience as we allow law enforcement officials to perform their work. We will continue to share updates as they are available, but know we are monitoring the situation and actively communicating at all levels of law enforcement even when we are unable to provide regular public updates.

I am absolutely committed to maintaining a safe work environment that allows employees to uphold the laws of the United States and carry out our mission of responsible public land and water stewardship for the benefit of all Americans.

Our foremost priority continues to be the safety and security of our employees so that you can continue to perform your duties and serve the American public. The Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Fish and Wildlife offices in the immediate area continue to be closed until further notice and employees in the vicinity are working remotely while we cooperate with law enforcement authorities to monitor and continually evaluate the situation. We recognize and appreciate that this is very disruptive to our employees and their families in the area.

The ongoing situation in Oregon is a reminder that employees in all offices should remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity to your supervisor and, where appropriate, law enforcement officials.

Thank you for your continued hard work and dedication to our mission in the face of difficult challenges, uncertainty, and disruptions. There is tremendous support for the work we do on a daily basis, even as we witness the unfortunate situation in Malheur National Wildlife Refuge.

I am proud to call you a colleague and appreciate your service to the Nation.

The Bureau of Land Management's Inconsistent Approach Toward Rule Breakers

Jonathan Thompson, High Country News: In the context of the Oregon standoff, there are similar cases involving Bureau of Land Management land, but the punishment for whatever transgressions might have occurred varies. Further examination shows how consistent (or not) the agency has been. [Read the Article](#)

Article for the journal about **effort to digitize native petitions to the State of Massachusetts dating from 1600's to 1800's** css

<http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2016/01/digitizing-native-american-petitions/>

Oil and Gas Development May Pose New Hazard to Water Quality in Arid Lands

Kate Dougherty, Earth Island Journal: A salty mystery is brewing in Carbon County, Wyoming. The brush-carpeted landscape here is home to ranchers, farmers and the beleaguered sage grouse. It's also home to Muddy Creek, where water salinity spiked suddenly in 2009.

[Read the Article](#)

Now leasing: Containers On Grand (hipster apartments in Phoenix).



I made the front page! PAYA made the front page! The Paiute made the front page!



***News from Native California* is a quarterly magazine published by Heyday and devoted to the vibrant cultures, art, languages, histories, social justice movements, and stories of California's diverse Indian peoples.**

In Our Languages – Kawaiisu

January 6, 2016A story as told by Kawaiisu Elder Lucille Girado-Hicks, February 2015 We used to go over that way to the ranch to pick gooseberries. Tama uusuusa aweenakwenüm ranchiva'an. Chehenüma pohoopita. In the summer we could find lots of berries. Su'ura tazava'ana müts owot mehenüm poho'apita. So we went there one afternoon...[Read More](#)

All Miwok Language Symposium

December 21, 2015All Miwok Language Symposium Written by Candra Neff The 2nd Annual All Miwok Language Symposium was held November 3rd through 5th at the Black Oak Casino Resort Hotel in Tuolumne, California. The Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians hosted the event. Sponsors included Jackson Rancheria, Shingle Springs Rancheria, United Auburn Indian Community and Wilton... [Read More](#)

Yocha Dehe: A Success Story in the Seka Hills

December 18, 2015Yocha Dehe: A Success Story in the Seka Hills by Samuel White Swan-Perkins 16 December 2015 Yolo County, situated near the Northern end of the Sacramento

Valley, is an area rich in agriculture tradition. For nearly 150 years farming, particularly almonds, grapes and olives, have been a boon for the rural areas' lagging... [Read More](#)

In Our Languages – Rumsen Ohlone

November 11, 2015 In Our Languages: Rumsen Ohlone by Louis Trevino ka meş 'iwsen. – I desire you. ka meş muyšin. – I love you. ka meş polšonin. – I am crazy with love for you. ka meş lomyonin. – I have become completely, crazily in love with you. ka mačnan. – I have lost myself,... [Read More](#)

“A is for Acorn” Baby Video

October 21, 2015 “A is for Acorn” Torres Martinez Tribal Librarian Luisa Armijo brought her daughter and grandson by the offices, and we couldn't resist showing them our new board book. (Bonus commentary by Malcolm.) [Read More](#)

Canadian Tribal Colleges

Alberta

- [Blue Quills First Nations College](#)
- [Maskwachees Cultural College](#)
- [Old Sun Community College](#), [Siksika 146\[1\]](#)
- [Red Crow Community College](#), [Cardston](#)
- [Yellowhead Tribal College](#), [Edmonton](#)

British Columbia

- [Native Education Centre](#), [Vancouver](#)
- [Nicola Valley Institute of Technology](#), [Merritt](#)

Manitoba

- [Yellowquill College](#), [Winnipeg](#)

Nunavut

- [Akitsiraq Law School](#)
- [Nunavut Arctic College](#)

Ontario

- [Anishinabek Education Institute](#)
- [First Nations Technical Institute](#), [Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory](#)
- [Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute](#)
- [Iohahi:io Akwesasne Adult Education Centre](#)
- [Negahneewin College](#), [Thunder Bay](#)
- [Ogwehoweh Skills and Trades Training Centre](#)
- [Oshki-Pimache-O-Win Education & Training Institute](#)
- [Seven Generations Education Institute](#)
- [Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig](#)
- [Six Nations Polytechnic](#)

Saskatchewan

- [First Nations University of Canada, Regina](#)

Upcoming Dinner and Home Hosting Opportunities

Russian Experts on Gender Based Violence February 5-10 (Dinner Hospitality)

Six Russian officials working on combating gender based violence will visit Reno to learn about our efforts in domestic violence prevention. They would like to be hosted February 6, 7, 8 or 9th.

Japanese Legal Officials to Study International Parental Child Abduction (Dinner Hospitality)

Two lawyers and a social worker from Japan will visit Reno February 18-23 to examine U.S. child custody laws and advocacy for children. They would like to be hosted (along with their interpreter) on February 19, 20, 21 or 22, 2016.

Six Organic Farming Officials from Belarus (Dinner Hospitality)

A group of farmers from Belarus, including some goat farmers, will visit Reno to learn about public private partnerships and government regulation with respect to organic farming. They would like to be hosted for dinner on February 18 or 19th.

Investigative Journalists to Learn about Water Rights and Other Hot Topics (Dinner Hospitality)

A group of five journalists from India, Liberia, Russia, Sri Lanka and Uruguay will visit Reno to meet with media officials from February 25-March 1, 2016. They would like to be hosted for dinner on February 26, 27, 28 or 29th.

More Russian Visitors to Learn about Preventing Gender Based Violence (Dinner Hospitality)

An additional group of Russian expert on the same topic will visit Reno March 23-29. They would like to be hosted for dinner on March 26, 27 or 28th.

Interested in Hosting Visitors for Overnight Stays?

Social Workers from Belarus (April 1-20, 2016)

10 female social workers from Belarus will visit Reno March 30-April 20 to learn about how the US assists youth with intellectual disabilities. We are looking for homes for the participants from April 1-20, 2016.

Government Officials from Kosovo (May 14-22, 2016)

Six officials will visit to learn about e-government and corruption from May 14-22, 2016. We are looking for home hosts for the participants (no biographical information yet).

25 Algerian Youth Participants (August 8-19, 2016)

Twenty-five high school students and three chaperones from Algeria will visit Reno August 8-19 to learn about youth leadership and civic engagement. Home hosts will undergo a background check, a home visit and learn about life in Algeria.

Contact Carina Black at cblack@unr.edu if you are interested in hosting!