



Trump Nominates Former New Mexico Congressman to Lead Bureau of Land Management

WASHINGTON, D.C. – This week, President Donald Trump nominated Steve Pearce, a former New Mexico congressman and oil industry business owner, to serve as director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The agency oversees approximately 245 million acres of public land and about 700 million acres of subsurface mineral rights nationwide, including areas adjacent to the Navajo Nation and its cultural sites in the Southwest.

Pearce, a long-time supporter of expanding oil and gas drilling, previously advocated for reducing national monument designations and increasing energy development across federal lands. Before entering Congress, he and his wife owned Lea Fishing Tools, an oilfield services company based in Hobbs, New Mexico, which they eventually sold in 2003. His nomination signals a potential shift toward increased oil leasing and production in regions like the Permian Basin and around areas of cultural significance, such as Chaco Culture National Historical Park. Environmental and tribal leaders have expressed concern that opening more federal lands to drilling could threaten sacred and historical areas that hold deep cultural and spiritual importance.

Pearce's selection follows the withdrawal of Kathleen Sgamma, Trump's previous nominee and a former oil and gas lobbyist. His appointment also aligns with recent congressional efforts to scale back monument designations. Arizona Representatives Paul Gosar and Eli Crane have introduced legislation to revoke two national monuments, including the Ancestral Footprints National Monument, which is co-managed by the Navajo Nation and neighboring tribes.