

Bureau of Land Management Threats, Intimidation, and Bullying Continue to Claim Innocent Lives

GARRYOWEN, MT Following a fourth suicide subsequent to bullying and harassment by Bureau of Land Management law enforcement agents, Christopher Kortlander, the Founding Director of the Custer Battlefield Museum in Garryowen, MT, is speaking out. Kortlander, himself the victim of two unwarranted Bureau of Land Management [raids](#), says the intimidation and threats by teams of heavily-armed BLM law enforcement agents must end.

“The Bureau of Land Management has a long track record of aggressive harassment, unwarranted raids, and heartbreaking suicides to answer for,” said Kortlander. “Their questionable assertions of criminal behavior and unchecked aggression must be exposed and those involved must be investigated.”

Representative Jason Chaffetz, a Republican from Utah, said, “We need to be more Andy Griffith and less Rambo.” In a January 24th [press release](#), he announced his plan to do just that. Chaffetz reintroduced the Local Enforcement for Local Lands Act, or H.R. 622, which will strip the Bureau of Land Management and the US Forest Service of their law enforcement authority, with the aim of bringing these agencies into line. “It’s time to get rid of the BLM and US Forest Service police,” Chaffetz says, “If there is a problem, your local sheriff is the first and best line of defense. By restoring local control in law enforcement, we enable federal agencies and county sheriffs to each focus on their respective core missions.”

Kortlander recounts, “In 2014, I was asked by an elected official to submit written testimony to the House of Representatives subcommittee that investigates this type of harassment and intimidation by federal law enforcement, but nothing has come of it. It’s time to get the public involved to end this kind of harassment of private, law-abiding citizens.” (See Congressional Hearing- [Threats, Intimidation and Bullying by Federal Land Managing Agencies – The attached 56-page document, submitted at this congressional hearing on July 24, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. in Room 1324 of the Longworth House Office Building, is very important because it reveals WHY the Custer Battlefield Museum Raids, the Four Corners Raids, and the Gibson Guitar Raids occurred.](#))

Federal Raids Lead to Suicides

On June 9, 2009, 17 teams of fully-armed Bureau of Land Management agents [raided](#) the southeastern Utah homes of two dozen casual Indian artifact hobbyist-collectors. When the over-the-top militaristic raids concluded, 24 people were charged with felonies and misdemeanors under the 1979 Archaeological Resource Protection Act (ARPA) which prohibits removing archaeological resources, including Native American artifacts from tribal or federal lands.

The day after the excessive raids, following hours of aggressive interrogation by Bureau of Land Management agents spearheaded by Dan Love, Dr. James D. Redd - one of those charged under the ARPA law – [committed suicide](#). A week later, Steven Shrader, another man charged in connection with the Four Corners raids, [killed himself](#). Eight months later, Ted Gardiner, the man the Bureau of Land Management agents had paid \$244,000 to supply them with (unverified) information about Indian artifact hobbyist-collectors, also [killed himself](#).

The Most Recent BLM-Related Suicide

On December 1, 2016, after months of harassment and bullying by federal law enforcement, half a dozen Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service agents, accompanied by a federal Social Security investigator, raided the Cody, Wyoming home of Robert Weaver, a rock hound who collected fossils. Weaver underwent eight long hours of brutal interrogation and bullying by BLM agents and the Social Security investigator; following his release (no charges were ever filed) federal agents continued to interrogate, harass, and intimidate Weaver for an entire month. On December 31, 2016, Robert Weaver [took his own life](#), tragically becoming the fourth suicide in connection with an over-the-top Bureau of Land Management raid.

Raids at Garryowen

In 2005, and again in 2008, Chris Kortlander, Founding Director of the Custer Battlefield Museum in Garryowen, MT,

was the victim of similar Nazi Gestapo-like raids by overzealous, unprofessional Bureau of Land Management law enforcement agents intent on proving that Kortlander was involved in the illegal trafficking of artifacts. Following the 2005 raid, no proof of wrongdoing was found and no charges were filed. The 2008 raid resulted in the same outcome, but the damage had been done. Kortlander's Historical Rarities collectibles business was left in shambles and his good reputation as an upstanding member of the antiques field was tarnished. The fight to restore his life and livelihood has left Kortlander exhausted, frustrated, and disheartened.

The recent news of yet another suicide of someone connected to raids led by the Bureau of Land Management has steeled his resolve to end this federal law enforcement nightmare. "I'm not willing to let another day go by without bringing the Bureau of Land Management's outrageous actions and unprofessional behavior to the attention of the American people, the Department of the Interior's office of the Inspector General, and the Department of Justice," insisted Kortlander. "The law enforcement unit of the Bureau of Land Management may be able to live with being connected to the suicides of law-abiding citizens, but I cannot, and neither should any other American."

"The Bureau of Land Management and other Department of the Interior law enforcement agencies have developed a 'Rambo' type attitude and they've been running amok, threatening and raiding innocent private citizens and respected businesses like Gibson Guitars and Custer Battlefield Museum with impunity. No one is stopping them and our elected officials cannot sit on the sidelines any longer."

A single suicide in connection to a Bureau of Land Management raid should alone be enough to warrant an investigation into the especially aggressive tactics used by the BLM. The aforementioned federal agency's law enforcement division is now linked to *four* suicides, all of which could have possibly been prevented had it not been for the threats, intimidation, and bullying at the hands of the Department of the Interior law enforcement agents.

Kortlander is working on a book that documents his personal experience with the abuse and aggression at the hands of the Bureau of Land Management's law enforcement division; the projected release date is late 2017. Furthermore, Kortlander has contacted each member of Montana's congressional delegation asking them to rein in the terrorist tactics of the Bureau of Land Management. He has also contacted Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah), who [reintroduced his bill](#) in Congress on January 24, 2017.

We the People of the United States must contact our Congressional delegation (*find your representative: <http://www.house.gov/representatives>*) and urge them to cosponsor Representative Chaffetz's bill, H.R. 622, to demilitarize the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service (*read more about this bill [here](#)*).

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VIDEO: [2009 Blanding Raid at the home of Dr. James Redd. Interview with Joe Mozingo and Phil Lyman](#)

PDF: [Kortlander's Never Before Seen 2010 OIG Report on Museum Raid](#)

AUDIO: ["Abuse at the Hand of the Bureau of Land Management" - Chris Kortlander w/ Host John. B. Wells Ark Midnight](#) (02/18/17)