

Save Monroe, Inc.
c/o Rt. 1, Box 665-A
Peterstown, WV 24963
March 27, 2018

Ms. Kimberly Bose
Secretary Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street NE, Room 1A
Washington, D.C. 20426

(via electronic submission)

RE: Mountain Valley Pipeline, CP16-10-000

Bureau of Land Management Federal Employees Protecting Public Lands Are Now Required to Wear Badges Depicting Oil Rigs

Save Monroe, Inc. submits the attached disturbing information to the Docket CP16-10-000:

- Exhibit 1: Copy of March 15, 2018 letter from Jeff Ruch, Executive Director, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER).
- Exhibit 2: Copy of VICE News March 16, 2018 article by Alex Lubben, "Federal Employees Protecting Public Lands Now Wear Oil Rigs On Their Lapels" with photos of the Bureau of Land Management's new "vision" cards.

Please file in the usual manner.

Federal Employees Ordered to be Walking Talking Points

From : PEER <info@peer.org>

Thu, Mar 15, 2018 04:22 PM

Subject : Federal Employees Ordered to be Walking Talking Points

To : [REDACTED]

Reply To : info@peer.org



March 15, 2018

Dear [REDACTED]

U.S. Bureau of Land Management employees have complained to PEER that they must wear “[Vision Cards](#)” on open display at all times while on duty. As you can see, these cards are little message boards with aphoristic statements about vision, mission, values, and guiding principles of the BLM.

At Least They Are Not Tattoos. BLM employees are now under orders to wear “Vision Cards” displaying official maxims on their uniforms.



The two Vision Cards repeat language from the agency [website](#) and –

- Display the image of an oil rig and what appears to be livestock grazing, in contrast to the official BLM logo which shows a tree, river, and mountain;
- Reference serving “stakeholders” and “customers” but do not mention serving the public; and
- Declare that the purpose of improving “the health and productivity of the land” is “to support the BLM multiple-use mission.”

These Vision Cards are reminiscent of propaganda placards used by totalitarian regimes. Yet this is supposed to be the Bureau of Land Management not Mao’s Red Guard.

One of several ironies about the card’s “Values” statement is that it touts employee “honesty, integrity ... courage, and commitment to make a difference.” Yet these very qualities are discouraged, as employees must walk in lockstep, lack any meaningful channels for feedback to managers, and are subject to an ex-military Cabinet Secretary who demands “[loyalty to the flag](#)” by which is meant the departmental pennant raised whenever Secretary Zinke is “[in garrison](#)” at the Main Interior Building.

These mandatory Vision Cards are both hokey and designed to reduce public servants to walking talking points. This is a dangerous group think exercise that disrespects and blurs the different roles of BLM specialists. For example, BLM scientists should not strive to “deliver better service to our customers.” Nor should law enforcement rangers be in pursuit of “excellence in business practices.”

More fundamentally, the person of federal employees should not be used for political messaging. [Help us](#) nip this practice in the bud.

Sincerely,



Jeff Ruch
Executive Director

P.S. Litigation Posse Forming. Following a PEER legal roadmap, conservation groups are lining up to sue the BLM and the Fish & Wildlife Service to nullify a slew of illegal actions taken by [illegitimate acting directors](#) in these agencies during the past year. Only a Trump administration would name acting directors who are unauthorized to act.

P.P.S. Perils of Social Media in Public Service. The Hatch Act forbids federal employees from partisan politicking. Trump appointees are [routinely violating this law](#) knowing they will face discipline. PEER has issued a caution that civil servants who

[engage in social media commentary](#) with a political bent risk termination as determined by...you guessed it, Trump appointees.

P.P.P.S. Are Manatees the Next Charismatic Megafauna Climate Change Victim? As the North Pole warms, Arctic air blankets the Eastern seaboard. Polar bears have been the poster child of adverse climate change impacts on wildlife. Another species victim of the past few weeks are Florida's manatees that cannot tolerate cold waters and are dying at a record rate. PEER has sounded a [warning](#) on the vulnerability of these defenseless creatures that is resounding.

P.P.P.P.S. Forced Empowerment. Earlier this year, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke proposed a massive reorganization supposedly designed to move decision-making from inside the Beltway to the field. An analysis by PEER reveals that Zinke runs a top-down operation where [input from the field](#) is neither sought nor welcome. In fact, it is difficult to identify a single instance in which Secretary Zinke has deferred to on-the-ground managers. More than 90% of Interior's workforce already work outside the Beltway but seem more disempowered than ever.

P.P.P.P.S. New Eco-Champion Videos. PEER's 25th anniversary celebration marches on with this week's video in which now retired Park Service biologist [Steve Gniadek](#) recounts how PEER talked him out of blowing the whistle. Also, check out the story of [Heather Wiley](#), the Army Corps biologist who went kayaking to save the L.A. River. See any [recent video profiles](#) you may have missed.

Contact Us | Your Privacy

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VICE News

https://news.vice.com/en_us/article/wj7e7m/bureau-of-land-management-gave-out-new-id-cards-with-oil-rigs-and-cowboys

Federal employees protecting public lands now wear oil rigs on their lapels

By [Alex Lubben](#) Mar 16, 2018



Above: A side-by-side photo of the front (left) and back (right) of the Bureau of Land Management's new "vision" cards. (Provided to VICE News by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility)

Under the Trump administration, the Bureau of Land Management has some new branding, one that prominently features oil rigs.

The Bureau of Land Management gave out new identification cards for all its employees to wear out in the field — complete with illustrations of oil rigs and cowboys. Under the heading “our vision,” the card also outlines the agency’s current vision: “to enhance the quality of life for all citizens through the balanced stewardship of America’s public lands and resources.”

The cards also highlight the agency’s “multiple-use mission” in sustaining the “productivity of the public lands” and pursuing “excellence in business practices.” The language also mentions the work the agency does for “customers” and “stakeholders” — words have become code for industry under the Trump administration.

Government watchdog group Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) provided photos of the cards, shown below, to VICE News. The [Washington Post](#) and [EE News](#) independently confirmed their distribution.

“These vision cards were created and sent out several months ago by the Washington office to encourage employees to be aware of the BLM's core values. No one was ordered to wear them by anyone at headquarters,” the agency’s spokesperson Michelle Barret told VICE News in an email.

Employees, however, told PEER that they were “ordered” to wear the cards on their lapels.

Under the Obama administration, the Bureau of Land Management promoted imagery that had more to do with public access to public lands rather than the agency’s role in fostering business. The Bureau of Land Management’s current [website notes](#) how the agency’s “multiple-use approach puts America First.” Before the Trump administration, the bureau’s [public-facing mission statements focused on](#) “eco-regional assessments” and “expanding the collection of native seeds,” though the language did mention providing for energy development on public lands.

In April of last year, however, the primary image on the Department of the Interior’s website switched from a photo of a family [looking wistfully over public lands](#) to a guy standing next to his truck with an American flag pinned to its roof and [looking up at a huge pile of coal](#).

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