



April 4, 2024

Margaret
Cortez
Chairperson

Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator
333 Las Vegas BLVD South, Suite 8016
Las Vegas, NV 89101

Jacky Rosen
United States Senator
333 Las Vegas BLVD South, Suite 8023
Las Vegas, NV 89101

Carmen
Armitage
Vice-
Chairperson

Steven Horsford
United States Representative
2250 N Las Vegas BLVD, Suite 500
North Las Vegas, NV 89030

Susie Lee
United States Representative
7785 W Sahara Ave, Suite 203
Las Vegas, NV 89117

George
Gholson
Secretary/Tre-
asurer

Subject: A Sacred Plea for the Protection of Ash Meadows – Our Timeless Home

Jimmy-John
Thompson
Council
Member

Dear Senator Cortez Masto, Senator Rosen, Representative Horsford, and
Representative Lee:

In the spirit of profound respect and unwavering resolve, we, the Timbisha Shoshone
Tribe, reach out to you with a message that echoes from the depths of time. For us, Ash
Meadows is not merely a location on a map; it is a vital haven, a meeting place, the very
soil that tells the story of our ancestors.

Bill Eddy
Council
Member

Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge stands as a testament to a bond that transcends
time – a bond between our Tribe and the land. This land, a vibrant and sacred oasis
within Nevada's Amargosa Valley, now faces a grave threat, one that could sever the
deep-rooted connection we have nurtured over countless generations. **The proposed
Let's Go Lithium Project by Rover Metals casts a dark shadow over Ash Meadows,
threatening to desecrate the land that is the essence of our cultural and spiritual
identity.**

This region, with its intricate tapestry of life, is a living library of our history. It is home to
the resilient Devils Hole pupfish, which has thrived in isolation, symbolizing the delicate
yet formidable spirit of this land. The refuge is home to at least 26 species of plants, fish,
amphibians, and other wildlife that have managed to live in harmony with the rhythms of
these remarkable oasis and wetlands. 12 of these species are protected by the
Endangered Species Act, illustrating the fragile nature of life in this region. These rare
forms of life, alongside the countless birds, bighorn sheep, insects, butterflies that
depend on the refuge and its waters for their survival, are as kin to us. This refuge and its
shimmering spring pools nourish our people.

The impending danger posed by the expansive mining project risks more than ecological
imbalance; it threatens to erase a sacred chapter of our heritage. The thought of

Timbisha Shoshone Tribe – Bishop Office – 621 West Line Street, Suite
#109, Bishop CA 93514
Phone: 760-872-3614 Fax: 760-872-3670



industrial machinery piercing the land that holds the whispers of our ancestors is not just unsettling; it is a call to defend the sanctity of our past and future.

Mining and drilling projects in the Amargosa Desert threaten the most precious and essential element to all life in this region: flowing groundwater. Not only do these activities risk driving some of the rarest forms of life remaining on our planet who have their home in Ash Meadows, but they also have the potential to affect the flow of water sustaining our tribal community in Furnace Creek, CA. Our ability to have a home in the hottest and driest place in North America is only possible due to the vast groundwater aquifer that gives rise to the Amargosa River. Our way of life and our very existence has always and will always be connected to the movement of water in these lands. To risk permanently altering an ancient flow of groundwater by allowing mining and drilling to occur in this region is to put at risk the very essence of our people.

We urge you to recognize that the protection of Ash Meadows and the communities of Death Valley and the Amargosa watershed goes beyond environmental stewardship; it is a crucial act of preserving the very soul of the Timbisha Shoshone. The disruption of this sacred land by mining activities is not just a violation of nature; it is a denial of our right to honor and maintain the legacy of our ancestors.

We call upon you to join us in safeguarding this irreplaceable sanctuary. We advocate for immediate mineral withdrawal. This action is vital in ensuring that the serene beauty and profound cultural significance of Ash Meadows are preserved, and that our people have a home into the deep future.

As we pen this letter, our hearts are heavy yet hopeful. What lies at stake is the essence of our Tribe – the continuity of a story that began long before written history, a story interwoven with the survival of a unique ecosystem, the perpetuation of Indigenous wisdom, and the protection of a sacred way of life.

We stand ready to collaborate, to share our knowledge and heritage, in any endeavors that lead us towards a future where Ash Meadows continues to be a symbol of unspoiled natural beauty, a repository of cultural wealth, and a legacy of ecological harmony. The time to act is now – to ensure that this sacred gem of the Mojave Desert is preserved for the children of today and the generations of tomorrow.

With reverence and hope,

The Timbisha Shoshone Tribe
Margaret Cortez, Tribal Chairwomen