

## **Background On House Natural Resource Committee Hearing Witnesses 02/08/23**

**SUMMARY:** The House Natural Resources Committee Will Host A Hearing Entitled “Unleashing America’s Energy And Mineral Potential” On February 8, 2023.

### **Kathleen Sgamma, President, Western Energy Alliance**

- Kathleen Sgamma is a long-time spokesperson for the oil industry.
- Sgamma’s Western Energy Alliance is so extreme that oil giant BP left the group over its backwards position on climate issues.
- Kathleen Sgamma says that the oil industry’s affect on climate change is “infinitesimal.”
- Kathleen Sgamma says the cause of the Bundy family’s armed takeover of the Malheur Wildlife Refuge is “too much federal ownership of land.” Kathleen Sgamma supports drilling near sites sacred to tribes.

### **Erik Milito, President, National Ocean Industries Association**

- Eric Milito worked for the American Petroleum Institute for 17 years.
- Eric Milito says that fracking is “being done safely” because of the oil industry’s “strong environmental stewardship.”
- Eric Milito wanted to cut public lands royalty rates for oil producers during the Covid 19 pandemic.
- Eric Milito spoke on a podcast sponsored by climate-denying extremists who have compared public lands ownership to “bondage.”

### **Brian Somers, President, Utah Mining Association**

- Brian Somers supports efforts to expand uranium mining in Utah.
- Brian Somers’s group represents Energy Fuels, the Canadian uranium company that lobbied to reduce Bears Ears National Monument.
- Brian Somers wanted to eliminate royalties for public lands coal miners during the Covid 19 pandemic.
- Brian Somers was involved in a secretive plan to rebuild a railroad near California’s Redwood Trail.
- Brian Somers made a bizarre Facebook post about “raping Mother Gaia” at Barack Obama’s 2009 inauguration.

### **Michael Hollomon II, Commercial Director and Member of the Board, U.S. Strategic Metals**

- Micahel Hollomon is a longtime commodities trader who spent a decade working in Moscow, Russia.
- Michael Hollomon is friends with a Hollywood “fixer” who coordinates parties for Russian oligarchs.

- Michael Hollomon says he spent four or five days partying with a Russian oligarch who is currently sanctioned.

## **Kathleen Sgamma (Western Energy Alliance)**

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### **Big Oil Lobbyist Kathleen Sgamma Pushes Myths About Oil And Gas Production, Climate Change, And Regulations To Skirt Industry Accountability**

#### **Kathleen Sgamma's Western Energy Alliance Is So Extreme That Even Big Oil Companies Distance Themselves From It**

*Western Energy Alliance Advocates on Behalf of Western Oil and Gas Companies.*

**Kathleen Sgamma Is The President Of The Western Energy Alliance (WEA).** "Kathleen joined Western Energy Alliance in March 2006." [Western Energy Alliance, About, accessed [02/03/23](#)]

- **Western Energy Alliance is a Trade Association of Oil and Natural Gas Companies in the West.** "Western Energy Alliance is a nonprofit trade association representing more than 300 companies engaged in all aspects of environmentally responsible exploration and production (E&P) of oil and natural gas in the West. We are an advocacy organization promoting the beneficial use and development of oil and natural gas, and the important economic, environmental and energy security solutions provided by the industry in the West. Since 1974, the Alliance has been the voice of the Western oil and natural gas industry, representing the 'upstream' segment of the industry. Alliance members include independents, the majority of which are small businesses with an average of fourteen employees, and associated companies." [Western Energy Alliance, [accessed 11/25/19](#)]

#### **Oil Giant BP Loudly Left WEA In February 2020, Citing The Group's Backwards Climate Policies**

**WEA Is An Industry Association Representing Oil And Gas Drillers.** "Western Energy Alliance represents 200 member companies engaged in all aspects of environmentally responsible exploration and production (E&P) of oil and natural gas in the West. The Alliance represents independent oil and gas producers, the majority of which are small businesses with an average of fourteen employees. Since 1974, the Alliance has been the voice of the Western oil and natural gas industry, representing the 'upstream' segment of the industry. As our name indicates, we collaborate with an alliance of stakeholders who share an interest in a vibrant

western economy with robust job creation.” [WEA, accessed [02/17/21](#)]

**In 2020, Oil Giant BP Left WEA Publicly, Citing The Group’s Anti-Climate Policies.** “BP is withdrawing from three trade groups over climate policies, a move that comes after the company vowed to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. The oil giant is pulling out of the American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers, the Western Energy Alliance and the Western States Petroleum Association, the company said Wednesday.” [Washington Post, [02/26/20](#)]

- **BP Also Cited WEA’s Opposition To Reducing Methane Pollution.** “BP said that it was quitting WEA because it was ‘not aligned’ with BP’s positions on clamping down on methane leaks. The oil giant said it was leaving the other groups because of differences over putting a price on carbon.” [Washington Post, [02/26/20](#)]

### **Kathleen Sgamma Denies That Oil And Gas Development Has An Impact On Climate Change.**

**Kathleen Sgamma Claimed Oil And Gas Activity As An “Infinitesimal Impact On Climate Change.”** “Kathleen Sgamma with the Western Energy Alliance, an industry advocacy group, said the environmentalists were seeking to block activity that has “an infinitesimal impact on climate change.” [AP, [09/01/15](#)]

**Kathleen Sgamma Claimed Oil And Gas Provide “More Climate Benefits Than Wind And Solar Combined.”** ““They are protesting against an energy source that provides more climate benefits than wind and solar combined,” Sgamma said. “This is not a reasonable movement.” [Salt Lake Tribune, [11/17/15](#)]

### **Western Energy Alliance Blamed The Bundy Family’s Armed Takeover Of A Wildlife Refuge On “Too Much Federal Ownership Of Land”**

**Western Energy Alliance Says The Armed Occupation Of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge Is A “Situation [That] Arises From Too Much Federal Ownership Of Land In The West.”** In a blog post, Western Energy Alliance President Kathleen Sgamma Wrote, “The situation arises from too much federal ownership of land in the West. Whereas in the East and Mid-West lands were transferred as private property to individuals for farms, by the time the West was settled the government retained a vast amount of land. Ranchers are not ‘freeloaders’ as they have been unfairly characterized by those who enjoy their own private property. They are admirably trying to make a living while feeding America, but are too often at the mercy of the federal government.” [Western Energy Alliance, [01/08/16](#)]

- **Sgamma Further Blamed A “Conservation-Only Mentality.”** She Wrote, “although ranchers have been working the land for many generations, federal land use policies have shifted significantly under their feet over the last few decades. Whereas the federal government used to balance ‘multiple-uses’ of public lands with conservation, today it all too often adopts a conservation-only mentality. The federal government administers 700 million acres, the vast majority in the West. These lands include not just National Parks, wilderness, wildlife refuges and other lands designated for conservation, but also hundreds of millions of acres of multiple-use lands that are appropriate for ranching, mining, energy, and other productive uses. For many years, the Interior Department

balanced conservation and economic development by ensuring productive activities adhere to strict environmental standards that protect wildlife, endangered species, cultural resources, air, and water. Now too often policies just involve squeezing out the productive activities.” [Western Energy Alliance, [01/08/16](#)]

### **Western Energy Alliance Supports Oil And Gas Drilling Near Tribal Sacred Sites Like Bears Ears National Monument.**

**Western Energy Alliance Supports Leasing to Oil and Gas Companies On Archaeologically Sensitive Land With Sacred Tribal Sites.** “The U.S. government will allow oil and gas companies to make lease bids Monday on lands considered archaeologically sensitive near a national monument stretching across the Utah-Colorado border that houses sacred tribal sites...Kathleen Sgamma of the oil industry trade group Western Energy Alliance countered that the plans are far from the boundaries of the monument. ‘They’re making sure companies are operating in a responsible way while meeting the call from Congress to expand oil and gas development.’ she said.” [KUTV, [09/09/19](#)]

**Kathleen Sgamma Said There Was “Industry Appetite” for Development in Bears Ears National Monument.** Sgamma said “there certainly is industry appetite for development there, or else companies wouldn’t have leases in the area,” even though Secretary Ryan Zinke said there were no oil and gas resources in Bears Ears. [E&E News, [04/13/17](#); The Salt Lake Tribune, [12/04/17](#)]

### **Western Energy Alliance Has Tried To Discredit Federal Government Scientists And Calls National Geographic “Expert Propagandists”**

**Kathleen Sgamma Discredited Federal Government Scientists.** Kathleen Sgamma wrote that peer review is “normally a rigorous scientific process,” but, “when used by federal agencies for endangered species listing decisions,” “is spin for asking somebody in a close circle of friends to approve your work.” Sgamma said that the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) “can count on its ‘friends’ in a tight circle of scientist-activists who won’t point out something that’s inconvenient to it.” She also claimed that a Department of the Interior analysis was “probably done by the Sierra Club” and believes that federal agencies used “faulty information that ignores a large body of scientific literature on the sage grouse.” [Western Energy Alliance, [05/15/15](#); Twitter, [01/15/16](#)]

**Kathleen Sgamma Called National Geographic “Expert Propagandists.”** Sgamma tweeted that National Geographic ‘are expert propagandists’ in reference to their TV show ‘Fracking Hell.’ [Twitter [12/21/15](#)]

## **Erik Milito (National Ocean Industries Association)**

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<b>Before Becoming President Of NOIA, Erik Milito Spent 17 Years With API, Racking Up A Total Of 14 Years As A Lobbyist For Oil And Gas Interests</b>
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## **Erik Milito Serves As President Of National Oceans Industry Association (NOIA), A Group Representing Offshore Oil And Gas Interests**

Erik Milito Began Serving As President Of National Oceans Industry Association (NOIA) In November 2019. "Veteran energy industry association executive Erik Milito has been named as the new president of the National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA) and will to take the helm of the offshore energy association effective November 1, 2019." [NOIA, [10/04/19](#)]

- **The National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA) Serves Offshore Oil And Gas Industry Interests.** "The National Ocean Industries Association – NOIA – serves the offshore oil, gas, wind and ocean minerals industries and provides tremendous value to its members by uniting and advancing the business and professional interests of its members and the industry." [NOIA, accessed [01/10/23](#)]

## **Before NOIA, Erik Milito Worked For The American Petroleum Institute (API) For 17 Years, Most Recently As Vice President Of Upstream Industry Operations**

*Milito Lobbied Congress, DOI, And Several Other Government Agencies For 11 Years On Behalf Of API, Beginning In 2009*

**Milito Worked At The American Petroleum Institute (API) For 17 Years, Most Recently As Vice President, Upstream Industry Operations.** "Milito comes to NOIA from the American Petroleum Institute (API), where he served for the past 17 years, most recently as Vice President, Upstream and Industry Operations, covering regulatory, legislative, and technical matters related to U.S. oil and natural gas exploration and production. He previously served as managing counsel at API, covering a wide range of legal issues." [NOIA, [10/04/19](#)]

- **2009-2019: Erik Milito Lobbied On Behalf Of API For Ten Years.** "LDA Lobbying for Erik Milito [...] Latest Quarter: Q4 2022 National Ocean Industries Association (2022) | Prior Quarters: American Petroleum Institute (2009 - 2019)" [Legistorm, accessed [02/03/23](#)]
- **Milito Lobbied On Behalf Of API Before Congress And Department Of Interior, Among Other Government Agencies.** "U.S. SENATE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, Interior - Dept of (DOI), Minerals Management Service, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Office of Management & Budget (OMB), U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), U.S. Forest Service" [Senate Lobbying Disclosure, [10/21/19](#)]

## **As An API Mouthpiece, Milito Claimed That Fracking "Is Being Done Safely" Under The "Strong Environmental Stewardship" Of Industry**

**Milito Claimed That Fracking "Is Being Done Safely" Under Industry's "Strong Environmental Stewardship."** ""The evidence gathered for EPA's study confirmed what previous agency administrator Lisa Jackson, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell, Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz, and many others had already acknowledged and what the oil and gas

industry has known: Hydraulic fracturing is being done safely under the strong environmental stewardship of state regulators and industry best practices,” Milito told reporters. “Yet, since releasing the report, the EPA continues to face a barrage of politically based attacks attempting to tamper with scientific conclusions.” Milito said the EPA’s conclusion that there is no evidence of widespread contamination as a result of fracking still stands. “There are reasons no such evidence exists: namely the application of proven engineering technologies and industry risk management practices, coupled with existing and ever-evolving state and federal regulations,” he said. ‘EPA’s assessment underscores the safety of advanced hydraulic fracturing and modern horizontal drilling. The study is scientifically sound.’” [Morning Consult, [06/08/16](#)]

## **Erik Milito Has Spent His Career Lobbying To Deregulate Public Lands Oil And Gas Production**

### *Milito Lobbied For Legislative Reforms To The Endangered Species Act As An Oil And Gas Industry Representative*

**On Behalf Of API, Milito Lobbied Congress And DOI Seeking Legislative Reforms To The Endangered Species Act, Critical Habitat Designations, And Related Issues.** “79 Fed. Reg. 27060 Definition of Destruction or Adverse Modification of Critical Habitat; 79 Fed. Reg. 27066 Implementing changes to the regulations for designating critical habitat; 80 Fed. Reg. 29286 Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants, Revisions to the Regulations for Petitions; [...] 81 Fed. Reg. 7414 Listing Endangered and Threatened Species and Designating Critical Habitat, Implementing Changes to the Regulations for Designating Critical Habitat; [...] Legislative efforts to reform the Endangered Species Act.” [Senate Lobbying Disclosure, [10/21/19](#)]

### *Milito Advocated For Cutting Royalty Rates On Public Lands Oil Production During The Covid 19 Pandemic*

**On Behalf Of API, Milito Lobbied Congress On “Efforts Related To Government Royalties For Federal Oil And Gas Leasing.”** “Efforts related to government royalties for federal oil and gas production;” [Senate Lobbying Disclosure, [10/21/19](#)]

**Erik Milito Said That Cutting Royalty Rates “Would Be The Quickest Way” To Provide Financial Relief To Offshore Oil Companies.** ““Royalty relief would be the quickest way to help ensure that offshore energy companies, especially the service and supply companies that make it all work, are able to weather this storm and keep energy flowing,” said Erik Milito, president of the National Ocean Industries Association, in a statement Wednesday to the Washington Examiner. “There is a severe risk that many companies and thousands of workers along the Gulf Coast will disappear forever.”” [Washington Examiner, [04/08/20](#)]

### *Milito Lobbied For Oil And Gas Leasing On The Coastal Plain Of The Arctic Wildlife Refuge*

**On Behalf Of API, Milito Lobbied Congress On Efforts Related To Oil And Gas Leasing On The Coastal Plain Of The Arctic Wildlife Refuge.** “Efforts related to oil and gas leasing on the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge;” [Senate Lobbying Disclosure, [10/21/19](#)]



## *Milito Lobbied For Exemptions From NEPA Review For Oil And Gas Development On Public Lands*

**On Behalf Of API, Milito Lobbied Congress Seeking “Categorical Exclusions As Defined By Section 390 Of The 2005 Energy Policy Act.** “Efforts relating to the use of categorical exclusions as defined in Section 390 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005;” [Senate Lobbying Disclosure, [10/21/19](#)]

- **Section 390 Of The Energy Policy Act Of 2005 Allows Exemptions From NEPA Analysis For Certain Oil And Gas Development Activities On Public Lands.** “The Energy Policy Act of 2005 was enacted in part to promote and expedite oil and natural gas development. Section 390 of the Energy Policy Act establishes statutory authority for the use of "categorical exclusions" (CXs) from further analysis under NEPA for five types of oil and gas development activities. The purpose of Section 390 CXs is to streamline approval of exploration and development of oil and gas on BLM public lands and U.S. Forest Service lands, by allowing designated actions to proceed without further environmental analysis.” [DOI, [09/09/11](#)]

## **Erik Milito Spoke On A Podcast Sponsored An Climate-Denying Extremist Who Compares Public Land Ownership To “Bondage”**

*Erik Milito Spoke On A Podcast Sponsored By The Committee For A Constructive Tomorrow (CFACT)*

**Erik Milito Spoke On “District Of Conservation,” A CFACT-Sponsored Podcast.** “District of Conservation is sponsored by CFACT. To learn more about the organization, visit [www.cfact.org](#). Welcome to the Podcast, I’m your host Gabriella Hoffman. Thanks for joining us. This week I have two phenomenal interviews to share with you all here. Today’s interview specifically will focus on my conversation with Erik Milito of the National Oceanic Industries Association.” [Apple Podcast, 0:00-0:29, [02/08/21](#)]

- **CFACT Partners With “District Of Conservation” Podcast To Promote Their “Content In Podcast Form.”** “Featured Contributors: We are pleased to partner with the contributors below to bring you new and exciting content in Podcast form! [...] District of Conservation GABRIELLA HOFFMAN” [CFACT, accessed [02/03/23](#)]

*CFACT Is An “Ultra-Conservative Group” That Denies The Existence Of Human-Caused Climate Change*

**The Guardian: The Committee For A Constructive Tomorrow (CFACT) Is An “Ultra-Conservative Group That Denies The Existence Of Climate Change.”** “The letter, penned on behalf of the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow (Cfact), an ultra-conservative group that denies the existence of climate change, suggests growing desperation about the prospects of a climate change deal emerging from the Paris meeting.” [The Guardian, [06/26/15](#)]

**CFACT Argued Global Warming Was Not Man Made, If It Was Even Happening.** “But do not be fooled by the amateurish approach, these are serious people with a very important message:

"Global warming is not man made and in fact may not be happening at all."" [The Telegraph, [12/09/09](#)]

*Craig Rucker, CFACT President And Co-Founder, Supports Transferring Public Lands To States And Referred To Federal Land Ownership As "Bondage"*

**Craig Rucker Serves As CFACT's President And Co-Founder.** "OUR STAFF Craig Rucker PRESIDENT AND CO-FOUNDER" [CFACT, accessed [02/03/23](#)]

**Craig Rucker Supports Transferring Federal Public Lands To States, Referring To Federal Land Ownership As "Bondage."** "Craig Rucker, CFACT Craig Rucker supports transferring federal public lands to states and referred to federal land ownership as "bondage." He said, "As long as the heavy hand of the federal government holds sway over the rural West, Western states will remain little more than colonies of the distant government in Washington Widespread private ownership of rural land has worked very well elsewhere in the United States, where our farms, ranches, orchards, and tree farms are the envy of the world. Similarly, most of [sic] nation's fracking-driven energy boom is taking place on private land. It's time to end the bondage of the rural West."" [The Montana Post, [11/09/17](#)]

## **Brian Somers (Utah Mining Association)**

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**Brian Somers Has Worked In Utah Politics For Over A Decade And Is Currently The President Of The Utah Mining Association (UMA)**

**Brian Somers Has Been President Of The Utah Mining Association Since 2019 Previously Serving In Various Public And Private Sector Roles**

**Brian Somers Is President Of The Utah Mining Association.** [LinkedIn, accessed [2/3/2023](#)]

**Before Joining The Utah Mining Association In 2019, Somers Worked As A Political Campaigner And In State Government.**

- Managing Director At The UT Science, Technology And Research Initiative (2017-19)
- Deputy Director At The UT Department Of Heritage & Arts (2012-17)
- Communications Director For Mia Love's Campaign (2012)
- Associate Comms Director In The Office Of Governor Gary R. Herbert (2011-2012)

[LinkedIn, accessed [2/3/2023](#)]

**Somers Is Vice Chair On The Board Of The Career Academy Of Utah, A Tuition-Free Online "Career Prep" Charter School.** Somers is listed as leading "Executive Leadership; Enterprise-Wide Strategic Planning; Government and Public Relations; Policy Advocacy; Marketing; Strategic Communications; Trade Association Management." [cau.k12.com, accessed [2/3/2023](#)]

*Brian Somer's Spouse Was A Long-time Staffer Of UT Representative Rob Bishop*



Brian Somers's Spouse, Jennifer Somers, Worked For Utah Representative Rob Bishop Between 2003 And 2016. [LegisStorm, accessed [2/3/2023](#)]

### **Brian Somers Supports Efforts To Expand Uranium Mining In Utah For Energy Fuels, A Canadian Company And Member Of UMA**

In Response To A Trump Administration Report, Brian Somers Said Utah Had Some Of The Most "Significant Uranium Reserves In The US" And That Reviving The Industry In Utah Would Rapidly Create Sustainable Jobs. "Brian Somers, president of the Utah Mining Association, said the recommendations would help reverse that trend. 'Utah has some of the most significant uranium reserves in the U.S.,' he said, adding the state 'could see the rapid creation of a substantial number of high-paying mining and milling jobs as the federal government begins to implement its strategy.'" [SLC Tribune, [4/25/2020](#)]

- **The Report Proposed Expanding Access And Streamlining The Permitting Process For Uranium Deposits On Federal Land.** "The report also proposes to "expand access to uranium deposits on federal lands" and to streamline permitting processes." [SLC Tribune, [4/25/2020](#)]

*Brian Somers's UMA Represents Energy Fuels, The Canadian Uranium Miner That Supported Reducing Bears Ears National Monument*

Energy Fuels, A Bronze-level Sponsor Of UMA, Calls Itself As An "Obvious Candidate To Supply U.S. Uranium Requirements" Despite Requesting Relief From The Federal Government Due To The COVID-19 Pandemic Months Earlier. "Energy Fuels, which operates White Mesa Mill south of Blanding and a handful of permitted but non-operational mines in San Juan County, applauded the recommendations, and CEO Mark Chalmers said his company was an "obvious candidate to supply U.S. uranium requirements..." Earlier this month, Energy Fuels co-wrote a letter to Trump with another uranium company, Ur-Energy, requesting 'immediate relief' and arguing that the coronavirus pandemic has driven the domestic uranium industry to 'the cusp of complete collapse.'" [Salt Lake Tribune, [4/25/2020](#)]

**Energy Fuels Participated In The Successful Effort To Reduce The Size Of Bear Ears National Monument in 2017.** "Energy Fuels participated in a successful effort to lobby the Trump administration to reduce the size of Bear Ears National Monument in 2017, which sparked ongoing lawsuits from five Native American tribes and a coalition of environmental groups." [Salt Lake Tribune, [4/25/2020](#)]

- **Energy Fuels Is A Canada-Based Energy Company.** "President Donald Trump's \$1.5 billion proposal to prop up the country's nuclear fuel industry has emboldened at least one company to take steps toward boosting operations at dormant uranium mines around the West, including outside Grand Canyon National Park. The company, Canada-based Energy Fuels Inc., announced a stock sale late Thursday and said it would use the proceeds for its uranium mining operations in the U.S. West." [Associated Press, [02/14/20](#)]

### **Brian Somers Wanted To Eliminate Federal Royalty Payments For Minerals Mined On Public Lands During The Covid 19 Pandemic**

**In March 2020, Somers Called On Utah's Federal Delegation To Support Suspending Federal Mineral Royalty Payments For Coal And Other "Leasable Minerals Produced On Federal Land" Amid The Economic Disruption Caused By The COVID-19 Pandemic.** "'Utah's coal producers are facing severe economic disruption given massive volatility in energy, commodity, and export markets as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Utah Mining Association has asked Utah's federal delegation to support a temporary suspension of the federal – not state – portion of mineral royalty payments for coal and other leasable minerals produced on federal lands,' said Brian Somers, president of the Utah Mining Association.'" [SLC Tribune, [3/20/2020](#)]

**Brian Somers Continued Stating The Royalty Reduction Would Ensure "Lights Stay On" And Miners "Stay On The Job."** "The coal industry is critical to Utah's economy both by providing the fuel that powers 64% of Utah's electrical grid, and as one of the largest employers in rural Utah. A temporary reduction in federal royalty payments will help to ensure Utah's lights stay on and miners in rural Utah stay on the job." [SLC Tribune, [3/20/2020](#)]

### **Brian Somers Was Revealed To Be Involved In A Secretive Plan To Rebuild A Railroad Near California's Redwood Trail For Coal Shipments**

*Brian Somers Was Involved In A Secretive Plan To Undermine California Conservation Efforts And Reopen An Abandoned Railway For Western Coal Shipments*

**In September 2021, The Salt Lake Tribune Revealed That Brian Somers Participated In A Call Concerning A Plan To Rebuild A California Rail Line To Ship Western-Mined Coal To Northern California Ports For International Export.** "In March, six months before the rail project came to public attention, a Utah port authority staffer named Christopher Mitton participated in a conference call with two coal industry representatives, an administrator from a Northern California tribe and a man named Justin Wight, identified as the "project consultant." The call's purpose was to discuss taking over the North Coast Railroad and develop an export terminal at Humboldt Bay. The project would have complete, or at least majority, tribal ownership... The industry representatives on the call were Conrad "CJ" Stewart, energy director for the Crow Nation, and Utah Mining Association president Brian Somers." [SLC Tribune, [9/25/2021](#)]

**The Plan Was Led By The North Coast Railroad Co., A Secretive Entity Likely Started By A Coal Company, Which Offered Financial Assistance To The North Coast Railroad To Rebuild The Line And Block Plans To Convert It To The Great Redwood Trail.** "Who exactly is behind the newly formed North Coast Railroad Co. remains a mystery, but available evidence points squarely to the Western coal industry, which has long hoped to expand its seagoing export capacity... The mystery company's recent filing, known as an "offer of financial assistance," was ostensibly made to block a popular plan to convert the rail right of way into the Great Redwood Trail, which has upset many northern Californians, few more than state Sen. Mike McGuire, a champion of the rails-to-trails project." [SLC Tribune, [9/25/2021](#)]

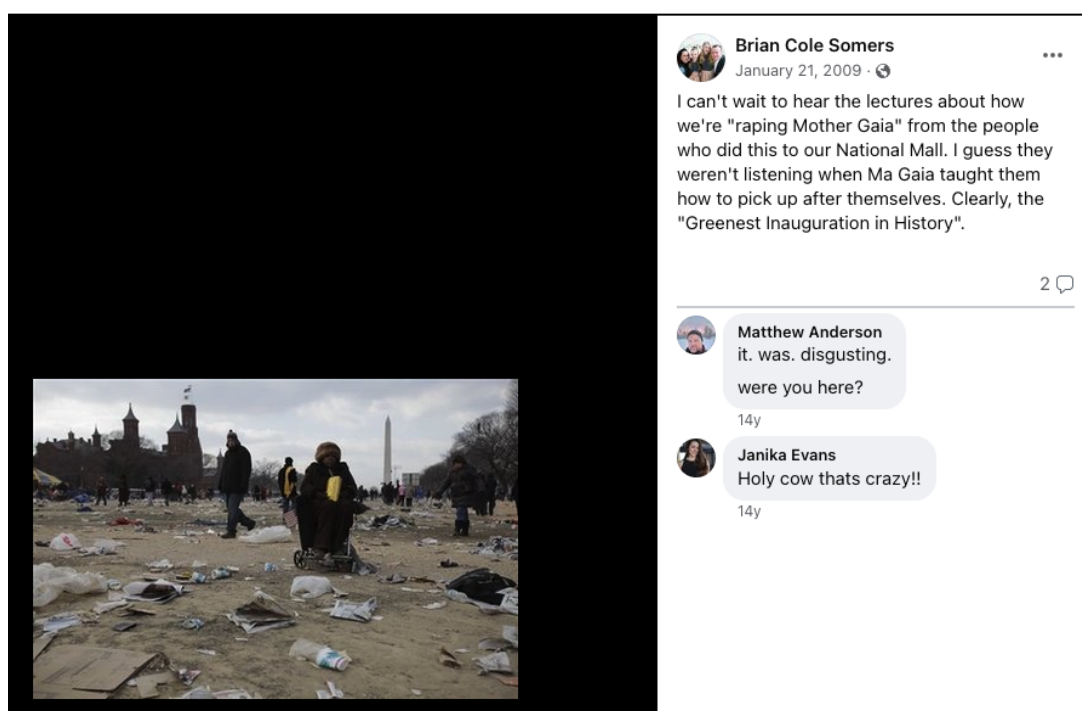
**The North Coast Railroad Co.'s Allegedly Fraudulent Bid For The Railway Was Rejected In 2022.** "Federal regulators have decided to turn down a late application from a shadowy corporation seeking to take over the 175 miles of rail line stretching from Willits to Eureka,

which may have submitted a fraudulent bank statement with its filing earlier this month.”  
[Times Standard, [6/10/2022](#)]

### **Brian Somers Made A Bizarre Facebook Post About “Raping Mother Gaia” In Repsonse To A Picture Of President Obama’s Inauguration**

*Somers Said He “Could Not Wait To Hear About How We’re Raping Mother Gaia” From People Attending President Obama’ Inauguration In Repsone To A Photo Of The Post-Inauguration Capitol Mall*

**Somers Said He “Could Not Wait To Hear About How We’re Raping Mother Gaia From The People Who Did This” In Repsonse To An Image Of Garbage On The Capitol Mall Allegedly Taken After The First Inuagation Of Barrak Obama.** “I can't wait to hear the lectures about how we're 'raping Mother Gaia' from the people who did this to our National Mall. I guess they weren't listening when Ma Gaia taught them how to pick up after themselves. Clearly, the 'Greenest Inauguration in History'.” [Facebook, [1/21/2009](#)]



Facebook, [1/21/2009](#)

## **Michael Hollomon II (U.S. Strategic Metals)**

**Michael Hollomon Spent Decades Working In Oil, Gas, And Mining Trading While Cultivating A Friendship With A Hollywood Fixer With Close Ties To Russian Oligarchs.**

## **Michael Hollomon Is Commercial Director Of US Strategic Metals, Adding To A Long Career In Metals And Commodity Trading...**

Michael Hollomon Is The Commercial Director And Board Member Of United States Strategic Metals. [LinkedIn, Mike Hollomon, accessed [02/03/23](#)]

- **Michael Hollomon Was The CEO Of Missouri Cobalt From May 2018 To April 2022.** [LinkedIn, Mike Hollomon, accessed [02/03/23](#)]
- **US Strategic Metals Is The New Name For Missouri Cobalt.** “Missouri Cobalt, LLC announced today it has changed the name of its parent company to United States Strategic Metals, LLC ("US Strategic Metals" or the "Company") to better reflect the Company's positioning as an emerging domestic supplier of strategic metals vital to the clean energy transition.” [PR Newswire, [02/09/22](#)]

Michael Hollomon Serves On The Board Of Directors Of TM2. “Michael serves as a Board director of TM2 and is the CEO of Missouri Cobalt.” [TM2, accessed [02/03/23](#)]

- **TM2 Is A Platform For Metals Trading And Investment.** “TM2 has created a unique market. The metals you can invest in on TM2 are fundamentally irreplaceable inputs to the 21st Century product supply chain, yet have few or no direct investment opportunities elsewhere. We focus on the technology metals, precious metals, and materials that have strong technological use and are expected to appreciate as tensions in the supply/demand chain grow over the next decade.” [TM2, accessed [02/03/23](#)]

Michael Hollomon Was The Head Of Coal At Gunvor SA From 2010 To 2015. [LinkedIn, Mike Hollomon, accessed [02/03/23](#)]

- **Gunvor Is A Commodities Trading House.** “Gunvor Group is one of the world’s largest independent commodities trading houses by turnover, creating logistics solutions that safely and efficiently move physical energy and bulk materials from where they are sourced and stored to where they are demanded most.” [Gunvor Group, accessed [02/03/23](#)]

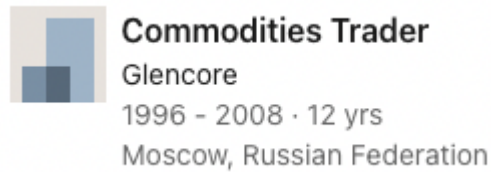
*Michael Hollomon Is The CEO Of The Dubai-Based Dreamphone Trading FZE.*

Michael Hollomon Is The CEO Of Dreamphone Trading FZE. [LinkedIn, Mike Hollomon, accessed [02/03/23](#)]

- **Dreamphone Trading FZE Is Based In Dubai, UAE.** [LinkedIn, Mike Hollomon, accessed [02/03/23](#)]

## **Michael Hollomon Says He Spent Over A Decade Working In Moscow As A Commodities Trader**

**Michael Hollomon Was A Commodities Trader At Glencore In Moscow, Russia From 1996 To 2008.**



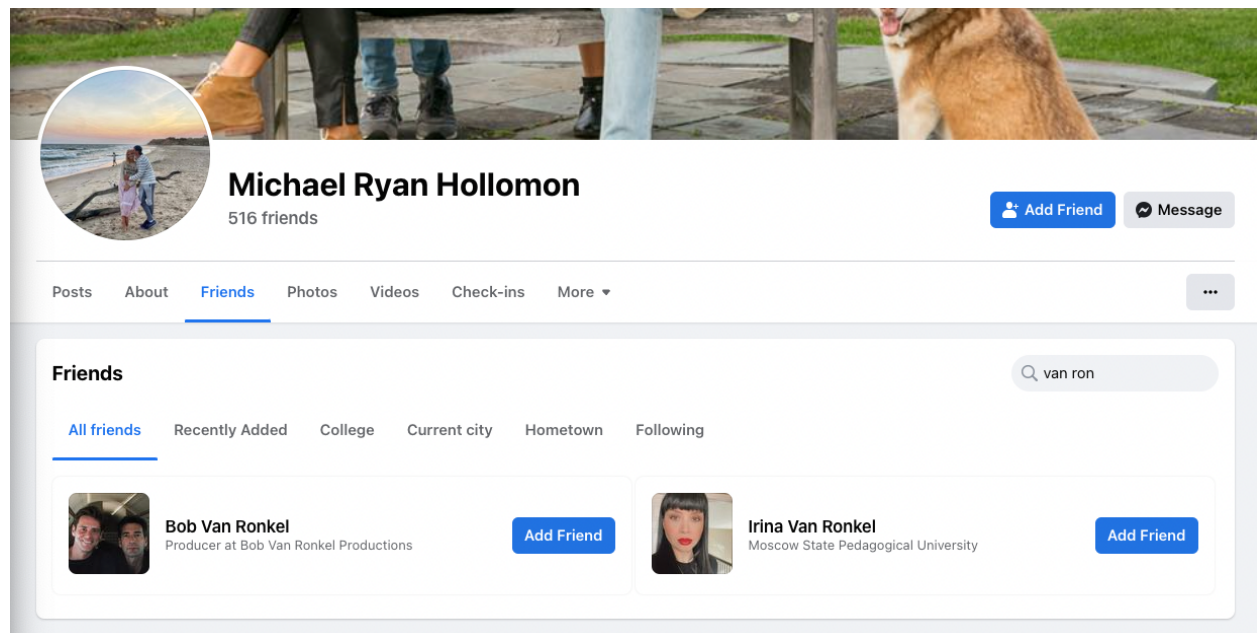
[LinkedIn, Mike Hollomon, accessed [02/03/23](#)]

- **Glencore Is “The World’s Largest Commodities Trading And Mining Conglomerate.”**  
“Michael has more than 24 years of experience in the global commodities and mining space, with more than half of that time spent with the world’s largest commodities trading and mining conglomerate, Glencore.” [TM2, accessed [02/03/23](#)]

## **Michael Hollomon Is Tied To Russian Oligarchs And Putin...**

**Michal Hollomon Is Friends With Hollywood Fixer Bob Van Ronkel, Known For Bringing American Celebrities To Moscow.** “Over the past two decades, Hollywood fixer Bob Van Ronkel has brought a revolving door of celebrities to visit Moscow, including Steven Seagal, Jim Carey and then-reality TV star Donald Trump. [...] In Russia, paying to host Hollywood celebrities became the mark of true wealth in a country dominated by the ultra-wealthy, and Van Ronkel filled that niche. Here is Michael Hollomon, a friend of Van Ronkel's, who used to live in Moscow.” [NPR, [07/02/18](#)]

**Michael Hollomon And Bob Van Ronkel Are Friends On Facebook.**



[Facebook, Michael Ryan Hollomon, accessed [02/03/23](#)]

*Bob Van Ronkel Works With A Number Of Celebrities - Including Then-Reality Star Donald Trump - And Russian Oligarchs Like Roman Abramovich And Vladimir Putin.*

**Bob Van Ronkel Facilitated Donald Trump's Visit To Moscow Prior To The Former President's Involvement In Politics.** "Over the past two decades, Hollywood fixer Bob Van Ronkel has been a sort of bridge facilitating the revolving door of American celebrities who visited Moscow, including then reality TV star Donald Trump." [NPR, [07/02/18](#)]

**Bob Van Ronkel Works With A Number Of Russian Oligarchs Including Roman Abramovich And Putin Himself.** "I was hired to bring Steven Seagal to perform with his band for another event with President Putin, so kind of was responsible for that introduction and Steven becoming best friends with him, which he is very good friends. [...] I was given a \$7 million budget with one other guy to throw a seven-day birthday party for a Russian turning 30. We had helicopters, jets and yachts taking all the wealthy Russians, including Roman Abramovich, who was at this party, Jack Nicholson, Sean Penn, Woody Harrelson, Lara Flynn Boyle and Peta Wilson." [NPR, [07/02/18](#)]

**Michael Hollomon Attended A Four To Five Day Trip Hosted By Russian Oligarch Oleg Deripaska.**

*Hollomon On Party With Oligarch: "We did have an amazing weekend - you know, four or five days - that Oleg ended up hosting everything"*

**Michael Hollomon Attended A "Four Or Five Days" Trip Hosted By Russian Oligarch Oleg Deripaska.** "MAK: Take, for example, the time about 15 years ago that Van Ronkel helped introduce comedian Jim Carrey to Russian oligarch Oleg Deripaska. Deripaska was recently sanctioned by the United States for benefiting from a Russian government that participates in, quote, "malign activities." Hollomon was there the weekend Carrey and Deripaska met. HOLLOMON: We did have an amazing weekend - you know, four or five days - that Oleg ended up hosting everything. This is the greatest night of my life, he said to me." [NPR, [07/02/18](#)]