



Federal report supports saving Oak Flat

New Bureau of Land Management report exposes planned devastation of culture, water, and environment

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WASHINGTON – A new federal [report](#) by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management details the cultural and environmental threats posed by the Biden Administration’s plan to transfer Oak Flat to a foreign-owned mining company. The report adds even more evidence supporting tribal members’ effort to defend their sacred religious site in [Apache Stronghold v. United States](#), a case currently at the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

“Oak Flat is the place where Apache have connected with our creator since time immemorial” **said Dr. Wendsler Nosie, Sr. of Apache Stronghold.** “This new report further validates what we have been saying all along: giving Oak Flat away to Resolution Copper will destroy the land we depend upon for our most important religious practices.”

For over six decades, Oak Flat has been protected by the federal government for mining and other practices that would render the hallowed land unusable for the Apache’s religious practices. But in 2014, the federal government proposed transferring Oak Flat to Resolution Copper, a foreign-owned mining company that plans to turn the sacred site into a two-mile-wide and 1,100-foot-deep crater. This past June, two judges at the Ninth Circuit refused to protect Oak Flat and Apache Stronghold from this destruction of culture, tradition, and worship. The full Court is now holding a vote on whether to rehear the case in the coming weeks.

“We are glad to see the Bureau of Land Management recognizing the disastrous effects of this proposed land transfer,” **said Dr. Nosie.** “It’s time for our sacred land to be protected and for the United States to honor its Treaty obligations and its promise of religious freedom for all.”

Additional Information:

- [Case Page: Apache Stronghold v. United States](#)
- [Legal Doc: U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit’s Opinion in Apache Stronghold v. United States \(June 24, 2022\)](#)

For more information or to arrange an interview, contact Ryan Colby at media@becketlaw.org or 202-349-7219. Interviews can be arranged in English, Chinese, French, German, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.

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*Becket is a non-profit, public-interest law firm dedicated to protecting the free expression of all religious traditions and has a 100% win-rate before the United States Supreme Court. For over 25 years, it has successfully defended clients of all faiths, including **Buddhists, Christians, Jews, Hindus, Muslims, Native Americans, Sikhs, and Zoroastrians** (read more [here](#)).*