



*Nez Perce*

**TRIBAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

P.O. BOX 305 • LAPWAI, IDAHO 83540 • (208) 843-2253

February 26, 2025

Doug Burgum, Secretary  
United States Department of Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington DC 20240

Brooke Rollins, Secretary  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Burgum and Secretary Rollins:

The Nez Perce Tribe requests your immediate assistance with ensuring the Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Trail and the Nez Perce National Historical Park\*, be properly funded and maintained and fully staffed to ensure the cultural resources, history, and artifacts that make these two federal programs unique are fully preserved and protected. Both programs document the historical interactions between the Nez Perce Tribe and the United States through not only the written history but through use of the landscape and geography of the region.

The Nez Perce Tribe has received information that both staff and funding for these programs have been impacted by the recent indiscriminate actions of the Department of Government Efficiency. We believe that a thoughtful review of the two programs will provide a very clear picture of the value and need for both programs and the need to protect them.

Secretary Burgum said in his opening statement as Secretary that he “prioritized tribal engagement through mutual respect, open communication, collaboration, and a sincere willingness to listen. At Interior, we will strengthen our commitment to enhancing the quality of life, promoting economic opportunities, and empowering our tribal partners through those principles.” We appreciate that approach and request the opportunity to discuss these programs with you, and Secretary Rollins, before any final or irreversible action is taken. We look forward to the opportunity to meet with you. Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Ryan Oatman*

Shannon F. Wheeler  
Chairman

*For*



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cc: Leannie Marten, Regional Forester, Northern Region  
U.S. Forest Service  
26 Fort Missoula Road  
Missoula, MT 59804

Chief of U. S. Forest Service  
U.S. Forest Service  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20227

\* <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/npnht/about-trail>

[https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/nepe/adhi/chap1.htm](https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/nepe/adhi/chap1.htm)