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April 15, 2026

Kenny Ocker
TLT Program Manager
Washington Department of Natural Resources
MS 47014
Olympia, WA 98504

Submitted via email dnrtiltprogram@dnr.wa.gov

Re: R-CALF USA Comments on Grant County DNR Proposed Land Transfer

Dear Mr. Ocker:

The Ranchers Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, United Stockgrowers of America (R-CALF USA) is the nation's largest producer-only trade association representing America's independent cattle and sheep producers. R-CALF USA understands that the Washington State Department of Natural Resources is proposing to transfer approximately 12,838 acres of state-managed land in Grant County, Washington, to the Colville Tribes between 2027 and 2029. For the reasons stated below R-CALF USA strongly opposes this proposed transfer.

We understand that this proposed transfer involves grazing lands that are located within and integral to Wade and Teresa King's ranching operation in Grant and Douglas counties. Given the wide publicization of their plight, the Washington Department of Natural Resources must know that the King's ranching operation was severely disrupted by the Washington Department of Ecology, which alleged the Kings had unlawfully disturbed wetlands. That unproven allegation, though it has severely upended the King's ranching operation, is pending both administrative proceedings and possible judicial proceedings to determine the veracity of the claims against the Kings.

Should the Washington State Department of Natural Resources transfer lands integral to the King's ranching operation without final adjudication of the Department of Ecology's claims against the Kings, such action would be at best opportunistic and at worst sinister.

At the very least, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources should postpone any decision regarding the proposed transfer until the State's claims against the Kings are fully adjudicated. Such postponement would preserve the rights of the Kings without harming the State's interest.

The State is positioned to grant to its citizens their rights to due process, or to willfully undermine those rights by rendering the Kings' decades-long ranching operation untenable, even if the claims that have upended the Kings' ranching operation are found to be false.

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We respectfully urge the Washington State Department of Natural Resources to postpone any decision regarding its proposed land transfer until all claims against the Kings have been fully adjudicated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Bullard". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Bill Bullard, CEO