

# Biden Obama \$700K Taxpayer Cash Handout Is Political Payola To White House Campaign Financiers

Fri, 13 Jan 2023 22:37:35, swmof88, [post\_tag: biden-obama-700k-taxpayer-cash-handout-is-political-payola-to-white-house-campaign-financiers, post\_tag: ioneer, category: news]

## Lithium mine announces \$700 million federal energy loan, activists call it a ruse

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By: [Bob Conrad](#)

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The company proposing the Rhyolite Ridge lithium mine today announced it received a conditional \$700 million loan from the U.S. Department of Energy.

The proposed loan is under the DOE's Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing loan program in support of the Biden Administration's critical minerals strategy, officials with Ioneer said.

Ioneer is an Australian mining company seeking to mine lithium at a site in Esmeralda County in southwest Nevada.

The mine is needed, Ioneer officials said, to advance lithium's use for the growing electric vehicle market.

"The Conditional Commitment highlights Rhyolite Ridge's strategic role in strengthening America's critical mineral supply chain in providing a secure, sustainable and reliable domestic source of lithium for the growing electric vehicle ecosystem," James Calaway, Ioneer's chairman, said in a press statement.

Ioneer and Sibanye-Stillwater is continuing to work on engineering components at the site "to delineate the southern limits of the deposit where mining is expected to commence and optimize the mine plan."

The mine is [subject to controversy](#) due to its location near the [endangered Tiehm's buckwheat](#).

Patrick Donnelly with the Center for Biological Diversity, which pushed for the endangered species designation for the plant, was critical of Ioneer's announcement.

"When the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service listed Tiehm's buckwheat under the Endangered Species Act in December, they also designated 910 acres of protected critical habitat surrounding the plant – a 500 meter buffer," he said. "This was to protect the pollinators and ecosystem that Tiehm's buckwheat relies on for survival. The protection of that critical habitat is held to a very high standard – 'no adverse modification.'"

"But in their listing decision, FWS analyzed Ioneer's July 2022 plan and found that it would result in the destruction of 38% of the critical habitat."

According to Ioneer, the Rhyolite Ridge Lithium-Boron Project is the only known lithium-boron deposit in North America and one of only two known such deposits in the world.

Donnelly said the company's announcement today ignored key points related to the buckwheat designation as endangered.

"The Rhyolite Ridge Mine is going to have to be completely redesigned," he added. "DOE is basically funding a myth – the myth that the Rhyolite Ridge Mine will be built as proposed. Whereas the reality is, if the mine even gets approved, it will be completely different and in a different location than currently proposed."

The Center for Biological Diversity also [recently sued to prevent cattle from grazing](#) near the buckwheat. Donnelly said his organization has initiated litigation four times over the project and "won't back down until every buckwheat is saved."

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A half-naked man wearing a Speedo popped into the background of an Arizona counselor's Zoom call during a meeting of the Pima County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday. County Supervisor Dr. Matt Heinz, 45, who previously served in the Obama administration, joined the meeting remotely from a cruise ship in the Caribbean. The 9:00 am meeting was two hours old when Heinz's unidentified 24-year-old travel companion wandered in to the shot. The man is wearing black vest and a black Speedo. The man begins to lift up his shirt, then freezes and looks at the computer, apparently not immediately realizing that Heinz was in a meeting. The physician quickly turned off his camera at that point. None of Heinz's colleagues made reference to the cameo. The board is scheduled to meet again on January 24. The physician later explained that the man in the video is his 'travel companion' and said that the pair are not an item nor is he a sex worker. He compared the moment to other viral moments in which Zoom calls are interrupted by children and pets.