



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Contact: Steve Grasty  
541-573-3071

## **Judge Steve Grasty Statement on the Ongoing Occupation of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge**

I am relieved that action has been taken to end this occupation, however, I am saddened by the loss of life. I hope and pray that those who remain at the Refuge will depart peacefully. Nobody wants any more bloodshed.

It's time to end this chapter in the life of Harney County and let us heal as a county, as friends and as neighbors. Harney County is a beautiful place and we have beautiful people. I know this community will pull together and be stronger than ever because we are a community that takes care of each other.

Going forward, we must address the underlying angst and frustration with federal actions that has brought us to where we are today. We must not hide our heads in the sand to federal land management issues and the inequitable resentencing of Dwight and Steve Hammond.

When it comes to federal land management, Harney County is leading the way with a number of collaborative projects where we have brought together farmers, ranchers, local, state and federal government, the environmental community and other stakeholders to solve issues together. This approach works. But throughout the western United States, and even in Harney County, we still have a long way to go when it comes to being true partners with the federal government in the management of public lands in our communities. I will be working hard to make sure these issues are addressed.

I want to close with one last admonition to the occupiers that remain on the Refuge. We don't need you to speak for us. Please, leave peacefully. Go home to your families.

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