

Otero County Commission, With Trump Insurrectionist On The Board, Voted To Give A \$20,000 Annual Contract To Out-Of-State Extremists Who Compare Conservation Policies To “The Actions of Nazi Germany”

SUMMARY: Otero County, New Mexico, voted to hire a Texas-based extremist organization called American Stewards of Liberty (ASoL) for up to \$20,000 per year to “provide Otero County with technical advice and guidance on land planning and endangered species issues.”

American Stewards for Liberty has spent the last year traveling rural America to raise false alarms about the Biden Administration’s conservation policies, comparing them to “the actions of Nazi Germany.”

Otero County’s vague, \$20,000 annual contract comes as some in the county were forced to vote to raise taxes for school capital improvements. The \$20,000 sum is more than Otero County’s budget allots for important law enforcement spending.

One of the Otero County Commissioners who voted to approve the funding is Couy Griffin, a January 6th insurrectionist who was found guilty for his role on January 6th and faces potential jail time.

Otero County Commissioners Voted Give \$20K A Year To American Stewards Of Liberty, An Extremist Group From Texas, While Spending Less On Important Law Enforcement Programs And Raising Property Taxes

Otero County Has Hired Out Of State Extremists At \$20,000 Per Year For Help “Dealing With Issues” Related To Land Use Planning

Otero County Hired Texas Group American Stewards Of Liberty For Up To \$20,000 Per Year In A Vague Contract

Otero County, New Mexico, Hired ASoL For Contract That “Is Not To Exceed \$20,000 Per Fiscal Year.” “The Otero County Commission entered into an agreement with non-profit organization American Stewards of Liberty to assist the County in “dealing with issues involving all aspects of endangered species and Federal land use planning,” the agreement states.” [*Alamogordo Daily News*, [03/23/22](#)]

- **Otero County Attorney RB Nichols Says The Group Will Help With Land Issue Planning And “Other Issues.”** “(American Stewards of Liberty) provide consulting services and legal services to counties having issues with land planning and other environmental issues,” Otero County Attorney RB Nichols said. “I think (these) services will be useful in this process with the Forest Plan, but also having them on contract with other issues that come up with land planning and endangered species.” [*Alamogordo Daily News*, [03/23/22](#)]

American Stewards Of Liberty Is A Texas-Based Group Traveling The US To Raise Fears That Biden Administration Conservation Policies Are Similar To "The Actions of Nazi Germany"

American Stewards of Liberty Is A Right Wing Group Stoking Fear Throughout Rural Communities About Biden Administration Campaign Policies. "A right-wing, anti-federal lands group is leading a disinformation campaign against the Biden administration's effort to protect 30% of America's lands and oceans by 2030. [...] American Stewards of Liberty, a little-known Texas group with ties to both the Trump administration and the fossil fuel industry, has worked to drum up opposition at the county and state level. It has characterized the proposal as a federal 'land grab' — before the Biden administration has even unveiled details about how it plans to achieve its goals — and stoked fear in rural communities across the West and Midwest." [Huffington Post, [05/06/21](#)]

- **American Stewards of Liberty Has Compared Biden Policies "To The Actions Of Nazi Germany."** "The opposition campaign has been organized in large part by American Stewards of Liberty, a Texas-based conservative group with ties to the oil and gas industry, which has falsely claimed that the initiative would involve the mass seizure of private property and has compared it to the actions of Nazi Germany." [Colorado Newslines, [07/28/21](#)]

The County Budget Allotted Less Money For Vital Expenses Like Law Enforcement Training And Equipment Than It Did For Byfield's "Services"

Otero County Budgeted More For ASoL Than They Did For Protective Equipment/Clothing For Police. According to Otero County's 2022 budget, the county budgeted \$12,000 for protective equipment/clothing for police, \$8,000 less than their contract with ASoL. [2021-02 Otero County Budget, Accessed [09/09/21](#)]

Otero County Budgeted More For ASoL Than They Did For Ammunition For Police. According to Otero County's 2022 budget, the county budgeted \$15,000 for ammunition for police, \$5,000 less than their contract with ASoL. [2021-02 Otero County Budget, Accessed [09/09/21](#)]

Otero County Budgeted More For ASoL Than They Spent On Police Trainings Last Year. According to Otero County's 2022 budget, the county spent \$15,556.87 on police training last year, nearly \$5,000 less than their contract with ASoL budgets for. [2021-02 Otero County Budget, Accessed [09/09/21](#)]

Otero County Budgeted The Same Amount For ASoL As They Did For Emergency Services Gas Costs. According to Otero County's 2022 budget, the county budgeted \$20,000 for emergency services gasoline costs, the same amount as their contract with ASoL. [2021-02 Otero County Budget, Accessed [09/09/21](#)]

Otero County Budgeted \$8,000 More For ASoL Than They Did For Animal Care At The Shelter. According to Otero County's 2022 budget, the county budgeted \$12,000 for care of

animals, and medical care, \$8,000 less than their contract with ASoL budgets for. [2021-02 Otero County Budget, Accessed [09/09/21](#)]

Otero County Budgeted \$17,000 More For ASoL Than They Did For Animal Food At The Shelter. According to Otero County’s 2022 budget, the county budgeted \$3,000 for feeding animals, \$17,000 less than their contract with ASoL budgets for. [2021-02 Otero County Budget, Accessed [09/09/21](#)]

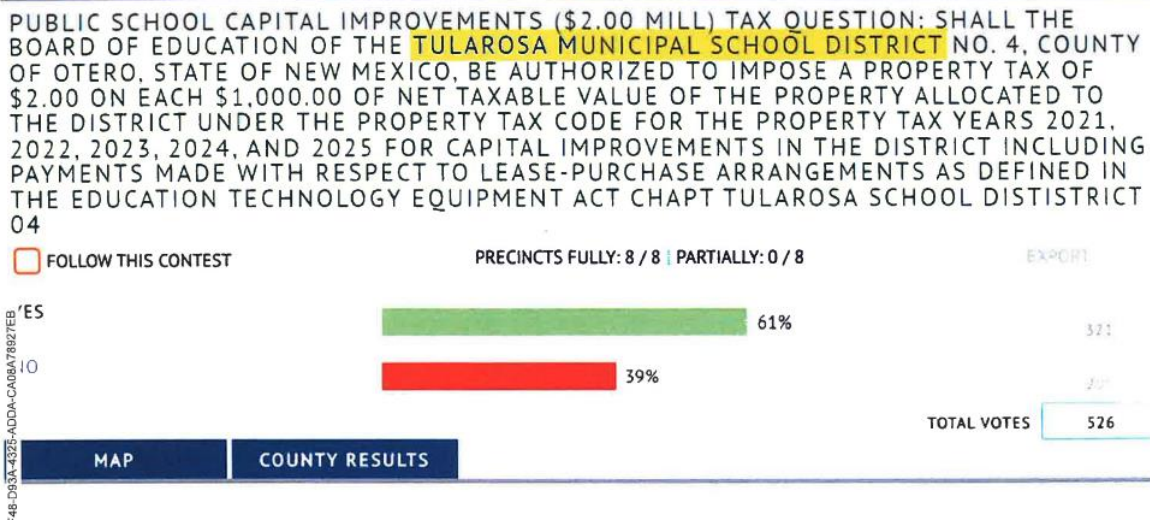
Otero County Budgeted The Same Amount For ASoL As They Did For Cattle Guards And Culverts. According to Otero County’s 2022 budget, the county budgeted \$20,000 for cattle guards and culverts, the same amount as their contract with ASoL. [2021-02 Otero County Budget, Accessed [09/09/21](#)]

While The County Commission Is Giving Money To An Out-Of-State Group, Some Residents See Higher Taxes For Schools

Otero Raised Property Taxes For The Next Four Years While Spending Money Poorly On ASoL

Otero County Residents Voted In 2021 To Raise Taxes For School Capital Improvements. on a ballot measure to raise property taxes for 2021-2025 for capital improvements to schools, while the county budgeted thousands for Byfield and ASoL’s “services.” [Co.otero.nm.us, [12/02/21](#)]

8 Precincts Raised Property Taxes On Themselves For School Improvements, While County Budgeted \$20,000 For ASoL’s “Expertise.”



[Co.otero.nm.us, [12/02/21](#)]

Otero County Commissioner Couy Griffin, Who Was Just Found Guilty For His Role On January 6th At The US Capitol, Voted For \$20,000 ASoL Funding

Griffin Could Face Jail Time For His Role In January 6th

Couy Griffin, District 2 Commissioner Of Otero, Voted To Hire ASoL, And Budget The \$20,000 For Byfield's Services. Couy Griffin, District 2 Commissioner of Otero, voted to hire ASoL, and budget the \$20,000 for Byfield's services. [YouTube, [03/10/22](#)]

Days Later, Griffin Found Guilty For His Trespassing During The January 6th Insurrection. "A federal judge on Tuesday found Couy Griffin, a founder of Cowboys for Trump and the second January 6 defendant to go on trial as part of the Justice Department's massive prosecution, guilty of trespassing on US Capitol grounds while Vice President Mike Pence was there. Griffin, a conspiracy theorist who also serves as a county commissioner in New Mexico, was acquitted of a second misdemeanor charge of disorderly and disruptive conduct. Griffin argued that he led others in prayer at the Capitol that day. Judge Trevor McFadden issued the ruling after a sometimes-contentious bench trial that began Monday and ended midday Tuesday. Griffin faces a potential fine, probation or jail time up to one year after being found guilty of entering and remaining in a restricted area." [CNN, [03/22/22](#)]