

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

**ELOUISE PEPION COBELL, *et al.*,**

**Plaintiffs.**

**v.**

**SALLY JEWELL,  
Secretary of the Interior, *et al.*,**

**Defendants.**

**Civil Action No. 96-01285 (TFH)**

**In re Objections to Special Master's Decision in  
*Cobell v. Jewell*, 96-cv-01285 (TFH)**

**Miscellaneous No. 14-mc-1168 (TFH)**

**STANDING ORDER REGARDING  
OBJECTIONS TO THE SPECIAL MASTER'S DECISIONS**

This order sets forth procedures to govern objections to, or appeals of,<sup>1</sup> the Special Master's determination that an individual who submitted a claim (a "claimant") failed to demonstrate that he or she is an eligible Class Member who may receive a payment from the settlement funds established pursuant to the Settlement Agreement that was approved by the Court on July 27, 2011. Accordingly, it hereby is

**ORDERED** that any claimant who seeks to object to the Special Master's decision shall file a memorandum of points and authorities that identifies each finding of the Special Master to which the claimant objects, as well as the basis for the objection and the evidence that the

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<sup>1</sup> Rule 53 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure provides for the filing of "objections" to a report issued by a Special Master. Such objections, however, are sometimes referred to colloquially as an "appeal."

claimant asserts supports the objection. The memorandum of points and authorities must identify (1) the case name, *Cobell v. Jewell*, (2) the case number, 96-cv-01285 (TFH), (3) the miscellaneous number, 14-mc-1168 (TFH), (4) the claimant's full name, (5) the claim number, and (6) a statement indicating that the claimant is objecting to the Special Master's decision. The documents that constitute the record of the Special Master's decision, including the documents the claimant submitted to the Special Master, will be forwarded to the Court so claimants do not need to resubmit these documents to the Court. If a claimant elects not to file objections to the Special Master's decision, or the claimant's objections are not filed on time, the Special Master's decision will become final. It further is

**ORDERED** that the claimant's memorandum of points and authorities objecting to the Special Master's decision may be filed by mailing it to the Clerk of the Court at the following address:<sup>2</sup>

Clerk of the Court  
United States District Court for the District of Columbia  
333 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20001

It further is

**ORDERED** that, a claimant may object to the Special Master's decision even if the claimant is not represented by an attorney, in which case the claimant will proceed pro se. All claimants, however, must comply with the federal and local rules that apply to this case, including the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure ("Fed. R. Civ. P."), which are available online at

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<sup>2</sup> Claimants who would like to file documents electronically should refer to the United States District Court for the District of Columbia Electronic Case Filing System (ECF) User's Manual for information about registering to file documents electronically. The User's Manual is available on the Court's internet website at <http://www.dcd.uscourts.gov/dcd/ecf-information>.

<http://www.uscourts.gov/RulesAndPolicies/rules/current-rules.aspx>, and the Rules of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia (the “Local Rules” or “LCvR”), which are available at <http://www.dcd.uscourts.gov/dcd/local-rules>. The fact that a claimant is not represented by an attorney does not relieve the claimant from this obligation. The claimant should not expect correspondence or orders from the Court instructing the claimant how to pursue objections to the Special Master’s decision. If the claimant fails to follow established procedures and orders issued by the Court the appeal may be subject to dismissal. This Court has published a handbook for individuals who seek to proceed without the assistance of counsel and the Court encourages any claimant proceeding pro se to review that handbook, which is titled “Pro Se NON-PRISONER Handbook” and is available on the Court’s website at <http://www.dcd.uscourts.gov/dcd/ProSeHelp>. It further is

**ORDERED** that all documents submitted in this case must be properly filed in compliance with applicable federal and local rules, including requirements to properly serve other parties. The Court will not accept letters or documents addressed directly to the Judge or chambers. *See* LCvR 5.1. In addition, as the Pro Se NON-PRISONER Handbook explains, all case-related inquiries must be directed to the Clerk’s Office. It is not permissible to write or telephone the Judge or chambers staff to make inquiries about the status of the case. It further is

**ORDERED** that, pursuant to LCvR 5.4(f), the claimant and all parties shall avoid including sensitive information in any document filed with the court unless such inclusion is necessary and relevant to the case. Absent a sealing order from the Court, all information contained in any document properly filed with the Court will be available to the public over the

internet via PACER. Accordingly, before filing a document the claimant or party must partially redact the following personal identifiers:

1. Social Security Numbers: use only the last four digits.
2. Names of minor children: use only the first and last initials.
3. Dates of birth: use only the year of birth.
4. Taxpayer-identification numbers: use only the last four digits.
5. Financial account numbers: use only the last four digits.

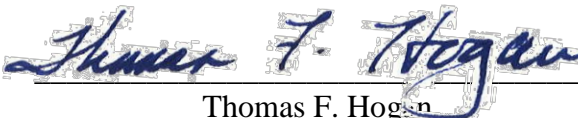
It further is

**ORDERED** that, as explained in the Pro Se NON-PRISONER Handbook, a claimant proceeding pro se may not represent another pro se claimant. Each claimant must file his or her own memorandum of points and authorities objecting to the Special Master's decision and must personally sign all documents filed with the Court. If several family members are relying on the same arguments and evidence, after memoranda of points and authorities are filed the family members may move the Court for permission to file a consolidated reply brief but, again, any such consolidated document must be signed by each person who joins it. It finally is

**ORDERED** that deadlines for the filing of objections by claimants, and responses by the parties, will be scheduled by a separate order of the Court.

**SO ORDERED.**

October 22, 2014

  
Thomas F. Hogan  
Senior United States District Judge