

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 23, 2008

The Honorable Dirk Kempthorne  
Secretary of the Interior  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Kempthorne:

We are writing to request that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) exclude lands within the Roan Plateau Planning Area from the Administration's planned August 14<sup>th</sup> lease sale.

Colorado is blessed to be home to significant energy resources that are vitally important in sustaining our Nation's energy needs and invigorating our state economy. The natural gas resources under the Roan Plateau in Northwest Colorado are no exception. But the BLM's decision to lease the entire 55,186-acre Roan Plateau Planning Area in August, over the objections of the State of Colorado and the affected local communities, will deprive Colorado of its share of bonus bids and lease revenues – estimated to be more than \$100 million – and it will undermine the balanced approach we have so aggressively pursued.

Under current law, Colorado will not receive any revenues from these leases until after the Anvil Points cleanup is completed. Therefore, if the Department moves forward with the proposed lease sale prior to a change in the law or the necessary certifications under the 1997 Transfer Act by the Secretaries of Interior and Energy, the Administration would deprive Colorado's Western Slope communities of funds that are rightfully theirs and that are necessary to mitigate the impacts of a dramatic increase in oil and gas development activities during the last seven years.

Moreover, by leasing all of the undeveloped public lands at once, the BLM plan would sell Colorado short. Governor Ritter's phased leasing recommendation, which was included in legislation we introduced earlier this year, would generate more revenue for both the federal government and the State of Colorado.

Finally, in its current form, the BLM development plan lacks adequate protections for the Roan's land, water, and wildlife – the very things that support the outfitters, guides, hotels and restaurants in the area.

The governor's plan and our legislation would require phased leasing on top of the plateau, to maximize revenues to the state and the federal treasury, and it would ensure

protection of critical native Colorado River cutthroat trout watersheds and other wildlife habitat on the top and around the base of the plateau. Unfortunately, BLM's current plan would deny Congress the opportunity to consider this legislation, ignores our joint recommendations, and ignores the concerns of the State of Colorado and the affected local communities. Moreover, despite your written assurances and those of Assistant Secretary Stephen Allred last February and March, respectively, to our knowledge BLM still has not issued a contract for the cleanup of Anvil Points, nor have you or Secretary Bodman made the required certification under the Transfer Act.

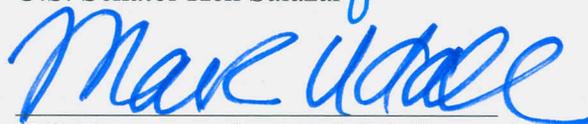
We therefore request that BLM refrain from including these lands in the August 14<sup>th</sup> lease sale and work with us to pursue a course of balanced and responsible development.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

  
U.S. Senator Ken Salazar

  
U.S. Representative John Salazar

  
U.S. Representative Mark Udall