

Good afternoon. My name is Beth Goodnough, and I am representing Western Fields Association and Western Fields Wyoming, Inc. Before I begin, I just wanted to give you background that my husband have been involved with the coal industry in Wyoming for over 32 years each. So we're well-versed in the various issues that we're walking through today. Our Western Fields Association and Western Fields Wyoming, Inc., are both not-for-profit cooperatives that produce, procure, and deliver over 17 million total tons of coal to utilities in the rural Great Plains, Rocky Mountains, and Southwest regions of the United States. Our services assist with the generation of an estimated 4,400 megawatts of electricity, enough to supply the electricity needs of more than 3 million households. Our service territory consists of mostly rural households and some of the most persistently poorest counties in the country. Our customers are concerned about the impact of the Clean Power Plan as well as they should be. The Clean Power Plan is projected to -- depending on what study you read -- either raise electricity prices by more than 10 percent or double or triple the price. This will be coupled with losses of 260,000 jobs annually between 2020 and 2040. Therefore, while the Clean Power Plan calls for reducing coal use by 32 percent nationwide, the market replacement technology is simply not available or would wreck the economy to try to implement by 2030. Given the projected negative impacts to the economy due to the Clean Power Plan, it is imperative that the BLM retain a reasonable and practical federal coal leasing program in order to keep the lights on in this country and especially in rural America. We urge the BLM to make the following changes to its program. Number one, do not kill the goose that lays the golden egg. Instead of raising royalty rates, lower them. Raising rates will result in lower revenues to the federal and state governments. Number two, streamline the federal coal leasing program. It takes between 10 and 15 years to obtain the lease plus all the other permits that are needed before you can begin mining a tract of coal. Do not change the current lease valuation program by adding in unproven permitting processes. Number three, remove the moratorium on coal leasing. Our rural cooperatives are concerned with the gaps in coal availability that we believe will occur due to the moratorium. Number four, if you do make changes that result in no leases, you must

include measures to reset that program in order to lower those royalty rates so that we can get leases going again. So have a safety valve in your process. Our rural customers will be disproportionately impacted by the Clean Power Plan due to the loss of jobs and higher electricity prices. Many are the same miners, railroad people, miners and construction workers recently laid off in Wyoming and Montana. We ask you not to make massive changes in the coal leasing program that will result in additional large increases in cost to our rural customers. Thank you.