

5/15/2016

To: BLM

My name is Chuck Rourke and I have been a resident and rancher in Campbell County, Wyoming all my life. I am the third generation here with my wife Annetta, our two sons and their families operating our ranch.

My late father and I have worked with the coal industry on agriculture issues since mining began back in the 1970's. We began grazing reclaimed land in 1983 at the Caballo mine. We are still grazing there today.

It is great to work with mine people that share the goals of being good stewards of the land. With good range management practices for livestock, we are also helping keep a good wildlife habitat and increasing numbers. Reclaimed lands are producing more pound of forage per acre than native which translates to less acres per animal units and more pounds of livestock produced. With this major downturn in coal production and price we are seeing a big drop in tax revenues for federal, state and local government. With this tax revenue loss the agriculture and other industries will have the extra tax burden to pay. This will make it harder to keep our business profitable.

I ask that you please consider helping the coal mine industry in this tough economic time to get financially stabilized so that with reasonable taxation they can continue mining and being a major economic factor in the community, state and country.

Thank you for allowing me to express some of my experiences and my appreciation for the benefits that coal mines has done for my family in the past, present and hopefully in the future.

Thank you,

Chuck Rourke