

**Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management**

**Coal Leasing PEIS Scoping Hearing Grand Junction Colorado**

**June 23, 2016**

Good Morning. My name is Wendell Koontz and I am from Hotchkiss Colorado. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

I'd like to start with some imaginative but fake newspaper headlines.

**FAA Announces Three Year Route Moratorium and PEIS**

Obama administration thru the FAA announces 3 yr. moratorium on issuing new routes, permits, or licenses for commercial airlines while the FAA conducts a PEIS to ensure airlines are providing fair return to taxpayers for the use of public airports and airspace, and to determine the true social cost of carbon from airplane manufacturing, burning of jet fuel, and ensuring passenger safety. Environmental NGO's demand these costs not be subsidized but be added to the cost of each airline ticket.

Whitehouse spokesperson says we've been flying since the Wright Brothers. It's time to move toward renewable transportation methods including walking, jogging, and swimming.

**Department of Revenue will conduct PEIS with Three Year Moratorium**

The Department of Revenue announces a 3 yr. moratorium for all new and renewing applications for non-profit 501.(c)3 status. A PEIS will be conducted by the IRS specifically analyzing the true cost of non-profit status to the American taxpayers and to account for the massive externalities in the total amount of carbon emitted for the benefit of these organizations, and to require the true social cost of that carbon be included in the fees these organizations pay.

Whitehouse spokesperson says we have enough clubs, groups, and foundations to last 20 years. A three year moratorium should not affect anyone.

I hope these sound as ridiculous and preposterous to you as they do to me. Nobody in their right mind would support such an agenda. However, this is how the Coal Leasing PEIS and Moratorium sounds to mining professionals. Think about it. Although there are alternative methods of travel such as our feet, the American public would not stand for a tenfold increase in the cost of airline tickets and the effect on our economy would be disastrous. But this is exactly what this Administration and the Department of Interior is proposing to the electrical power generation business. With the Energy Information Administration projecting coal fired generation even 24 years from now, in 2040, at 34% provided by affordable dependable coal we should be looking at ways to make the coal leasing program more efficient while still providing the taxpayers fair return.

The federal coal leasing program is not broken. Both the Inspector General's report and the General Accounting Office's report agree. The modest improvements recommended in those reports have been or are in progress for implementation. Director Kornze's letter of response to Sen. Markey summed it up nicely.

Revisions to the existing coal leasing program should focus on streamlining and expediting the coal leasing process. Expediting the leasing process will allow for the responsible development of our natural resources, provide additional revenue to the public through royalties and other taxes and allow job creating companies to continue to prosper.

In addition to the economic benefits we get from resource extraction such as coal mining, we should also recognize that cheap, reliable energy that comes from coal helps improve our standard of living. The energy industry is the industry that powers all other industries. The more affordable and reliable our electricity is, the better our access is to food, shelter, clothing, transportation, sanitation, clean water and everything else.

In my opinion, this PEIS should also consider:

- Social benefits provided to the taxpayers from bonus bid payments, royalties, taxes, and continued employment of thousands and that economic impact to the US, states, and local communities.
- Social benefits of dependable reliable power to the health care industry, print and digital media, recreation, government, emergency responders, military, and other industries that require affordable power on demand 24/7.
- Social impacts of lost jobs including the 900 lost jobs locally in the North Fork and thousands of lost jobs nationally on families, communities, and states.
- Social cost of increasing prices on commodities and utilities that are the logical outcome on the proposed increases in royalties and taxes and decreasing production.

In closing I would like to reread a quote I'm sure you've heard many times:

*"It's going to take a very long time before we can wean ourselves from fossil fuels, so I think that to keep it in the ground is naïve, to say we could shift to 100 percent renewables is naïve."*

(Secretary S. Jewell May 6, 2016)

<http://www.desertsun.com/story/news/environment/2016/05/06/sally-jewell-keep-ground-protests-naive/83992074/>

Thank you for your time and effort to be here today and for listening to the voices of the American people.

*Wendell A. Hoody*  
*June 22 2016*