My understanding of the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement to ensure the taxpayers get a fair return from the coal resources, make coal leasing more transparent and more competitive, and manage the coal leasing in a way that is consistent with the Obama Administrations climate change objectives.

I don't see how increasing royalties would increase the taxpayers return on the resource. It seems to me that the result would be the opposite. Increasing royalties would make many marginal reserves uneconomical to mine and therefore there would be no revenue return from those reserves.

Coal companies are not making huge profits and an increase in cost could force the closure of mines as their current leases run out and could even prevent new mines from opening.

We have seen the closure of mines already and I don't see how forcing more to close is good for our economy. In the North Fork the businesses and miners are hurting. You just have to look at the shelves of the local stores to see that they are reducing stock and selection, or look at the dry cleaning racks at the laundromat where 3 racks use to pack full now the clothes could fit on one rack. Our schools are hurting not only because families are leaving to find work but also because there is less tax revenue from the mines in the valley.

As I see it, to maximize the return on the resources we need to mine the resource or there is no return. To do, that mining must be profitable, unless the idea is to shutdown coal mining on federal leases and import coal from other countries because we are still very dependent on coal generated electricity and as much as many would like to see that change, it is not going to happen anytime soon.

The coal leasing needs to be streamlined and faster to help our coal mining communities continue to be strong; there are not enough replacement jobs in our communities and the few there are; are not high enough paying to support our local economically.

Thank You,

Elizabeth Lindgren

Paonia, Colorado