

BLM Coal Hearing

1. Coal is on its way out as a major energy entity. This is inevitably happening through cheap gas prices and new technologies. It is the market that is driving the downturn, along with environmental issues.
2. However!..... I understand this is affecting people who rely on coal for their livelihoods, I am sure there are many of you here today. We need to be mindful about this transition in order to protect and support these coal communities.
3. I have seen these transition in the past. I came to this region in the 60's and I saw towns going through these very transitions we are seeing today.
 - a. Breckenridge; from Gold, to miners working on the Eisenhower tunnel, and the 23 mile Roberts tunnel and Dillion dam. Then working to help construct and operate the ski area that followed, the town is booming again.
 - b. Moab; A town that was built up by prospectors and miners of various, minerals. The demand disappeared, along with many residents, some of whom just left, leaving the keys in the door. Now it has another life, which is supported by the uniqueness of the surrounding lands and open space.
 - c. Fruita, A small farm community, that has become a major destination, mostly because of the surrounding, protected, public lands, of which these lands are very unique, as is a large part of Colorado.
4. Transition away from coal is happening. And it needs to happen. We need to embrace cleaner energy sources like renewable energy, public health and the environment depend on it. We need to diversify our economy and move away from the boom and bust cycles of coal. However, it is crucially important that we support the coal workers who of course, are trying to protect their families. We need to make it obvious that we are supporting the communities through this transition.

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