

MS. CASCADE: My name is Robyn Cascade. I live in Ridgeway, Colorado. And I'm here as the leader of the Northern San Juan Chapter of the National Organization Great Old Broads for Wilderness. I thank the Department and Secretary Jewell for calling the moratorium on new coal leases in order to take an earnest look at the Federal Coal Program. I believe new leases should, one, require a NEPA analysis to fully evaluate the social cost of carbon and reflect the impact of leasing coal on our global climate and the future of our communities. For example, Firefighters in Colorado have spoken out about the increase in the number, intensity, size, danger, and cost of wildfires due to climate change. We ask that you account for these costs in lives, property, and decimated forests in our State and across the nation. Two, increase 30-year-old royalty rate and close loopholes so corporations that profit from coal pay the full cost of its impact, rather than taxpayers footing the bill. These costs include the scientifically-proven negative effects of coal on public health, land, air, water, and species. Three, reform self-bonding and reclamation requirements on leases to ensure money will be available to properly close sites. The current system has resulted in over \$3.6 billion of outstanding reclamation costs that will fall on taxpayers. And four, do right by our energy workers by using a portion of public coal proceeds to invest in initiatives that revitalize communities and provide a just transition for workers as the coal industry collapses. These reforms will improve the Federal Coal Program. But, even more than that, I want the Department to take a hard look at what science and our own daily experience is telling us. We need to cease burning coal as soon as possible to stop the worst scenarios of climate change. Public lands can be part of the solution to climate change, rather than part of the problem. To do that, the Department must consider a permanent moratorium on new coal leases. Reforming lease sales cannot totally mitigate the effects of burning coal on the climate, or on the health of our communities and our land. It can't bring a fading industry back from the brink. It will not help transition workers to new jobs. Given the realities of the economic, environmental, and public health costs of coal, keeping our Federal coal in the ground is firmly in the public interest. Thank you so much for your consideration.