

MR. KING: Hi. First of all, thank you very much for the opportunity to speak. My name is Warren King. I'm with the Wilderness Society. And I live here in Grand Junction.

BLM has a multiple use mandate. And as an agency, they're faced with the difficult task of balancing a number of competitive interests, including recreating, grazing; coal, oil, and gas development.

However, for some time now certain uses have been prioritized and supported above others, specifically coal development. The Coal Leasing Program has not been substantially updated in over 30 years.

This has resulted in a number of issues, including a loss of revenue to taxpayers from royalties, a lack of transparency and competition in leasing, and market oversupply.

As currently structured and implemented, the leasing program has provided the coal industry with all the advantages a private enterprise needs to flourish. Despite this assistance, coal is becoming a less-important part of our national energy portfolio.

In fact, in April 2010, 44 percent of our electricity generation came from coal. In April of this year, that number is 29 percent. Despite what some may claim, this is not due to

increased or overly burdensome regulation, but primarily due to larger market forces, namely cheap natural gas and decreasing international demand from countries like China.

I do not believe that our reliance on coal will disappear overnight. But, I do recognize that we as a nation are transitioning away from it as an energy source. And with that in mind, we need to review the way we manage coal on Federal lands to account for this changing landscape.

While I realize that we are all here today to discuss the reform of the Federal Coal Leasing Program, I think it's equally important to acknowledge that this is just one piece of a much larger conversation.

What we are really letting BLM know is what we believe the role of our public lands should be and how we want these shared lands to be managed. Here in Grand Junction we know the value and importance of public lands, especially in the context of our local economy.

It seems like now, more than ever, terms like economic diversification and sustainable economy have worked their way into our everyday conversations as we realize that

we must transition away from a community that relies on extractive industries, which are notoriously unpredictable. Our proximity to public lands has and will continue to play a huge role as our community undergoes this economic transition and begins to promote tourism and recreation. And how those lands are managed will determine the success of this initiative moving forward.

Not only that, but their management can dramatically impact other essential values that make this place, make this a place you want to live, work, play. The management will impact things like public health, air, and water quality.

Public lands are and can be an even greater contributor to our local economy. According to a recent study, quite recreation on BLM lands in 2014 resulted in \$275 million in spending and over 3,000 jobs.

All this is to say, we must support BLM in their efforts to reform the Federal Coal Leasing Program. We must adapt our Federal regulations to the new energy environment as we transition away from coal, while ensuring that the leasing the production that continues is done in a fair, efficient, and effective manner.

This sort of management of our public lands is in line with and supports our economic vision here in the Grand Valley. Thank you.

MS. PATTERSON: Thank you very much. We have group 11 through 15 can now come down to microphone 1, with Molly. And we will move over to microphone number 2, for speaker number 16.