

MR. RAMEY: Hi, folks. My name is Jim Ramey. And I work for the Wilderness Society in our Denver Office. I'm here today to share my own personal opinion on coal reform. Thank you for coming to Colorado and for hanging out with us in overtime to discuss this much-needed review of the Federal Coal Program. I grew up in Ohio on the east side of Cleveland. And little did I know until just recently, that the electricity power in my home when I grew up came from publically-owned coal from the Powder River Basin in Wyoming. I didn't even know there was a Federal Coal Program, let alone that I was being personally impacted by it. About four years ago, I moved to Colorado with my wife, Lindsey [phonetic]. And we lived in Montrose until this April when we moved to Denver. During our time on the Western Slope, I worked in Paonia in Delta County, which was quite the culture shock, having always lived in the big city for all of my life. But, there's a quality about the people here in Grand Junction and Montrose and the North Fork Valley and across the Western Slope. And I think part of that quality of the people comes from the quality of this place. Having lived both on the Western Slope and in other big cities, I can fully understand why people choose to live here. For me and my wife and for many of my friends in Montrose and in the North Fork and others who are part of my generation, I can tell you that one of the most important factors for quality of life is access to the, the outdoors into our public lands. And that's one incredibly bright spot that most communities in Colorado have, but especially so here on the Western Slope. As coal continues to wind down much faster than any of us had anticipated, I hope we can look to our public lands to support diversifying the local economy with alternative energy development and by growing the outdoor recreation economy. In Delta County, as you've heard today, coal has had more than a century-long history. Coal trains have rolled out of the Valley since the early 1900's. There have been ups and downs, but coal has long been a very significant part of the local economy. I know times are tough for the community in Delta County. I know the Commissioners there, Mark Roeber and Robbie LeValley, who you heard from earlier today. And I have a great respect and appreciation for what they're going through to try to figure out how to move the community forward. But, they're doing a lot to be proactive. And it's my hope that through this process, Interior, BLM, the folks back in Washington,

that you can figure out a way to be a partner to the local communities like Delta County, who are working to define their future. I hope you'll take a hard look at that through this review. This is not going to be easy. And I don't think anyone in this room or who was here today has the answers. But, today as the record coal production looked to be in the rearview mirror -- and we need to look forward at how to bring our energy production, local economies, and public land management into the 21st century. Thank you very much.