BLM Federal Coal Leasing Program Programmatic EIS Scoping Meeting
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Thank you for preparing a PEIS of the federal coal leasing program and for including public comments in the process.

The current program is outdated – it hasn't been revised in decades – and it's out of step with our nation's commitment to act on climate change that threatens our communities and the environment. It does not account for the harm done to the physical and economic health of communities.

Forty percent of all coal produced in the United States comes from the federal coal leasing program. Land owned by the public should be used to benefit the public. Putting tons of carbon into the atmosphere, slowing the growth of clean energy and harming communities near coal mines and power plants and elsewhere does not do that.

BLM's review of the federal coal leasing program should evaluate the following:

1. Phasing out coal leasing entirely on publicly-owned lands.

2. Including the total, true cost of coal into on the royalty rates that coal companies pay for the right to mine publicly owned coal. The true cost should include the entire cycle of coal use: mining coal, burning coal, and disposing of coal waste, all of which have a negative impact on people and the environment.

3. Examining how BLM's decisions to lease taxpayer-owned coal affect wind and solar generation.

4. Reevaluating whether the practice of "self-bonding" adequately protects taxpayers. When companies like Peabody declare bankruptcy, self-bonding funds are put in jeopardy and ultimately the public will fund what the companies should be paying for.

5. Determining what can be done to make sure that coal miners and others in secondary industries that rely on coal – like railroad workers who haul coal, for example - don't loose their livelihoods but are able to make the transition to a clean energy economy.

6. Evaluating whether exporting coal – if effect shipping carbon emissions overseas – is in the public's interest.

Remember that this coal belongs to the public, not the coal companies or the government. It's time to make sure that the use of our lands and our coal reflects what's best for the public and our climate. Thank you.