Transcript of **Scoping Meeting**

Date: June 28, 2016

Case: Federal Coal Program, Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

IN RE: FEDERAL COAL LEASING PROGRAM
PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
STATEMENT

SCOPING MEETING

TUESDAY, JUNE 28, 2016
1:10 P.M.

DAVID LAWRENCE CONVENTION CENTER
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

- - -

BEFORE:

BARBARA EGGERS: Associate State Director,
Eastern States BLM
AL ELSER: Deputy Division Chief,
Solid Minerals, BLM
NEIL KORNZE: Director of BLM

KATIE PATTERSON: Facilitator

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REPORTED BY: DEBORAH L. ENDLER, COURT REPORTER

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MS. PATTERSON: Good afternoon. We will go ahead and get started if everyone wants to take a seat. I'll encourage folks to come up to the front of the room so they can hear and see everybody well.

On behalf of the Bureau of Land Management, I want to welcome you all to the sixth and final public scoping meeting for the Federal Coal Program, Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement.

I want to thank you all for being here today. Certainly recognize that your time is valuable, and we greatly appreciate your participation in this process.

Before we get started today, I'm going to just go over a few logistical announcements. First of all, if you need any help during the day or have questions, feel free to find someone wearing the badge around the room. They will be happy to help you out.

Bathrooms are located out these doors and to either side, and emergency exists are also out those doors, you will see the exit

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signs.

You are welcome to come and go during the meeting today as you please. If you do leave the secured area, you will just have to do the bag check again.

We ask that you silence your cell phones, please, out of respect for everyone else in the meeting. If you do need to take a phone call or have a side conversation, please go outside those doors and have it in the lobby, we appreciate it.

As a reminder, if you want to provide verbal comments today, you do need a speaking card. And if you didn't already get one of those, you can get one at the back of the room here at our speaker card table.

This meeting is being live streamed over the internet as well, so if you know of anybody who would like to watch from home, couldn't make it today, you can give them the internet website address, which is on our agenda.

I'll just go over what's on our agenda real quickly so that you have an idea of what we'll be going over today.

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We are going to begin with some welcoming remarks, followed by a brief power point presentation, providing you some information about the Federal Coal Program, and then we will get into the commenting period.

We are scheduled right now to take a break at 4 p.m. until 4:30, and then we will go until 7 today. We will be here until 7 no matter what. So feel free to stick around. That's enough for the logistics so far.

It's now my pressure to introduce Barbara Eggers who is the Acting State Director for Eastern States BLM.

MS. BARBARA EGGERS: Thank you. Good afternoon everyone and thank you for being here. We would like to welcome you to the Public Scoping Meeting on the Federal Coal Program. Public scoping is an important part of this process, and your comments today will help us as we make our decisions on the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement.

While we want to hear any thoughts or comments you may have, there are some areas that we would particularly like to hear some

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1 comments on.
2 For example, how, when and where to
3 lease federal coal? How can we account for
4 the environmental and public health impacts
5 of the coal program? How to ensure the sale
6 of public resources can result in fair
7 returns to the American taxpayers, including
8 whether current royalties should be adjusted?
9 And finally, should U.S. imports factor
10 into leasing and other program decisions?
11 So, again, I'd like to thank you for
12 being here today and I look forward to
13 hearing your comments.
14 And with that, I would like to
15 introduce Neil Kornze, Director of BLM.
16 MR. NEIL KORNZE: Hi, folks. It's a
17 pleasure to be here in Pittsburgh with you.
18 This is a Great American city. And I'm going
19 to let you know that we sincerely appreciate
20 you taking time out of your busy lives to be
21 here. Taking part in a public comment
22 session is not something that we all do every
23 day, and I know that in my own life I never
24 do this. It takes a lot of effort to get to
25 these types of events.

6

1 So today, we are here to talk about the
2 nation's coal program. But let me start with
3 the Bureau of Land Management. This
4 organization, which is a public entity,
5 public agency, we manage 10 percent of the
6 nation's lands and roughly 30 percent of the
7 nation's minerals and soils.
8 We have a very large set of
9 responsibilities. We manage property on your
10 behalf all the way from the Artic Ocean to
11 the Mexican border, from the San Juan islands
12 of Washington State to the Keys in Florida.
13 And one of the very important programs
14 that we have responsibility for is the
15 nation's Federal Coal Program. So it is a
16 large supplier of energy to the country and
17 there are a lot of very important questions
18 that members of public, members of Congress
19 and others have raised.
20 And so in an effort to make sure that
21 we have a full sense of the national voice,
22 we will hold these sessions to make sure we
23 can hear from you and your thoughts.
24 Barbara has identified a number of the
25 key areas that we would like to hear from you

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1 from. But we are taking a top to bottom look
2 at the Federal Coal Program, and so are
3 excited to hear what you have to share with
4 us today.
5 We will be listening intently and
6 sincerely and really, truly greatly
7 appreciate you spending time with us today.
8 I'm going to invite Al Elser up to the
9 mike. Al is our Deputy Division Chief for
10 Solid Minerals, which means that Al and his
11 team have national responsibilities for
12 making sure that the coal program, hard rock
13 minerals, which is gold and silver, and those
14 type of mining operations are done and done
15 well. So Al Elser.
16 MR. AL ELSER: Thank you, Director
17 Kornze. We are hear to listen to you today.
18 So I'm not going to be very verbose while I'm
19 up here. I think it's more important that we
20 give you guys the time to give your comments
21 on the Federal Coal Program and the things
22 that you'd like to have clarified in your own
23 minds during this programmatic review.
24 I've got about a 10 minute presentation
25 that will give you an introduction to what it

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1 is that we do in the Bureau of Land
2 Management when it comes to managing this
3 public resource, as well as keying up some of
4 the questions that have already been
5 identified through the listening sessions
6 that we had last summer across the nation
7 where we asked you for your input on what we
8 needed to look at to modernizing the Federal
9 Coal Program.
10 So real briefly, the Bureau is one of
11 several agencies that has a role in managing
12 this public resource. When it comes to our
13 responsibilities, we've been tasked with
14 leasing and production verification.
15 So when an operator wants to mine
16 federal coal, they can come to the Bureau of
17 Land Management and apply for a lease for
18 that tract of land that contains that public
19 coal.
20 Once we have issued a lease, assuming
21 it is goes to lease issuance, and all the
22 permitting has been issued by some of the
23 other agencies, which we'll talk about here
24 in a second, then we're also charged with
25 monitoring the production from those leased

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1 lands and verifying that all that public coal
2 that's being mined is being mined according
3 to the lease terms.
4 So again, we are just one of several
5 agencies. The Office of Surface Mining and
6 reclamation and Enforcement, or OSMRE, they
7 are the office that's charged with developing
8 and permitting that mine's permit to actually
9 go in and disturb that ground and mine that
10 federal, that public coal.
11 So once we have issued a lease, OSM,
12 OSMRE gets involved, they look at what the
13 applicant has planned as far as developing
14 that resource. They issue a permit along
15 with the state's in which that severance is
16 taking place, and then it comes back over to
17 us to monitor that production.
18 There is also the Office of Natural
19 Resources Revenue. They are tasked with
20 collecting and disbursing all of the
21 royalties that come in from that federal coal
22 production.
23 And then, of course, is the Mine,
24 Safety and Health Administration, which is
25 charged with developing and enforcing federal

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1 safety rules for the mines.
2 So just real briefly, some quick
3 program statistics for the BLM. At the end
4 of 2015, we administered 306 coal leases
5 across the United States. Most of these
6 leases are out in the western states which
7 we'll talk about in a second here, but we do
8 have a number of leases out here in the
9 eastern states area as well.
10 Over the last decade, from 2006 to the
11 end of last year, those BLM-managed public
12 lands produced approximately 4.3 billion tons
13 of coal, worth over 63 billion dollars on the
14 open market.
15 And that production generated 6.8
16 billion in royalties and 3.8 billion in
17 rents, bonuses and other payments.
18 And it's important to note that that
19 money gets split with the states. So a lot
20 of that revenue that's coming in through
21 those three streams comes back directly to
22 those communities in which the miners are
23 working.
24 And during that time, the BLM held a
25 total of 32 coal lease sales.

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1 In 2015, approximately one-third of the
2 nation's electricity was generated by coal.
3 This is down a little bit from previous years
4 where I think the peak was around 40, 44
5 percent, but coal is still producing over a
6 third of the nation's electricity. And of
7 that third approximately 44 percent comes
8 from coal produced from public resources.
9 And 88 percent of that came out of the
10 Powder River Basin of Wyoming and Montana.
11 So the majority of the federal coal, public
12 coal that is mined, is mined out west in this
13 area here in red on this map. This encircles
14 an area that includes Montana, North and
15 South Dakota, Wyoming, parts of Idaho, Utah,
16 Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona.
17 But the vast majority of the
18 BLM-managed production comes out of the
19 Powder River Basin in Wyoming and Montana,
20 which is the basin immediately south of that
21 yellow area to the north of the picture.
22 But again, we do have a lot of federal
23 coal leases that we manage out here in the
24 eastern states. You can see that there is a
25 number of coal resources throughout the

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1 United States, but just because of the way
2 the ownership for United States land
3 developed over the years, most of what we
4 manage is out in those western states.
5 So before we get into the Programmatic
6 Environmental Impact Statements, or PEIS, one
7 of the questions we would like help on, I
8 want to take just a brief moment to talk
9 about the coal leasing pause that we've been
10 hearing a lot about.
11 Back in January of this year, Secretary
12 Jewell, the Department of the Interior,
13 announced or signed Secretarial Order 3338
14 which directed us at the BLM to prepare this
15 programmatic review as well as put a pause on
16 new leasing while we developed this document.
17 But it's really important to understand
18 that that pause does not affect current
19 production or current leases. So anything
20 that's already out there, that's been leased
21 to a company, which amounts to about 20 years
22 of federal production, that will be
23 completely unaffected by the pause.
24 Pending leases that we have already
25 gone through our national environmental

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1 policy analysis on and signed a Record of
2 Decision, or Decision Record, to offer that
3 coal for lease, we can move forward with
4 those as well.
5 Those pending applications that we
6 haven't signed a decision on, we can continue
7 to process, but we'll just be deferring a
8 lease sale until we are done with this
9 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement.
10 So really the applications that are
11 affected by this coal lease pause are just
12 anything new coming in the door while we're
13 under this programmatic review.
14 So it makes sense, so that we are
15 looking at ways to improve the Federal Coal
16 Program, that we shouldn't be considering new
17 leases if we've identified areas that need to
18 be analyzed during this Programmatic
19 Environmental Impact Statement.
20 So the last thing on that is that it's
21 important to note that if something were to
22 happen where an operator needs coal that they
23 hadn't anticipated and can show that it's
24 really an emergency, we will consider those
25 lease applications as well.

14

1 So there is a lot of checks and
2 balances built into this pause that should
3 allow everything to move forward so that
4 we're not having a number of companies that
5 are running up against not having enough
6 federal coal resources to continue mining.
7 It's really just those new mines or
8 those new applications that are affected by
9 the pause.
10 So getting into the Programmatic
11 Environmental Impact Statement, I mentioned
12 that last year, last summer, we held a series
13 of listening sessions across the United
14 States where we asked for your input on what
15 we can do to modernize the coal program.
16 There were a number of areas that were
17 identified from your comments that we have
18 asked for specifically your comments and
19 thoughts on during this programmatic
20 evaluation.
21 So I want to tee those up a little bit
22 here and give you a little bit background on
23 some of the questions that we have for you.
24 Now, it's important to note that the
25 full set of issues that we're going to

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1 discuss or that we're going to analyze in the
2 PEIS will come out of this process, this open
3 scoping process that we have with you. So we
4 don't expect this to be the full sleet, we
5 just know that these are some of the
6 questions that we've already identified as
7 areas we would like to hear comment on.
8 So areas like how, when and where to
9 lease. Examples should we be considering
10 holding scheduled lease sales the way we do
11 for oil and gas, or should we be holding
12 those sales during times when the market is
13 higher so that we are maximizing that fair
14 market value of the bonus bid.
15 Where should we be considering leasing
16 or not to lease based on that landscape level
17 view approach that we have.
18 Does our current unsuitability criteria
19 which are a set of screens that we use to
20 identify areas that we do not want to see
21 coal leasing consideration, are those screens
22 adequate for addressing those questions of
23 where or where not to lease?
24 Fair return. This is another question
25 that we would definitely like to get your

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1 input on. There are three streams of revenue
2 from the Federal Coal Program, bonus bids,
3 rents and royalties. Are they adequately
4 securing a fair return for the American
5 public? How should those components be
6 calculated in the overall picture of the fair
7 return? And should externalities be
8 considered as part of that calculation? And
9 if so, what and how should we do that?
10 Climate impacts. How can we best
11 measure and assess the climate impacts of
12 continued Federal coal production and
13 transportation and combustion? What are
14 potential substitution effects that may occur
15 to any changes that we make to our program?
16 Will we see increased production from
17 non-Federal lands?
18 How may BLM best ensure no unnecessary
19 and undue degradation of public lands due to
20 climate change impacts? And how do we
21 mitigate or account for those impacts? And
22 does the program, or how does the program
23 relate to the nation's overall climate
24 objectives as well as its energy and security
25 needs?

17

1 Of course, there are other impacts from
2 Federal coal production and transportation
3 and combustion. And what are those impacts
4 or effects on the other resources? Examples
5 of air quality or water quality, wildlife,
6 other land uses.
7 How are the impacts from mining,
8 combusting of Federal coal adequately
9 mitigated? And should standard mitigation be
10 considered at this programmatic level that
11 we're looking at here in addition to the
12 project-by-project level that we currently
13 look at those mitigation standards.
14 Socioeconomic considerations.
15 Obviously there is a number of socioeconomic
16 factors that go into a program of this size
17 and of this scale. And does our current
18 program adequately account for some of those
19 externalities that are related to the
20 production including environmental and social
21 impacts? How does our program and the
22 pricing of Federal coal affect state,
23 regional and national economies, including
24 the job markets and energy markets in
25 general?

18

1 And finally, what is the impact of the
2 program alternatives that we might develop
3 out of this analysis on the nation's
4 projected fuel mix and cost of electricity?
5 Exports is another topic that has
6 certainly been at the forefront of a lot of
7 the coal discussions lately and we would like
8 to hear input on this as well.
9 How should we consider actual or
10 projected exports in our leasing decisions?
11 And what potential mechanisms could we use to
12 appropriately evaluate that potential?
13 We haven't seen a lot of export over
14 the last several decades, but it's growing,
15 so how do we look at that, knowing that it's
16 more potential right now than based on some
17 of the actual figures.
18 Energy needs. You can't talk about
19 coal without talking about energy. How does
20 our program support fulfilling the energy
21 needs of the United States? How does the
22 program and pricing of Federal coal impact on
23 electricity generation, particularly in light
24 of some of the other regulatory influences
25 that are out there right now?

19

1 And finally, what other sources of
2 energy supply, including increased efficiency
3 of existing technology, are projected to be
4 available?
5 So these are all some of the questions
6 that we'd really like to get your feedback
7 on. And with that, I'm going to turn it back
8 over to our facilitator, Katie, and we will
9 get into our comment phase. So thank you
10 very much.
11 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you, Al. Before
12 we get started on the commenting portion of
13 the meeting, just going to go over a few
14 notes about the process and objectives for
15 today's meeting.
16 First of all, my name is Katie
17 Patterson, and I'm with Environmental
18 Management and Planning Soluations, also
19 known as EMPSI. And my job today is to help
20 make sure that your input is heard and
21 incorporated into the programmatic EIS.
22 This public scoping period lasts until
23 July 28th, and comments received after that
24 scoping period will still be considered in
25 the EIS and will also be incorporated into

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1 the scoping report as practicable.
2 My job is also to ensure that we hold
3 this meeting today in a civil and inclusive
4 manner. All comments are valuable and I
5 think we all know how hard it can be to get
6 up and stand up in front of a group of people
7 and share your input, so therefore I ask that
8 we can agree to some ground rules.
9 First of all, let's be respectful of
10 each other and diverse opinions. We ask that
11 you keep your clapping and jeering down. Not
12 only can it be disrupting to the meeting, but
13 it also delays us from getting to hear
14 additional comments from people who came here
15 to speak today.
16 Remember that everyone does have a
17 right to their opinion and it's okay to
18 disagree, that is, after all, what makes
19 American great.
20 And again, if you have any special
21 needs, for example, if you can't come up to
22 the microphone, but would like to speak,
23 please feel free to find someone with a name
24 badge and we'll be to happy to help. We have
25 a roving microphone that can come to you in

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1 the audience if you need.
2 As Al mentioned, this is a scoping
3 meeting in support of the Federal Coal
4 Program, PEIS, governed under the National
5 Environmental Policy Act. Scoping is a
6 valuated term and it refers to the early and
7 open process for identifying issues, actions,
8 alternatives and impacts that should be
9 considered in EIS.
10 This is a programmatic EIS. And a
11 programmatic EIS is a formal opportunity for
12 extensive public input and comment. It
13 evaluates the effects of a broad program such
14 as the possible reforming of the Federal Coal
15 Program.
16 If you have more questions about this
17 process, there is a poster in the side of the
18 room that lays out some more of the steps of
19 the process. And of course, BLM staff in
20 attendance can answer questions about the
21 process as well.
22 While the format of today's meeting is
23 similar to the listening sessions that were
24 held last year, it is different in a few
25 ways. The purpose of this meeting is to help

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1 define the scope of the PEIS and inform the
2 analysis of that PEIS. Helpful comments are
3 ones that combine data or information about
4 issues that should be analyzed in the PEIS,
5 or specific concerns that should be assessed.
6 I want to make clear that no decisions
7 will be made at today's meeting. We are at
8 the beginning of a process that could take up
9 to three years, and there will be numerous
10 opportunities for public involvement
11 throughout that process.
12 All comments count equally regardless
13 of the number of times that they are heard or
14 received, so it's less like a voting process
15 and really we are just asking for each
16 person's comment.
17 All input received during this scoping
18 period will be reviewed, analyzed and
19 included in a scoping report that will be
20 published later this fall.
21 I want to also introduce our court
22 reporter who is here today, Deb. She is
23 going to be producing a transcript of today's
24 meeting, so it will be recorded in that
25 manner.

23

1 And as a reminder, we are also live
2 streaming over the web.
3 I'll make a quick note about the
4 speaking process. This is similar to the
5 guidelines that you may have heard when you
6 received your speaking card and then we will
7 be able to get started.
8 We do want to accommodate as many
9 people as possible today. We have given out
10 about 30 speaking cards so far and we'll be
11 continuing to give them out throughout the
12 day to anybody that would like to speak.
13 In order to accomplish this, we have
14 the following process. We did distribute
15 speaker cards on a first come, first serve
16 basis. If you want to speak, but do not have
17 a card, please go back to the table, the
18 speaker card table at the back of the room to
19 get one.
20 Each speaker card has a number in the
21 upper right-hand corner, and it's your ticket
22 to speak. So make sure you hold onto it once
23 you receive that card. We will be calling
24 people up in order or their numbers in groups
25 of five at a time.

24

1 When your number is called, you can
2 proceed up to the microphones. We have two
3 microphones at the front of the room.
4 Microphone 1 is here on my left with Amy and
5 we have chairs reserved for each group of 5
6 as they get called up. Microphone number 2
7 is on my right with Molly. Amy and Molly
8 will be helping you without when you get down
9 to the microphone. We also do have a
10 cordless microphone, so again, if you cannot
11 make it up to the microphone, just raise your
12 hand when your number is called, and we will
13 be happy to bring it to you.
14 We do ask that you, you have to be
15 present in order to speak. So if you are
16 going to leave and come back, please make
17 sure that you give plenty of time before you
18 anticipate being called up. We do also want
19 to hear directly from you, so as neat as
20 technology can be, please don't bring up your
21 cell phone for a person commenting through
22 Skype or Face Time or anything. We would
23 like to hear from you in person.
24 When you begin your comment, please
25 state your name and the organization that you

25

1 are representing, and speak clearly and
2 slowly into the microphone for our court
3 reporter.
4 We have the microphones facing forward
5 and this is especially important not only so
6 that our panel can hear you more clearly, but
7 also so that the court reporter can
8 accurately capture your comments.
9 Each person will have a maximum of
10 three minutes to speak, which will be
11 indicated by a digital count down timer on
12 each of these two screens. The timer looks
13 like this. When it gets to zero, it's going
14 to play a little chime. I know it can get a
15 bit annoying, sorry about that, that's just
16 how the timer works. But it also helps as a
17 reminder to please go ahead and wrap up your
18 comment at that time.
19 If people respect the three minute
20 limit, that will also help us make sure that
21 we can hear as many commentors today as
22 possible. So the timer is here to just help
23 you keep track of your time.
24 If you do hit your three minute limit,
25 we are not going to jump up and cut you off

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1 in the middle of a sentence. So don't worry
2 about that, go ahead and finish your thought.
3 If you do keep going on after that, we
4 will ask you to take your seat out of respect
5 for the other attendees.
6 We are going to accommodate as many
7 speakers as time allows today. However,
8 receipt of the speaker card does not
9 guarantee your opportunity to speak.
10 Based on the number of folks we have
11 signed up so far, I'm very confident that we
12 will be able to hear from everyone who is
13 here today.
14 Speaking times cannot be taken by
15 multiple recipients, so please don't take
16 multiple cards and give them to one person
17 and have six minutes. Each person is just
18 three minutes per person.
19 If you have written comments that you
20 are speaking from, we encourage you to leave
21 those with us as well. We have a comment box
22 at our commenting station in the back corner
23 of the room. You can submit any written
24 comments, not just ones that you use to
25 speak.

27

1 And there is information there about
2 how you can submit your comments after
3 today's meeting.
4 In the interest of time today, there is
5 no need to reiterate comments that have
6 already been made. If you would like to come
7 up and simply state your support for someone
8 else's comment, you are welcome to come up
9 and just say "ditto" or whatever you would
10 like to express that support.
11 Lastly, we do have a long meeting
12 schedule today and our panelists have been
13 very gracious to come, but they may need to
14 go out and take a quick break from time to
15 time. So if they step down off the stage,
16 just know that they will be back shortly and
17 let's be understanding of that, please.
18 I'm going to turn it back over to
19 Barbara to introduce a member of our
20 Congressional delegation.
21 MS. BARBARA EGGERS: Thank you, Katie.
22 So I'd like to introduce Jeremy Honhold who
23 is here with U.S. Congressman's Keith
24 Rothfu's office. We appreciate you taking
25 the time here today.

28

1 JEREMY HONHOLD: Good afternoon. My
2 name is Jeremy Honhold. I am speaking on
3 behalf of Congressman Keith Rothfus. Since
4 the Congressman could not join us today, he
5 asked that I convey his concern that changes
6 to the Federal coal leasing program could
7 further damage the already struggling coal
8 industry.
9 As we all know, anti-coal regulations
10 have contributed to the loss of thousands of
11 jobs in the coal industry. Roughly 40
12 percent of U.S. coal comes from federal lands
13 the prospect that additional red tape and
14 prices artificially inflated by the federal
15 government could impact this significant
16 segment of domestic coal production should
17 worry all who support good jobs, affordable
18 energy and vibrant U.S. industry.
19 As you consider possible changes to the
20 Federal Coal Leasing Program, Congressman
21 Rothfus urges you to be mindful of the
22 overwhelming benefits provided to the
23 American people. The coal industry supports
24 family-sustaining jobs nationwide and fuels a
25 significant portion of our country's energy

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1 supply. Any efforts to reduce the amount of
2 coal produced on federal lands would have a
3 significant and negative impact on American
4 jobs and our energy security.
5 As you know, under Secretarial Order
6 3338, the Federal government has imposed a
7 moratorium on further coal lease sales
8 pending completion of the Programmatic
9 Environmental Impact Statement. In doing so,
10 BLM is putting 65,000 jobs at risk and
11 threatening further hardship in coal
12 communities.
13 As representative from a district with
14 a long history of mining, and one that has
15 suffered as a result of Washington's
16 job-killing policies, Congressman Rothfus
17 cannot sit silently as regulators threaten to
18 impose further hardships on the American
19 people.
20 Though Pennsylvania's 12th District
21 does not contain large Federal land tracts,
22 it is home to many miners, equipment
23 suppliers and other firms that depend on a
24 healthy coal industry for their livelihoods.
25 Accordingly, we are concerned that any

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1 additional regulations from Federal agencies
2 that seem designed to keep coal in the
3 ground. These regulations have caused
4 lasting damage to the industry nationwide and
5 eliminated family-sustaining jobs in
6 communities from Appalachia to the west
7 coast.
8 On behalf of the Congressman, I'd like
9 to thank you for the opportunity to deliver
10 my remarks today.
11 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you, Jeremy. We
12 are going to go ahead and get started with
13 the public commenting portion of the meeting
14 now. So group number 1 through 5 come down
15 to microphone number 1. Group 6 through 10
16 please come to microphone number 2. We will
17 start with speaker number one on microphone
18 1.
19 JOSHUA MANTELL: My name is Joshua
20 Mantell. I'm the Carbon Management Campaign
21 Manager for the Wilderness Society. Thank
22 you to Director Kornze, the Department of
23 Interior, the Bureau of Land Management, for
24 the opportunity to speak here today about the
25 Federal Coal Program and the need for reform.

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1 The Federal Coal Program is broken.
2 That's not just me saying that. That's what
3 reports from the Government Accountability
4 Office, the Department of the Interior,
5 Inspector General and numerous other advisors
6 have said over the last 30 years.
7 You have listened and we thank you for
8 hearing those calls. The question now is
9 what do we do about this. There are a
10 multitude of issues that stretch back long
11 before this administration that need to be
12 resolved.
13 Number one, we are currently leasing
14 coal at the behest of companies and the coal
15 industry. We need federal land managers and
16 experts to be in charge of where, when and
17 how we lease coal.
18 Two, federal taxpayers are not
19 receiving their fair share for the use of
20 their land and resources. Right now coal
21 companies are paying effective royalty rate
22 of 4.9 percent according to one study, and 90
23 percent of coal leases have a single bidder
24 since 1990. We need to raise the royalty
25 rate for surface mined coal, and raise the

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1 minimum bid so that we are receiving what is
2 due.
3 Three, the impacts of coal on the land,
4 water, local communities and our climate are
5 not being accounted for at any point during
6 the leasing process. These impacts should be
7 accounted for and mitigated before a lease is
8 approved.
9 And four, there is a terrible record of
10 reclaiming old mines. We should not be
11 leasing to companies that have a poor track
12 record of cleaning up land. This is why a
13 comprehensive look of the entire coal program
14 is so important. We cannot fix these
15 problems without a clear review. We know the
16 problems exist and that work needs to be done
17 to find solutions.
18 But the fact is that the current coal
19 program is costing taxpayers, hurting our
20 share of lands and damaging our climate.
21 These lands and the resources underneath
22 belong to all of us. We all deserve a say in
23 how these resources are managed.
24 It's also incumbent on us to remember
25 that these shared resources don't just affect

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our lands. They affect our health, our budget and our shared planet. What worked for the Federal Coal Program in 1984 after the last review, which was before I was born, by the way, not to mention 1920 when the Act was passed, does not necessarily work in 2016.

We have some new technologies, like renewable energy, that is getting cheaper and more prevalent every day.

We understand so much more about climate change and we know we have to do something about it now. And Americans are valuing our shared lands for so much more, with the Department of Interior reporting contributed $45 million in economic output for recreation and conservation just last year. These are the values that should drive our public lands decision.

Thank you again for your important work on this issue and I thank you for your time.

LARRY SELTWEIGER: I'm Larry Seltweiger and I'm president and CEO of Penn Future, a state wide organization committed to a clean energy economy and sustainable communities.

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Since 1971 I've been involved in various levels around the issue of coal. I worked for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and oversaw a $200 million program in the '70s to reclaim strip mines in Pennsylvania.

And it's been my experience that many communities in this state and across the country have found themselves without the jobs, pensions or thriving economies that they were promised by big coal companies that went bust.

Communities here and throughout the nation have struggled to survive with scarred and subsided lands, poisoned waters and wide spread and severe ecological damage from coal mined on our public lands, often in a single bidder arrangement, causes great harm to the communities while ships go to China to produce cheap goods to undercut U.S. workers and harm our economy.

I believe that our coal dependence over the past cannot be our future. Simply stated, it's incongruent with protecting the planet.

Reforms of the leasing and production

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of coal on our national public lands and tribal lands are long overdue. They have not been updated for 30 years and they reflect an urgent priority for any carbon emissions.

Government and independent investigators say American taxpayers are being short-changed because of the Federal Coal Program's flaws. These include inconsistencies in estimating coals, fair market value and failure to consider value of exporting the coal.

A 2012 independent report estimates that U.S. Taxpayers have lost nearly 30 billion in revenue over the last 30 years because BLM has failed to get fair market value in the coal mined just in the Powder River Basin.

As coal companies declare bankruptcy, including even giants like Peabody, American taxpayers are on the hook literally for billions of dollars to clean up and reclaim vast expanses of public lands. Pennsylvania is home to the largest longwall mining operation and the largest coking facilities in the nation, yet we have over 3,000 miles

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of streams and rivers that have been polluted by mine drainage, and we live with one-third of the abandoned mine lands in the United States.

We have seen the old story played over and over again. Coal companies give single bid sweetheart deals, but go bankrupt anyways. And clearly today science is telling us that the problem is much worse than these localized impacts, as coal generated electricity is a leading cause of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change.

I would like to point out that our President, this week, is meeting with the head of Canada and also Mexico to cut our emissions by 50 percent and that's not possible if we continue to lease coal in this country. Thank you.

MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.

AUTUMN HANNA: Good afternoon. My name is Autumn Hanna and I'm Senior Program Director at Taxpayers For Common Sense, a national non-partisan budget watchdog organization that for the last two decades has worked to achieve sound fiscal policy

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1 across the federal government.
2 I'm especially pleased to provide
3 comments to the Bureau of Land Management on
4 the Federal Coal Program here in my home
5 town. The BLM leases coal owned by all
6 federal taxpayers and the management of the
7 Federal Coal Program is an important issue
8 here in Pittsburgh and across the country.
9 For the last 15 years I have worked
10 with Taxpayers For Common Sense to actively
11 ensure that taxpayers receive a fair return
12 on all resources developed on federal lands
13 and waters, from hard rock minerals, oil, gas
14 and coal to wind and solar.
15 Coal is a central part of our nation's
16 energy mix and over the last decade, the BLM
17 managed leases that produced approximately
18 4.3 billion tons of coal, resulting in $9.5
19 billion in revenue collections by the United
20 States.
21 These funds are an important source of
22 revenue for the country. And while the
23 Department of Interior is legally required to
24 provide a fair return to taxpayers for the
25 development of the coal we all own, the

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1 leasing program has been plagued with
2 problems. Further, it fails to meet the
3 goals set forth during the last review under
4 the Reagan Administration.
5 In 2013 my organization released a
6 study on fair market value of federal coal.
7 We found that the current coal program was in
8 need of significant reform and responsible
9 for billions in taxpayer losses.
10 For example, by supplanting the
11 competitive system envisioned by Congress
12 more than 40 years ago, the current Lease by
13 Application system has failed taxpayers. The
14 system improperly distorts the valuation of
15 lease tracts, brings in significantly reduced
16 bids, and shrouds crucial information in
17 secrecy.
18 There's little, if any, competition
19 under the leasing program. Incredibly, the
20 Government Accountability Office found that
21 90 percent of lease sales in the Powder River
22 Basin from 1990 to 2013 has only one bidder.
23 The game is essentially rigged: under the
24 current system, individual companies often
25 draw the tracts for leasing themselves.

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1 In the absence of competition, the BLM
2 must accurately calculate the fair market
3 value of federal coal. Here, too, the BLM
4 has failed.
5 Before determining the fair market
6 value, the Secretary of Interior must provide
7 an opportunity for public comments. But it
8 is impossible to provide feedback when the
9 BLM refuses to share its valuation data or
10 methodology. Final lease sale numbers are
11 often undervalued and can be used as
12 comparables for new tracts, locking in a
13 rolling system undervalued leases and
14 taxpayer losses.
15 Finally, changes in the marketplace must
16 be considered when calculating fair market
17 value since coal exports to foreign markets
18 have more than doubled in the last ten years.
19 As we detailed in our comments to DOI last
20 year, coal valuation at the initial point of
21 sale may not truly capture the value of the
22 taxpayers' resource.
23 The BLM has a responsibility to
24 taxpayers to ensure they are fully
25 compensated for the sale of all public

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1 resources. In the face of an ever-rising $19
2 trillion federal debt, taxpayers can afford
3 nothing less.
4 Thank you for the opportunity to
5 present comments here today.
6 JIM LYON: Good afternoon. I'm Jim
7 Lyon, Vice President, National Widelife
8 Federation, a national organization with more
9 than 6 million members and supporters and
10 federation family of 50 state affiliate
11 organizations.
12 Two weeks ago our state affiliates
13 unanimously approved a resolution calling for
14 a comprehensive reform of the Federal Coal
15 Program. We will be submitting extensive
16 technical comments before the deadline.
17 So I'm just going to hit on a couple of
18 high points today. The Federal Coal Program
19 is broken from soup to nuts, and we encourage
20 you as you approach this to look at it
21 comprehensively and cohesively. Please look
22 at the program from cradle to grave; lease
23 site, bid applications, royalty, mine plan
24 adequacy, reclamation bonding, reclamation
25 integrity, post mining productivity, bond

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1 release and of course carbon reduction.
2 On a couple of these points, the
3 leasing application process is neither
4 competitive nor strategic, and as we know the
5 12 and a half percent royalty is woefully
6 below fair market. The study found that coal
7 leases have attracted only one bidder at
8 rocks bottom prices.
9 Recently the Council of Economic
10 Advisors reported that companies used
11 questionable loophole. As Larry just pointed
12 out, we just lost $30 billion in royalty
13 rates. So a future program must ensure that
14 these sites are competitive bids, royalties
15 must be at fair market and close loopholes.
16 And the whole point of this is the
17 mine. Mining performance, the leases show
18 failure fail to reclaim. Our report recently
19 found that of the 450 square miles of mined
20 land in the Powder River Basin, only 46
21 square miles have been fully reclaimed to
22 final bond to these standards. It's doubtful
23 these lands are going to be fully reclaimed
24 because of damaged water. How far
25 reclamation has lagged behind performance and

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1 company's financial health is in trouble.
2 This is not ultimate use, this is permanent
3 damage.
4 As you know, the majority of these,
5 federal coal lies under prairies, fragile
6 habitat that's home to imperiled sage grouse,
7 mule deer, elk, pronghorn and 300 other
8 species. Can take decades to reclaim these
9 mines to pre-mining conditions.
10 Another recent study we did of wildlife
11 herds in and outside of fossil fuel
12 extraction zones of the Powder River showed
13 that only one out of 8 mule deer herds and
14 only 3 out of 11 pronghorn herds are healthy.
15 So the coal leasing must not result in
16 permanent damage to public lands and water.
17 It must include repercussions for wildlife.
18 I'd go on about bonding, but we all
19 know that's a shredded program that needs
20 seriously to be overhauled so that there is a
21 safety net. So thank you.
22 MITCHELL C. HESCOX: Good afternoon.
23 Thank you for allowing me to speak. I am
24 Mitchell Hescox, I am president and CEO of
25 Evangelical Environmental Network. I'm a

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1 native of Pennsylvania, currently reside
2 here.
3 EEN, or Evangelical Environmental
4 Network, represents over 2 and a half million
5 pro-life Christians around the country who
6 take an action and support some clean energy,
7 climate change and clean energy future. We
8 also represent over 70,000 people here in
9 this Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
10 For us, dealing with energy and
11 pollution is what we call a matter of life,
12 the impacts it has on our children and our
13 entire population.
14 I'd like to state for the record that I
15 agree with the first four speakers, and they
16 could have had my comments written down, so I
17 will just tell stories then.
18 I'm probably one of the few people here
19 that actually live in a coal community. I
20 actually worked in the coal industry for 14
21 years and grew up in a little town called
22 Lamburg (sp), Pennsylvania. Less than a 100
23 yards from my back yard were unreclaimed coal
24 strip mines. They were state owned lands.
25 Still to this day they have never been

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1 reclaimed.
2 Just a couple miles on top of a place
3 in Cambria County, which was called Jackson
4 Ridge, my dad's favorite hunting ground. It
5 was mined back in the '60s as well and to
6 this day has never been reclaimed. It spews
7 out toxic mine waste into the forest,
8 destroying trees, wildlife and pollution that
9 affects our children right now.
10 So in support of the comments and what
11 I would like to make are two-fold. One is
12 was mentioned, we can no longer afford or
13 allow self-bonding by any coal company. The
14 amount of bankruptcies are there, are
15 witnessed around the country. It is that
16 lack of bonding and the externalities that
17 affect, has to be a way to accumulate those
18 external costs.
19 For years both utility industry and the
20 coal companies themselves have privatized the
21 profits of our coal industry and externalized
22 the cost on our children's lungs, hearts and
23 brains. Not to mention the effects of
24 climate disruption and other things.
25 So I would urge you and as the people

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of faith from all around this nation and the Commonwealth, let us move towards a clean, energy economy, retrain our workers, but most importantly for your benefit, let us make sure that we no longer allow mines not to be reclaimed and our waters poisoned. Thank you very much.

MS. PATTERSON: Thank you. Group 11 through 15, please come down to microphone number 1. We will move to microphone number 2 for speaker number 6.

ROBIN MANN: Hello, my name is Robin Mann and I'm a member of the Sierra Club Board of Directors and serve as Vice President. Our organization will be submitting formal comments.

So I'm speaking here on my own behalf. But I'll say that the organization is committed to driving rapid progress in confronting carbon pollution and speeding the country to a clean energy economy, 100 percent clean energy economy on behalf of our 2.4 million members and supporters.

I live in Delaware County, Pennsylvania, and I work closely with

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Environmental Justice Community in southwest Philadelphia. It is increasingly vulnerable to climate induced storm surge and sea level rise.

I'm also a grandmother of three, three small children, two of whom live in coastal Maine community coping already with sea level rise, but also seeing the future liability of the lobster and shellfish industry, its main economic mainstay under threat from carbon pollution induced ocean warming and acidification.

President Obama has shown strong leadership in confronting climate, climate change with the Climate Action Plan and his administration's emission reduction initiatives, especially the Clean Power Plan and revision of the CAFE standards.

States and cities are making significant strides with emission reduction policies and programs. Hundreds of coal-powered power plants are slated for retirement or renewable energy is coming online.

But I share the deep concern expressed

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earlier that we are not moving rapidly enough to avert catastrophic climate impacts that will most definitely burden and potentially displace the most vulnerable communities, especially low income and people of color communities, and will rob my grandchildren of their generation of the future they deserve.

The Federal Coal Leasing Program is overdue for an overhaul and is seriously flawed in numerous ways that have been mentioned. It needs taxpayer protections to be reformed, eliminate self-bonding, and it also needs climate change to be addressed formally.

In addition, the other measures that have been mentioned I will just note that given the urgency of rapid progress in transitioning the economy off fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy, BLM must evaluate the alternative of ending the program all together to a planned transition that leaves the remaining coal in the ground and remaining lands in tact with their environmental and social benefits and provides a transition for the communities and

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workers dependent on it. Thank you very much.

MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.

PATRICE TOMCIK: Hello. My name is Patrice Tomcik, and I live in Gibsonia, PA, about 30 minutes north of Pittsburgh. I'm here as a mother of two young boys, member of grass roots organization Mars Care Group, a member of Protect Our Children Coalition, and a member of Mom's Clean Air Force.

What all these organizations have in common is that we fight for our children's health. I'm here today because I know that every stage of the coal life cycle impacts human health and the pollution from the mining and burning of coal in power plants has an even greater impact on children because they are vulnerable population.

Developing babies and children are vulnerable because they have body systems that are not mature and are still developing. The lungs and brains continue to develop until the early 20s and exposure to harmful pollution can cause damage to these organ systems.

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1 As a parent, I'm concerned about the
2 harmful pollution created from the burning of
3 coal and power plants in my community. I
4 live downwind from one of the largest coal
5 plants.
6 I'm particularly concerned about what
7 my children are breathing in. The pollutants
8 that are emitted are particulate matter,
9 nitrogen oxide, sulfur dioxide and dangerous
10 heavy metals such as mercury, lead and there
11 are many more.
12 This pollution can effect our
13 children's health by causing ground level
14 ozone response, which affects lung tissue,
15 cause respiratory diseases, adversely affect
16 the normal lung development of children and
17 exacerbate asthma attacks. Asthma is a
18 leading cause of missed school days among
19 children ages 5 to 17.
20 Exposure to mercury is a particular
21 concern for pregnant women and nursing
22 mothers and young children because mercury is
23 a toxic heavy metal that can cause brain
24 damage, impairs learning and growth.
25 Even people who do not develop illness

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1 directly from whole foods find their health
2 impacted due to coal's contribution to carbon
3 dioxide and causing climate change.
4 The health risk from climate change are
5 especially serious for children, elderly
6 those who are immune compromised. The direct
7 effects of climate change include increased
8 illness and deaths from extreme weather and
9 heat stress. Children are especially
10 vulnerable to heat exposure because they
11 don't have fully developed temperature
12 regulation mechanisms within their bodies.
13 The indirect effects of climate change
14 are malnutrition, food insecurity, anxiety,
15 depression and increase of insect-borne
16 diseases like the zika virus.
17 The BLM must consider the climate
18 consequences and health impacts on our
19 children and future generations of leasing
20 public lands for fossil fuel extraction. We
21 need to start developing the capacity today
22 to generate energy from clean, safe and
23 renewable sources for the health of our
24 children today and future generations. Thank
25 you.

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1 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.
2 ED PERRY: My name is Ed Perry. I'm an
3 aquatic biologist working for the National
4 Wildlife Federation, on their clean energy
5 and climate change campaigns. The monetary
6 benefits of mining coal are well known, but
7 what I hope your EIS will focus on is the
8 considerable cost to human health, our
9 economy, our nation's wildlife by our
10 government's continued support for coal
11 mining on public lands.
12 Climate scientists have firmly
13 established that fossil fuels are causing the
14 planet to heat up, lead to massive wildfires,
15 more intense hurricanes, loss of wildlife and
16 public health problems. These costs
17 generated by these environmental disasters
18 are being borne by the people who are being
19 harmed, not by the companies who are creating
20 this harm.
21 Already, wildlife are seeing the
22 effects of climate change all across our
23 great country. And here in Pennsylvania
24 scientists forecast that our state tree, the
25 hemlock, our state fish, the brook trout, and

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1 our state bird, the rough grouse, will be
2 gone in the next 90 years unless we take
3 action to reduce carbon pollution.
4 This costs and this loss of our
5 biological heritage needs to be considered
6 and someone should be bearing that cost.
7 The adverse impacts on human health are
8 also substantial. Just one example, every
9 body of water in our country is contaminated
10 with mercury. And here in Pennsylvania, the
11 State of Pennsylvania lists an additional 86
12 streams and lakes, thousands of stream miles
13 and thousands of acres of lakes that are so
14 contaminated they recommend women of
15 childbearing age only consume one meal of
16 fish per month.
17 Finally, I hope you consider what the
18 impacts on our public lands is costing us.
19 As you well know, coal use is declining
20 rapidly. And here in Pennsylvania coal
21 companies going out of business are infamous
22 for not cleaning up after themselves. And as
23 a result, we have thousands of miles of
24 streams that are devoid of aquatic life that
25 we will have to bear the cost of restoring.

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1 So question is if western coal
2 companies go bankrupt, is your bond
3 sufficient to restore our public lands? Or
4 once again are we going to be stuck with a
5 bill for that cleanup?
6 And finally, when we consider the
7 direction our country is going and the
8 emphasis the President is putting on moving
9 to clean, renewable energy, you have to
10 wonder why we are continuing to allow coal
11 mining on our public lands. You have to
12 wonder why we are continuing to do that.
13 And as I understand it, this EIS is
14 only going to focus on future leases, but any
15 business today, when it's recognized that
16 they are causing damage to public health or
17 pollution problems, they have to clean up
18 their act. So I strongly recommend that this
19 EIS, whatever you come up with, also applies
20 to existing coal operations. Thank you.
21 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.
22 KHARI MOSLEY: Good afternoon. My name
23 is Khari Mosley. I'm the Pennsylvania
24 Regional Program Manager for Blue Green
25 Alliance. In 2006 the United Steelworkers

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1 and the Sierra Club formed the Blue Green
2 Alliance with the belief that creating good
3 jobs and protecting the environment were not
4 mutually exclusive. We can and must do both.
5 The Blue Green Alliance believes that
6 the concentrated overall of this program is
7 not only an opportunity to fix a broken
8 system, but also an opportunity to take a
9 hard look at how coal-dependent communities,
10 regional economies and individual workers can
11 transition to new economic models.
12 The review of the federal coal leasing
13 systems must evaluate BLM authority and
14 opportunities, as well as actions of other
15 agencies and Congress could take, to help
16 ensure a just transition for workers and
17 communities to a clean energy economy. Such
18 actions should include robust investment in
19 community economic development, protection of
20 worker livelihoods, and development of new
21 tax revenue sources for local economies.
22 A combination of factors is forging a
23 new reality where lower gas prices, rising
24 coal costs, and the competitive cost of
25 renewable energy sources are driving a shift

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1 to clean energy. The new energy technologies
2 coming on-line will create hundreds of
3 thousands of new jobs and will continue to do
4 so in communities across the country. But,
5 as our nation makes this transition, some
6 workers and communities may be impacted.
7 Coal mines, coal-fired power plants,
8 coal transportation infrastructure, coal
9 handling facilities and their associated
10 supply and maintenance industries are often
11 the lifeblood of small towns, providing
12 significant employment and contributing to
13 their communities' tax base. Moving toward
14 clean energy could result in fewer jobs at a
15 local level and a reduction in the tax stream
16 going to local governments in these
17 communities.
18 Therefore, we must consider what
19 authority and opportunities the federal
20 government possesses, having succeeded in
21 capturing a fair return for extracted coal,
22 to ensure that some portion of that increased
23 return is put to use ensuring a just
24 transition for workers, communities and
25 regional economies occurs.

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1 BLM has sought comment as to whether
2 the extraction of fossil resources from
3 federal Lands is consistent with U.S. climate
4 goals.
5 In order to better understand and
6 manage carbon emissions from public lands,
7 the U.S. Geological Survey intends to
8 establish and maintain a public database to
9 account for annual carbon emissions from
10 fossil fuels developed on federal lands. The
11 Blue Green Alliance supports this effort to
12 ensure a transparent process that accounts
13 for costs, which would otherwise be
14 externalized.
15 In summary, we thank the Bureau of Land
16 Management and the U.S. Department of
17 Interior for seeking to improve the federal
18 coal leasing system and look forward to
19 continuing to work with your agencies on the
20 eventual implementation of a modernized and
21 improved system both to serve the interests
22 of American communities, workers, taxpayers
23 and our national environment. Thank you.
24 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.
25 PATRICK GRENTER: Hello, my name is

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1 Patrick Grenter. I'm the Executive Director
2 of Center for Coalfield Justice. I will be
3 the first person to say "ditto." So many
4 people have come up and spoke on issues that
5 I think are important.
6 Particularly, I want to echo statements
7 made by people for frontline communities.
8 The Center for Coalfield Justice works
9 primarily in southwestern Pennsylvania,
10 Washington. We are an environmental justice
11 organization that work on issues primarily
12 related to underground coal mining and
13 hydraulic fracturing.
14 Washington and Greene Counties are
15 communities where almost no one owns the
16 rights to their coal. Greene County just in
17 the past couple years was the third largest
18 coal-producing county in the country, home to
19 the largest underground coal mine in the
20 country. These are frontline communities
21 directly impacted by coal every single day
22 for people who live there.
23 So not having the rights to their coal
24 means so many people are forced to live with
25 the harms of the coal industry, destroyed

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1 streams, displaced communities, reduced tax
2 base, destroyed property values.
3 These are facts of lives for people who
4 have to live in and around coal.
5 Now, we, as American taxpayers, have an
6 opportunity here with the BLM to reform this
7 coal program and to change the view. If we
8 do decide to continue leasing, I think there
9 is a serous examination, particularly given
10 that there is a 20 year backlog of leases to
11 eliminate future coal lease entirely,
12 particularly if we are truthful in our
13 concern about climate change.
14 If we do decide to continue coal
15 leasing, there must be increased royalties.
16 Coal companies should have to pay the full
17 cost of their activities. There is no such
18 thing as affordable, cheap coal.
19 The question is who pays for it? What
20 we have seen all too often is communities
21 living in and around coal are forced to pay
22 for that cleanup or forced to pay for the
23 activities of coal through health costs and
24 other activities like that.
25 What we have seen is those liabilities

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1 and external costs of coal are internalized
2 on companies, they cannot compete with
3 renewables, and this process is just slowing
4 the effect the transition in the economy,
5 which is essential for our country's future.
6 Thank you.
7 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you. Group 16
8 through 20 come up to microphone number 2
9 now. We will move to microphone number 1 for
10 speaker number 11.
11 LAURA BURNS: Thank you for the
12 opportunity to speak today. My name is Laura
13 Burns. I'm a field organization with Moms
14 Clean Air Force. I'm also a toxicologist, a
15 Republican and a conservative Christian. On
16 top of all that, I'm a parent.
17 And as a parent, I understand these
18 decisions you face are often quite heavy, but
19 I also ask that while you make these
20 decisions you consider the health of the
21 children who will be affected by them for the
22 reminder of their lives.
23 President Obama has publicly
24 acknowledged the need for America to reduce
25 our emissions. In addition, to overusing

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1 fossil fuels that pollute our atmosphere by
2 adding climate driving chemicals, we have
3 chosen to turn a blind eye to the
4 environmental damage that is created. For
5 too long, piecemeal evaluations and
6 lease-by-lease comparisons to global
7 greenhouse gas concentrations misrepresent
8 the nature of a very real climate crisis and
9 thereby downplay the extent to which coal
10 leasing contributes to the problem.
11 We can no longer accept this naive view
12 of what coal pollution does to our
13 environment, our health and our economies.
14 When our environment is damaged, our climate
15 is damaged.
16 Already, 2016 had been the hottest year
17 on record. Pollution from coal is a great
18 contributor. In January 2015 a peer-reviewed
19 study in Nature concluded that in order to
20 avoid the worst effects of climate change,
21 one third of all oil reserves, half of all
22 gas reserves and more than 80 percent of coal
23 reserves worldwide must remain in the ground
24 through 2050.
25 We ask that the BLM address the evident

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1 inconsistency between the conclusions of the
2 best available climate science and the
3 agency's continued expansion of the Federal
4 Coal Program. Thank you.
5 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.
6 BILL MYERS: Can you hear me? Ladies
7 and gentlemen, Kate, I apologize --
8 MS. PATTERSON: Katie.
9 BILL MYERS: I don't have any pages,
10 anything that you haven't heard in years, but
11 I do have personal experiences, family -- Oh,
12 I'm Bill Myers, Dr. Bill Myers, from Gahanna,
13 Ohio. I assume you have never heard of
14 Gahanna before. It's an interesting name.
15 Again, thanks for your review of this
16 issue. I think it's long past and needs a
17 really hard look and I appreciate your
18 promise.
19 My little brother, his name is Patrick.
20 Very smart man. He is a gas turbine
21 engineer. An expert in electricity
22 generations from natural gas. He believes
23 that every ounce of fossil fuel on and in
24 Earth should be extracted and burned. He
25 really believes that.

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1 He believes that the current global
2 warming, which he acknowledges, is a natural
3 cycle of Earth through the ages, and is
4 influenced very little, or not at all, by
5 what man does.
6 Patrick has a wonderful wife, two fine
7 sons, four beautiful grandchildren. He
8 thinks they will all be fine for years to
9 come, comforted by electricity produced from
10 coal and natural gas, with perhaps a little
11 hydro power thrown in.
12 Patrick has recently retired from long
13 and rewarding career in the gas industry.
14 His last employment was as a plant manager
15 for American Electric Power, a plant that he
16 designed and managed in its construction and
17 operation.
18 Patrick doesn't like environmental
19 regulation. Patrick lives in West Virginia.
20 And in spite of the clear evidence to the
21 contrary, thinks that land reclamation is a
22 real and effective practice. He doesn't
23 think we need all the mountain tops.
24 I recently marked the 50th anniversary
25 of entering the practice of medicine. Most

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1 of those years were spent in a small town in
2 Ohio, family doctor, and as a clinical
3 associate professor on the faculty of the
4 Ohio State University College of Medicine.
5 During those years I cared for
6 thousands of patients, young and old, who
7 suffered intensively from diseases that
8 through the years we have learned were caused
9 or greatly worsened by air quality. What we
10 breathe has a direct effect on how long we
11 live and how well we live.
12 I, too, grew up in West Virginia. The
13 smell of burning coal meant warmth and
14 comfort in the home of my early years. There
15 was a lot we didn't know then.
16 Since then we have learned more. I
17 hope you will take into account what we have
18 learned scientifically and experiencing in
19 the decision-making. Thank you.
20 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.
21 MICHELLS DOYON: My name is Michelle
22 Doyon. I lived and outdoor recreated for 22
23 years on the western slope in Colorado and
24 Utah, and I've lived for 18 years now in
25 Western Pennsylvania.

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1 The federal coal leasing program needs
2 key reforms. We need climate protection
3 reform. The Federal Coal Program accounts
4 for roughly 40 percent of U.S. coal
5 production linking it to 13 percent of U.S.
6 greenhouse gas emissions.
7 BLM must assess the external cost that
8 mining and burning federal coal imposes on
9 society, disclose to the public and decision
10 makers how BLM's decisions to lease federally
11 owned coal affects the amount of wind and
12 solar generation available in the
13 marketplace.
14 BLM must evaluate an alternative that
15 would phase out federal coal leasing and
16 create a plan transition of the federal
17 government out of the coal leasing business.
18 Taxpayer protection reforms are needed.
19 Federal coal royalty rates are far below the
20 18.5 percent from offshore oil and gas and
21 have not changed in 30 years. BLM should
22 raise royalty rates and close loopholes that
23 allow companies to avoid paying agreed upon
24 royalty rates.
25 Artificially low coal leases directly

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1 affect energy production competition and this
2 low cost is undercutting renewable resource
3 development.
4 We need reclamation and bonding
5 reforms. In my communities that I live in,
6 Scottdale and Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania,
7 there are many locations that are adversely
8 affected by old, abandoned, unreclaimed coal
9 mines, processing sites and dumps. We call
10 on BLM to prepare a thorough Environmental
11 Impact Statement under the National
12 Environmental Policy Act that critically
13 evaluates the programs's climate and economic
14 impacts for the very first time.
15 The review must be comprehensive in
16 scope. It must be transparent with public
17 participation, and the review must
18 acknowledge the scientific consensus that the
19 vast majority of fossil fuels must remain in
20 the ground in order to avoid the worst
21 effects of climate disruption.
22 Finally, BLM has a choice in whether or
23 not to approve proposed coal leases and
24 should base their decisions on the public
25 interests, the administration's climate

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1 objectives and how severe the project's
2 environmental and climate consequences are.
3 Thank you.
4 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.
5 KARINA TOY: Hi, my name is Karina Toy,
6 and while I work as an intern for the
7 Wilderness Society, I am here today to share
8 my own personal opinions.
9 As a Seattle native, I want to first
10 off thank the BLM for hosting these hearings
11 in a diverse locations across the country. I
12 also want to applaud the Department of
13 Interior's efforts to review the Federal Coal
14 Program which as we all know is extremely
15 outdated.
16 As an avid supporter of public land for
17 legacy, it seems wrong to me that we are
18 depending on regulations created before I was
19 born, before email overtook sending mail via
20 the post office, before new technology were
21 invented and the phrase climate change became
22 part of public and everyday vernacular.
23 I think it's helpful to highlight my
24 young age, but also to emphasize the fact
25 that a lot has changed since these

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1 regulations were put in place, and it is high
2 time that they change as well.
3 I am an undergraduate student at the
4 Middlebury College where I focus my studies
5 on renewable energy across the globe. I am
6 also a U.S. Citizen who pays taxes. This is
7 not something that I resent, don't get me
8 wrong, but there are some things that I feel
9 is an important part to being a citizens and
10 the government, taxation through
11 representation.
12 However, in this contract we fail to
13 get a fair return on our tax. What the
14 government should be doing with the money
15 available to buy the citizens' security,
16 social services and to look out for the land
17 that we all share.
18 This is why I was so furious to learn
19 that the current coal leasing system doesn't
20 only encourage the development of coal from a
21 renewable technology, renewable technology
22 that will, preserve the land for generations
23 to come, but also that this development
24 generates a major loss to tax base.
25 In one city alone, taxpayers are being

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1 deprived of $730 million per year due to this
2 failure of the federal government. However,
3 we taxpayers are not the only ones affected.
4 These policies also represent a loss of
5 government revenue that could clean up this
6 environmental and economic for my generation
7 and the generations after mine who cannot be
8 here to speak have been left with.
9 It is time to support the future and
10 start thinking about those who come after us
11 instead of ourselves. These are all steps in
12 the right direction. And I thank you all so
13 much for your work.
14 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.
15 GREG KOCHANSKI: Hi. I thank you for
16 the opportunity to speak today. My name is
17 Greg Kochanski. My occupation is a
18 physicist, academic and recently a software
19 engineer. Today I'm here to represent myself
20 and my children.
21 When we start thinking about changing
22 leasing terms and royalties for coal mining,
23 it helps to distinguish between short term
24 and long term stakeholders. We know who the
25 short term stakeholders are because we can

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1 see them and they have voices, and sometimes
2 lawyers.
3 But who are the long term stakeholders?
4 They are people who mostly haven't yet been
5 born. Scientific research has established
6 that humanity must live within an overall
7 carbon budget. Keep the Earth's environment
8 within a somewhat safe range. We can allow
9 ourselves to release no more than about 500
10 billion tons of carbon dioxide from fossil
11 fuels.
12 While that is a lot, we are burning
13 coal, oil and gas at a ferocious rate, enough
14 to release more than 36 billion ton of carbon
15 dioxide every year. Simple division. 500,
16 36 gone every year. Well, it's about 14
17 years, which is a shockingly short time.
18 If we keep going at the present rate,
19 we will burn through our safety margin in
20 2029. Fortunately, if we start ramping down
21 the fossil fuel industry now, we will have a
22 bit longer.
23 If we start now and cut fossil fuel
24 lease in half by 2029, and we can continue to
25 ramp the industry down to zero carbon by

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1 about 2040.
2 And in 2040 is just about when the long
3 term starts. My children will be in their
4 40s. If I have grandchildren by then, they
5 will just be beginning their lives.
6 Some of you may think that's a crazy
7 fast schedule, but it's not my schedule.
8 It's set by the influxable laws of physics
9 and the rate at which we are burning fossil
10 fuels.
11 We are burning coal and making carbon
12 dioxide substantially faster than natural
13 processes can remove them from the biosphere.
14 Consequently, CO2 accumulates, traps
15 heat, leads to climate change and all the
16 other problems that everyone knows about.
17 The accumulation needs to stop. To do
18 that we need to make maximum use of current
19 resources. And we also need to design
20 releasing rules so that there is no
21 uncertainty about the overall fossil fuel
22 use.
23 The market must understand clearly and
24 as early as possible that fossil fuel use
25 will be heading downwards. As we give that

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1 signal, we need to give the market as much
2 freedom as possible to find the low cost
3 solution. Thank you.
4 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you. Group 21
5 through 25 can now come down to microphone
6 number 1. And we will move to speaker number
7 16 on microphone 2.
8 RANDELL WIESENMAYER: Good afternoon.
9 I'm Dr. Randell Wiesenmayer, professor at
10 West Virginia University, and I'm here
11 representing the organization 350.org and
12 Citizens Climate Lobby.
13 I thank the members of the board,
14 members of the panel, for the opportunity to
15 express my serious concerns related to coal
16 extraction on public lands. As indicated in
17 the power point at the beginning of the
18 session, a significant amount of coal is
19 being extracted from our public lands. This
20 means that a significant amount of carbon
21 dioxide, mercury, lead and other toxic
22 materials are being spewed into the
23 atmosphere at a cost of about $300 billion
24 estimated.
25 That's far more than the $68 billion

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1 that was shown up there as income generated
2 from the extraction of coal.
3 Today the carbon dioxide levels are 460
4 parts per million. That's up from 180 parts
5 per million. The ice is melting.
6 Greenland's ice caps, glaciers are
7 melting. Antartica's glaciers are melting.
8 Alpine's glaciers are melting. And according
9 to James Hanson, the current rate of melting,
10 sea level rise expected to go up or rise by
11 12 feet by the end of this century. That's
12 12 feet by the end of this century.
13 It's estimated that 2 billion people
14 are going to be displaced by the sea level
15 rises. That's far more extensive in terms of
16 the losses there than the short term gains by
17 the extraction of fossil fuels.
18 The oceans are dying. The carbon
19 dioxide levels have caused the oceans to warm
20 and acidify. This acidification is ruining
21 our reefs, which are an ecological indicator
22 of the tropical rain forest in terms of its
23 reduction of ecosystems, and at the same time
24 that plankton is being destroyed in the
25 oceans as well. Plankten, by the way, is a

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1 source of 70 percent of our oxygen that we
2 breathe.
3 In addition to this, this warming is
4 causing the melting of permafrost and we see
5 methane being released. Methane levels have
6 been recorded at that exceeding 3,000 parts
7 per billion. That's the highest rate of
8 methane that has been recorded.
9 Methane is 80 times more potent than
10 greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide is,
11 according to Michael Mann in his book "Dire
12 Predictions."
13 For the sake of future generations, we
14 must transition from fossil fuels to
15 renewable sources of energy. For the sake of
16 our eternity of Earth's ecosystems that
17 support human life on this planet, we must
18 transition from fossil fuels to renewable
19 energy sources. Keeping the coal and all
20 fossil fuels in the ground on public lands
21 will play an important role in the
22 restriction of the carbon dioxide being
23 emitted into the atmosphere. Thank you for
24 your time.
25 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.

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1 DAVE BLAIR: Hello, I'm Dave Blair.
2 And I am going to go partially to completely
3 off script because of something that you
4 asked earlier today. And that is about
5 externalities. My mother is an externality.
6 She died in 2004 of lung cancer. She never
7 smoked a cigarette in her life and the
8 doctors said it was most likely air
9 pollution.
10 Air pollution is about one-third caused
11 in this country by coal. And that is
12 something that calculators cannot understand.
13 That's something that a computer cannot
14 understand. And we, and you, have to come to
15 some way of thinking beyond that and thinking
16 as humans and as compassionate people about
17 externalities because numbers do not show
18 externalities.
19 Now I'll go on script. Okay, actually
20 after I retired, I looked around and noticed
21 so many people seemed helpless about what
22 they could do about climate change, so I
23 decided to show that net zero houses are
24 possible; two, that it can be done without
25 being ridiculously expensive; and three, show

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1 people how to do it.
2 We built it for $135 a square foot. We
3 didn't get all our solar power on line until
4 about mid July, which puts it not a full year
5 at solar power; and even so, our total cost
6 was $22.46 for the entire year. That's heat,
7 electric and hot water.
8 Now, what's that have to do with Bureau
9 of Land Management and coal? Actually has
10 everything to do with Bureau of Land
11 Management and coal. Because it shows that
12 we don't need it. There are better ways.
13 We need to put our federal tax dollars
14 and subsidies into things that work and
15 things that don't harm people, that don't
16 have externalities. And it can be done.
17 Penn Future will be giving a house tour
18 in about mid October. I live in Monaca,
19 Pennsylvania. All of you, and that means all
20 of you, too, are welcome, come to my house, I
21 will show you, I'll show you, A, it can work;
22 B, it's not that crazy expensive; and C, I'll
23 show you how to do it if you want to know.
24 Thank you.
25 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.

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1 TALIA O'BRIEN: Hello, my name is Talia
2 O'Brien. I'm with the Sierra Club. I just
3 want to thank you for this opportunity to let
4 me speak. I've never had a personal
5 experience with the effects of coal.
6 However, I don't need to have one to know the
7 negatives. The effects of coal will
8 eventually lead to an unsustainable planet,
9 and I'm sure that some of you have children,
10 and I myself would like to have children some
11 day.
12 And the things added to this planet
13 such as the burning of coal make living a
14 clean and healthy lifestyle nearly
15 impossible.
16 And as a young environmentalist, the
17 negatives that coal specifically will bring
18 will affect my generation and future
19 generations the most.
20 The extraction and burning of coal will
21 bring money to the country, okay, but how
22 much are future generations worth and how
23 much is enough? Thank you.
24 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.
25 JANE KIRCHNER: I'm Jane Kirchner. I

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1 live in Northern Virginia, and I work for the
2 National Wildlife Federation, online advocacy
3 manager. I'd like to thank the Department of
4 Interior for conducting the review of the
5 federal coal leasing program, because this
6 program has such an immense and lasting
7 impact on America's public lands, and these
8 are the lands that belong to all of us.
9 And I really appreciate also the public
10 input sessions and comment period so citizens
11 truly have an opportunity to share their
12 concerns directly with you.
13 Today, I'd like to express concerns
14 regarding the protection of wildlife and
15 water quality from the impacts of mining coal
16 on public lands. Unfortunately, the
17 resultant pollution and degradation from coal
18 mining can continue for thousands of years
19 after the coal has been extracted. Here are
20 a few examples of the impacts to consider as
21 you make reforms to the program:
22 The degradation of aquatic habitats is
23 a major impact of coal mining, may be
24 apparent many miles from a mining site.
25 Sediment contamination of surface water is

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1 common with mining. Sediment yields may
2 increase to a thousand times their former
3 level as a result of strip mining. The
4 heaviest sediment pollution of a drainage
5 normally comes within 5 to 25 years after
6 mining. And in some areas unreclaimed soil
7 piles, I'm sorry, spoil piles continue to
8 erode even 50 to 65 years after the area has
9 been mined.
10 Presence of acid-forming materials
11 exposed as a result of mining can affect
12 aquatic wildlife by eliminating habitat and
13 by causing direct destruction of some
14 species. Lesser concentrations can suppress
15 productivity, growth rate and reproduction of
16 many aquatic species. Acids, dilute
17 concentrations of heavy metals and high
18 alkalinity can cause severe damage to
19 wildlife in some areas. In fact, the
20 duration of acidic-waste pollution can be
21 long. Estimates of the time required to
22 leach exposed acidic materials in the Eastern
23 United States range from 800 to 3,000 years.
24 It is way beyond a business life cycle
25 calculation.

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1 Mule deer, pronghorn antelope, sage
2 grouse, elk, and hundreds of bird species
3 including eagles make their home in the
4 Powder River Basin of Wyoming and Montana.
5 And as you mentioned before, that is a major
6 coal region. The National Wildlife
7 Federation and Natural Resources Defense
8 Council commissioned a study of the health of
9 wildlife in this major coal producing region.
10 More than 30 percent of the mule deer and
11 pronghorn herds evaluated were found to be
12 unhealthy. Notably, the mule deer herds
13 evaluated, the only one that was found to be
14 healthy was the one living in an area without
15 any energy development within its boundaries.
16 I urge you to look beyond immediate or
17 short-term, cosmetic reclamation. Reforming
18 the Federal Coal Program must include new
19 protections, prohibitions and management
20 actions to fully protect wildlife populations
21 and the very vulnerable habitats they all
22 depend on. Thank you very much.
23 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.
24 BRIAN RONREMOELLER: Good afternoon.
25 My name is Brian Ronremoeller. I'm here on

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1 behalf of the Sierra Club, Ohio chapter,
2 175,000 members, supporters, in the Buckeye
3 State.
4 First of all, we'd just like to urge
5 BLM to consider the alternative, to end the
6 federal coal leasing program because we can
7 never fully account for all the public health
8 and environmental impacts coal leasing. In
9 Ohio we estimate that about one out of every
10 100,000 people die from coal-powered
11 pollution in our state. No number above zero
12 is an acceptable number of deaths from coal
13 pollution.
14 No number above zero is an acceptable
15 number of asthma attacks of our children in
16 our state.
17 Second of all, like to urge BLM to also
18 conduct Programmatic EIS for the development
19 of all fossil fuels on our public lands.
20 For example, there was an environmental
21 assessment, national forest to lease up to
22 30,000 acres, oil and gas, where the
23 environmental assessment issued a finding of
24 no significant impact because the climate
25 impacts were beyond the scope of that study.

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So we urge that Secretary Jewell also issue an order for Programmatic EIS for oil, gas, mine. Thank you.

MS. PATTERSON: Thank you. Group 26 through 30 can come to microphone number 2 now. We will move to speaker 21 at microphone 1.

ROBIN MARTIN: Good afternoon. Thank you for this speaking opportunity. My name is Robin Martin, and I am a Sierra Club member, Pittsburgh native, and graduated environmental biology student at Chatham University.

I'm requesting the BLM to conduct a thorough review on new coal leases that acknowledges the scientist consensus that a vast majority of unmined coal must remain in the ground to circumvent most devastating effects of climate disruption.

Continuing to issue new coal leases would be a direct contradiction to the United States' commitment to climate resolutions made during the Paris Climate Agreement to curb greenhouse gas emissions in order to achieve global temperature rise levels below

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2 degrees Celsius, or 1.5 if we are really motivated.

The United States is known for our resourcefulness, and we have a chance to be a world leader in energy innovation by phasing out coal and investing in alternative energies that preserve the health of the land and the American people.

As a daughter from a union family that includes coal miners who have lost their economic viability after the coal land has dried up, and a wife who is afraid to start a family due to environmental dangers of living within five miles of Clarion Coke Works, I implore the BLM to consider utilizing the land for cleaner, more sustainable energy options that provide environmental and economic opportunities for future generations.

We did not inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children. Thank you so much for your time and your dedication to our nation's land and energy needs.

MS. PATTERSON: Thank you. I think we

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are also missing speaker number 23. So if you are here, please come on up.

MARK SZYBIST: My name is Mark Szybist, I'm a senior program advocate in the energy and transportation program for the National Defense Council based in Washington, D.C.

On a personal note, I grew up in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. I have two great grandfathers who mined coal, and before moving to DC, I lived in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania within several minutes of several coal mines.

We would like to thank Secretary Jewell for her leadership in causing the review of this Federal Coal Leasing Program. I'm here today because NDC has a long history working on coal mining dating back to the passage of SMCRA.

In 2011 we commissioned the first audit of the Federal Coal Leasing Program in 30 years. The ensuing report was Tomsend's greatest reward, which found that over those three decades the coal program short changed taxpayers by almost $30 billion.

Many have commented on the flaws of the

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current program. Last week Senator Maria Cantwell of Washington noted that coal on federal land in Montana had sold for an average of 12 cents a ton, "33 tons of coal for the price of a big mac."

Last week the President's Council of Economic Advisors released a report on the program. President Obama's top environmental advisor Ryan East summarized it this way. "This is a hard look at the economics and what we see is a program that even before getting through the environmental considerations is not serving the interests of taxpayers."

But you are all aware of this and that's why you are here today. So what changes would we like to see? NDC believes that America's federal lands and waters are a national commons to be managed for the common good of all Americans.

In the 21st century that is not what we would call leasing. It scars our landscapes and hinders the crucial shift to clean energy.

We support a phase-out of fossil fuel

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1 leases on federal lands starting with a
2 phase-out of new leases and no renewal of
3 non-producing leases.
4 Short of that, we would like to see the
5 public put first. BLM should be in firm
6 control of when, where and how coal, federal
7 coal, is leased, not coal companies. The
8 agency should lease only when, one, it can
9 ensure areas for lease are low conflicts on
10 wildlife, air, water and protected lands.
11 Also, the coal-mined methane is
12 captured.
13 Two, coal companies have demonstrated
14 less than 10 years in business; three, coal
15 companies need measurable and enforceable
16 standards for reclaiming mined lands. The
17 scope of the review should be extended to
18 include OSM.
19 And four, taxpayers will get a fair
20 return to coal soil. That means cutting out
21 captive transactions, substantially raising
22 minimum bids and eliminating royalty rate
23 reductions.
24 Last, but not least, BLM needs to align
25 coal policies with our national climate

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1 goals. This can be achieved in part by
2 raising royalty rates, finding increased
3 royalties should be used to help communities
4 transition to more sustainable economies.
5 Thank you very much.
6 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.
7 FRANK SZOLLOSI: Good afternoon. My
8 name is Frank Szollosi. I live in Toledo,
9 Ohio. I'm here on behalf of the National
10 Wildlife Federation working to unite all
11 Americans to ensure wildlife thrive in
12 natural habitation.
13 National Wildlife Federation got its
14 start as the general wildlife under former
15 Secretary of the Interior Harold and
16 Secretary Jewell and director had the
17 opportunity to be just as consequential for
18 the future of this country as Secretary Hinge
19 was with the process as the coal mining.
20 Rapidly changing world is part of our
21 mission statement. It's why we need to
22 reform coal leasing now. There is increased
23 pressure on wildlife and habitat, especially
24 from fossil fuel extraction.
25 According to your own data, BLM data,

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1 in 2010, 2011, the eastern state's office
2 leased 460,000 acres of public land for
3 fossil fuel extraction which was up 71
4 percent from previous five years.
5 I'd like to join my fellow Buckeye,
6 special shout-out, for protections in the
7 national forest in southern Ohio. We are
8 here for coal reform. Taxpayers should not
9 bail out the coal companies.
10 Raise the royalty rate. Raise the
11 minimum bid. It's a drag on our economy, not
12 to mention the climate impacts for coal
13 leasing impacts on public lands.
14 We urgently need reform. Like the
15 previous gentleman, my grandfather was born
16 in Adena, Ohio, coal town near
17 St. Clairsville, Ohio, 1922. My great
18 grandfather and my grandfather worked there.
19 Last week I was so proud of my
20 organization. Our affiliates on behalf of 6
21 million National Wildlife Federation members
22 endorsed a resolution encouraging the federal
23 government to finance a just transition for
24 coal miners and the people in those coal
25 communities, extremely important.

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1 We need to improve reclamation
2 performance. Last summer, my son and I drove
3 through North Dakota and Montana to hike and
4 fish. We drove through the Powder River
5 Basin. I'd like his sons and daughters to
6 have the same opportunity that we were able
7 to provide for him.
8 And I'm not alone. Although I live in
9 Ohio, vast amounts of National Wildlife
10 Federation commissioned an independent public
11 research was also overwhelming. 83 percent
12 of Ohioans consider it very important to
13 protect national public lands.
14 I encourage you to take their voices
15 into consideration. They are our lands and
16 belong to all of us and we owe it to
17 ourselves to get this right.
18 Thank you for your leadership on coal
19 leasing reform.
20 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.
21 JUSTIN WASSER: My name is Justin
22 Wasser, and I work for the Sierra club,
23 speaking on my own account. Sharing personal
24 story today. I live here in Pittsburgh.
25 So at the top, two main issues I'd like

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1 to address. First, well, the first is the
2 reform, reclamation bonding. And reforming
3 bonding.
4 And the second is assessing
5 externalities. On the bonding. Personally,
6 I grew up about 72 miles east of here in a
7 mining area. I played on what we call bony
8 piles, slag heap. And I think I was 11
9 before I realized it's not natural for
10 certain streams to be orange.
11 The process on any land of reclamation
12 is an absolute failure. It's a failure to
13 the communities on the terms of quality of
14 life and to their health. Where I grow up or
15 grew up, one of my family lives there, there
16 are higher rates of cancer, of heart disease,
17 of issues that scientific consensus shows,
18 they may not say it's a direct correlation,
19 but definitely the lack of cleaning up after
20 mining, after burning and transporting coal
21 contributes to it.
22 The Youghiogheny and the Conemaugh
23 Rivers, it's a story of two rivers that are
24 near by here. The Yough had some mining
25 issues and through state, federal and

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1 non-profit investments over the last 10 years
2 has become what some people have called the
3 Madison River, a famous river out west for
4 trout fishing. The Madison River of the
5 east.
6 That has brought all kinds of funding
7 and tourism to the area.
8 Now, the Conemaugh River, not too far
9 off from there, where I'm from, is not
10 bringing in tourism, is not attracting
11 people. People aren't fishing on that river
12 because of the problems with reclamation.
13 On assessing externalities, with just
14 30 seconds, I'd like to say that I'm 28 years
15 old and staring into a future of dealing with
16 global warming, climate change and the
17 catastrophes that could come. And I think it
18 is time that the BLM review the scientific
19 consensus on the effects of mining and
20 burning what's extracted out of federal
21 lands, and those externalities far into the
22 future of the time, energy and finances we
23 are going to have to put in to clean up the
24 mess from today. Thank you.
25 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you. Speaker

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1 number 23, last call, are you here? Number
2 23? Okay.
3 We will call group 31 through 35 down
4 to microphone number 1. We are also missing
5 speaker number 28 I believe. So if you are
6 here, please come to microphone number 2.
7 Speaker number 26.
8 BEN LEERS: My name is Ben Leers, I'm
9 with Sierra Club Ohio. I'm going to be short
10 and sweet. Personal story as well. I'm from
11 Las Vegas, Nevada and my parents live in
12 Utah. So living in the west I spent a lot of
13 time in the national parks. It's where I
14 have found my spirituality and a lot of
15 valuable time as a kid.
16 So seeing the national parks, it's one
17 of the most well-protected pieces of land
18 that I've ever seen.
19 So I moved out east for school about
20 three years ago, and I was introduced to an
21 entirely new type of view and nature. But
22 it's not as well protected as demonstrated by
23 the federal coal leasing program. Giving the
24 land out and letting them destroy it.
25 In the national parks it's vandalism

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1 and it's a federal misdemeanor and penalized
2 by up to six months in prison and a fine up
3 to $500. Meanwhile, the federal leasing
4 program of coal, we are giving this land to
5 corporations and allowing them to destroy
6 this property which belongs to everybody
7 here.
8 So like you guys mentioned, 20 years
9 in, we still have leases that are going to be
10 in effect and this destruction is going to
11 occur for 20 years going on into the future.
12 So I want to reiterate the words of a
13 couple of people that have spoken that it is
14 necessary that federal land leases for coal
15 needs to be stopped, but not only that but
16 begin to impose recommendations to phase out
17 the federal leasing of land for coal all
18 together.
19 You guys have been presented with the
20 statistics and you know the drastic effects
21 that it has. So I think this is a lot larger
22 of a problem than money and the economy. Our
23 entire future and environment is at stake.
24 Thank you.
25 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.

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1 DORCAS EVANS MILLER: Hello. Thank
2 you. My name is Dorcas Evans Miller, and I'm
3 retired. That means that I have time to
4 volunteer. And I have to thank my friends at
5 Pittsburgh Sierra Club and Environment and
6 350.org for educating me to what I've been
7 learning over time.
8 But now I'm more committed than ever.
9 So I grew up in Springdale, which is on the
10 Allegheny River, about 20 minutes from here,
11 between two power stations between the ages
12 of 5 and 15.
13 The results are health issues for my
14 family that we learned about later, heart
15 disease being one, after five generations of
16 us being in this area.
17 Rachel Carson, author of the "Silent
18 Scream" of the 1960s informed me and the
19 world about poison and effects on humans.
20 She happens to be from Springdale, so I guess
21 that's where we get a little of our activism.
22 I'm proud of her and her message.
23 Currently I'm working with the Clean Power
24 Plan. We are working on volunteering with
25 that and the adopted legislation, adopted

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1 legislator.
2 So we are coming after the bodies that
3 can effect change. And I might as well be
4 right up front, blocking extraction from
5 public lands would be my number one priority.
6 I remember the actual soot on our cars
7 and clothes in the 1950s. We lived with the
8 effects of coal, not knowing the health
9 effects later in our life.
10 Energy is now a new path. Renewables
11 are the future, I believe, and I'm learning
12 that in these organizations. I have heard
13 young people like my friend Talia who just
14 spoke here today and the young woman from
15 Seattle, they have asked us, our age people,
16 to become responsible, and we must not miss
17 this opportunity to address coal and its
18 effects on the health and the land.
19 So again, I would repeat, no leases.
20 No leases on public lands. It is our public
21 land.
22 Should we extract any fossil fuel? The
23 answer would be no. From what I'm learning.
24 Please tax carbon so that we can
25 remediate our public lands and leave them the

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1 way we found them. I fear for the future and
2 my loved ones on the east and the west coast
3 of the nation and of the world who have lost
4 their lands, who will slowly lose their land
5 because of rising water.
6 We cannot deny that fossil fuels
7 contribute to climate change. There is too
8 much evidence. There is no clean coal.
9 Public lands should not contribute to climate
10 change. In fact, we should contribute to
11 renewable solution. I know we can do it. It
12 is up to us. It is our time. Thank you.
13 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.
14 RACHEL RAKOVAN: Hi, I'm Rachel
15 Rakovan. I'm a professor of ecology at the
16 Community College of Beaver County. I'm also
17 board chairman for the Environmental Advisory
18 Board for the township. And I am founder of
19 the ECO Action Nonprofit Organization.
20 I'm here to talk to you about coal
21 mining, direct effects. In my past I lived
22 in Appalachia and coal mining was the cause
23 of cancer, which actually inspired me to
24 become an environmental scientist. Several
25 of my family members have died from cancer.

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1 In particular, my two year old niece and
2 stepfather.
3 Anyhow. So coal mining is the cause of
4 pollution in southern Ohio. And what it does
5 is it causes cancer among people, families,
6 friends, that makes people become addicted to
7 cancer medications.
8 And then what happens after that, it
9 gets in the hands of teenagers, that cancer
10 medications. They become addicted to
11 Oxycontins, and Oxycontins are very
12 expensive, this is a cancer medication, then
13 they divert to heroin and illicit street
14 drugs, which is cheaper, and what they then
15 do is take excess amounts of heroin and they
16 end up in teenage drug overdose.
17 So I have about 60 friends from the
18 time that I was pre-teen that have died from
19 heroin usage that was caused from this chain
20 reaction from coal mining.
21 So, again, in recap, coal mining causes
22 cancer, which then causes people to become
23 addicted to cancer medications, which then
24 contributes to the illicit drug trade and
25 then causes teenage drug overdose.

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1 Excuse me. So the direct effects of
2 coal can be accounted for. But the indirect
3 effects and the chain reaction of coal and
4 the cost to communities as well as our lives
5 are concerned -- excuse me.
6 I also wanted to talk about something
7 else. I am a consultant for open -- I'm
8 sorry, it's very personal. But I would like
9 to see us convert to renewable energy
10 sources. Thank you.
11 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.
12 JAMES KOTCON: Good afternoon. My name
13 is James Kotcon. I'm from Morgantown, West
14 Virginia. I currently serve as the
15 conservation chair for the West Virginia
16 chapter of the Sierra Club.
17 I have some written comments that I'll
18 be filing. But sort of summarize some of the
19 things we have heard here today.
20 In real life I teach at West Virginia
21 University and through a course on
22 environmental impact assessment where we
23 study the process so I have a pretty good
24 grasp of what you're proposing on this
25 Programmatic EIS.

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1 You will be considering the effects of
2 several alternatives, one of those might be
3 to resume the leasing program, in terms
4 business as usual, and maybe end somewhere in
5 between.
6 I am here today to urge that you look
7 very seriously at the no leasing alternative.
8 I realize that from an agency whose mission
9 is to issue leases that's going to be a very
10 heavy lift, and I'd like to give you some
11 reasons why.
12 We have heard a lot about the problems
13 with the leasing program, the need to reform
14 reclamation bonding, the need to end the self
15 bonding, the need to consider and incorporate
16 the social cost of carbon in the leasing
17 costs, a lot of the adverse impacts on mining
18 communities and so on. And I think you need
19 to consider each of those.
20 EPA asks that you consider both the
21 direct impacts of your alternatives as well
22 as the indirect and cumulative impacts. Much
23 of what we have heard today is testimony from
24 the eastern United States really looks as
25 evidence of the indirect and cumulative

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1 impacts of leasing from western states coal.
2 It will be easy to disregard some of
3 this testimony today as not relevant to the
4 western states leasing programs, and I'm
5 urging you to resist that temptation to
6 disregard that and instead look at the
7 impacts on eastern states of the leasing
8 programs in western United States.
9 For example, about 40 percent of the
10 coal burned in coal-fired power plants in
11 West Virginia is actually western coal. So
12 the air pollution impacts of that western
13 coal, the mercury in the streams, the impacts
14 to fisheries, is an indirect impact of your
15 leasing program, and it's happening in my
16 home State of West Virginia. Please consider
17 that in your analysis.
18 There are indirect impacts of burning
19 western coals on eastern coal communities,
20 impacts to workers. Right now a number of
21 the major mining companies in West Virginia
22 are bankrupt and don't have the money for
23 reclamation. It is important that you get an
24 estimate of the true cost of coal and that
25 you fully consider those in your analysis.

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1 Thank you.
2 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you. At this
3 time I believe we have only given out two
4 more speaker cards for 31, 32. So if there
5 is anyone else who would like to speak right
6 now, please grab a speaker card in the back
7 and come on up as well. We will hear from
8 speaker number 31.
9 AIMEE ERICKSON: Thank you. Does this
10 mean I can speak longer since I'm the next to
11 the last person? I was just checking.
12 My name is Aimee Erickson. I'm the
13 Executive Director of Citizens Coal Council,
14 a national nonprofit organization whose
15 mission is to inform, empower and work for
16 and with communities affected by mining,
17 processing and use of coal.
18 While many activists and organizations
19 will make strong, well-documented cases for
20 problematic, fiscal aspects of coal leasing,
21 I believe that there is critical opportunity
22 at this very moment for the United States
23 government to make its position clear: We
24 are taking real, measurable steps to stem the
25 momentum of climate change.

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1 Even though the coal industry has seen
2 a significant decline over the last decade,
3 we can't ignore the reality of the United
4 States is the fourth largest source of coal
5 exports in the world.
6 Of those exports, the majority of our
7 coal is headed to Asia. Joby Warrick in a
8 Washington Post article put it most aptly:
9 "Each shipment highlights what critics
10 describe as a hypocrisy, underlining U.S.
11 climate policy: While boasting of pollution
12 cuts at home, the United States is
13 facilitating the sale of large quantities of
14 government-owned coal abroad."
15 To make it abundantly clear, continuing
16 the mining and export of government owned
17 coal is making a statement to the world where
18 our priorities lie and most importantly it
19 goes against President Obama's Climate Action
20 Plan.
21 By the Bureau of Land Management not
22 taking into account the effects of coal
23 exports on global warming, you are
24 undermining global efforts to address climate
25 change.

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1 In yesterday's USA Today article on the
2 West Virginia floods, it stated that climate
3 change may have added to this disaster.
4 According to the National Climate
5 Assessment, the part of the U.S. that
6 includes West Virginia has seen a 71 percent
7 increase in extreme precipitation since 1958.
8 We are exporting our pollution and that
9 pollution is not only still contributing to
10 global climate change, but its local effects
11 are impacting poor and vulnerable
12 populations.
13 Now is the time to take a serious
14 stance on climate change and protect the most
15 vulnerable. This is a real, substantial
16 thing we can do to not only show that our
17 humanity takes precedence over our concern
18 for money, but to increase the possibility
19 that our world will be a livable place for
20 future generations.
21 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.
22 KRISSY KASSERMAN: Hi. I'm Krissy
23 Kasserman. I live and work in former coal
24 communities that are struggling to recover
25 from massive decades of environmental

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1 devastation for both legacy sites and from
2 those permitted under the current regulatory
3 system.
4 For decades coal companies have mined
5 tons of coal, 40 percent of all coal burned
6 in the U.S. power plants from our public
7 lands. Most of the coal mined comes from
8 grass lands, ranches, natural habitat, leases
9 to mine underneath this land, encourages
10 consumption of dirty fuels by artificially
11 lowering the price at a time when we should
12 be moving away from fossil fuels.
13 What I want to talk about today,
14 though, is the way that continued federal
15 coal leasing diverts our attention from the
16 real work, transitioning coal communities
17 like mine to a clean energy future.
18 The transition to a clean energy
19 economy will create new jobs and new
20 opportunities for those of us living in coal
21 country. Some of these new jobs will be in
22 reclamation, reclaiming and restoring old
23 dangerous and polluted mine sites which foul
24 our streams and create a danger to community.
25 We want time and opportunity to assist

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1 communities in moving forward. And we can be
2 using funds released by the U.S. government
3 to manage the Federal Coal Leasing Program to
4 enhance this transition or to restore these
5 legacy sites.
6 The Federal Coal Leasing program should
7 be ended in order to save taxpayers money,
8 protect public land and to begin the
9 meaningful transition for coal communities
10 here in Appalachian and beyond.
11 I ask you to end taxpayer-funded coal
12 leases on public lands and instead make this
13 important and historic transition toward a
14 clean energy economy. Thank you.
15 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you. If there is
16 no one else who would like to get a speaker
17 card right now, that is the last of our
18 commentors so far. I want to thank you all
19 who are here for your respectful comments and
20 your insightful thoughts, and I'll invite the
21 panel if you would like to give remarks
22 before we go into a break.
23 MR. NEIL KORNZE: Let me say briefly
24 that we very much appreciate the sincere,
25 personal comments folks have shared with us

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1 today. We are committed to being here
2 throughout the session. So we are going to
3 take a short break. Look forward to visiting
4 with some of you and appreciate your time and
5 attention to these very important issues.
6 MS. PATTERSON: All right. Thank you
7 everybody for being here. Encourage you to
8 all stay involved in the Programmatic EIS
9 process, and reminder that all of these
10 comments as well as the rest of the input
11 from the scoping period will be incorporated
12 into a scoping report that will be available
13 later this fall.
14 You can stay informed by visiting the
15 project website and making sure that you
16 signed in with your contact information out
17 at the sign-in sheets. Thank you everybody.
18 We are going to take a break now.
19 (Recessed at 3:11 p.m.)
20 (Resumed at 4:00 p.m.)
21 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you for being
22 here. We have a packed house. We are really
23 glad that you are providing input. We are
24 live streaming this over the internet as
25 well. So we are going to go live back to

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1 that as well.
2 I think that you have an overview of
3 the speaking procedures. Three minutes each.
4 And we, of course, ask you to be respectful
5 of each other. So, sir, if you are ready to
6 begin your comment.
7 FRED KRAYBILL: My name is Fred
8 Kraybill. Greet you all. I live in
9 Pittsburgh. I work at the VA Medical Center.
10 I am very concerned about climate change and
11 I dedicate much of my spare time to working
12 on this issue. I want to thank President
13 Obama, Secretary Sally Jewell, and the
14 Department of the Interior for this historic
15 step to put a pause on coal leasing on
16 federal lands. It was very unfair that
17 federal lands were leased to coal companies
18 at rock bottom prices and allowed them to
19 compete unfairly with other cleaner energy
20 sources.
21 It was also unfair to the taxpayers
22 that shoulder a tax burden when highly
23 profitable coal companies were not paying
24 their fair share to lease federal lands for
25 coal.

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1 But ultimately, the most important
2 consideration to this issue is how much coal
3 can still be burned in our remaining carbon
4 budget. How much must we reduce our carbon
5 emissions to prevent a 2 degree Celsius
6 warming and to try to stay within a 1.5
7 degree Celsius warming?
8 Most of the people I know will say that
9 we must keep fossil fuels in the ground. The
10 BLM has many competing interests to think
11 about, but at the very least it seems to me
12 that if the BLM continues to lease federal
13 lands for coal, then it must be at a price
14 that accounts for the social cost of carbon
15 and it must be at a price that allows clean,
16 renewable energy to rapidly overtake fossil
17 fuels in the energy marketplace. Because the
18 solution to pollution is renewable, it's
19 doable.
20 Recently I've been watching the
21 devastating weather events in both ends of
22 the U.S. Historic rainfall and flash floods
23 in West Virginia and devastating, out of
24 control, wildfires in the southwest. We are
25 witnessing exactly what climate scientists

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1 have predicted for years. Record breaking
2 heat waves, drought, forest fires, flash
3 floods and storms. Record breaking sea level
4 rise, glacier melt and ocean acidification.
5 So I ask the BLM and the Department of
6 the Interior to make addressing climate
7 change your most important priority when
8 considering how to revamp the federal coal
9 leasing program. Thank you for your time.
10 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.
11 NEXT SPEAKER: Good afternoon. My name
12 is Claudia Kirkpatrick and I live at 3763
13 Orchard Street in Pittsburgh, and I am a
14 member of the local chapter of the Sierra
15 Club. And I am speaking to support the
16 changes that Fred was talking about.
17 The Federal Coal Leasing Program,
18 through which the Bureau of Land Management
19 grants coal companies leases to mine coal on
20 federal public lands, creates serious
21 problems.
22 This program destroys the public lands,
23 which should be for the use of all the
24 citizens of the United States, and it is a
25 major factor in continuing to pollute our air

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1 and water. Burning coal is a direct cause of
2 asthma, respiratory illnesses and cancer.
3 It is a serious risk especially to
4 children and families in the areas around the
5 power plants which are still burning coal.
6 And it is more likely that low income and
7 minority children and families will be the
8 people most seriously harmed. We, the people
9 of the United States, through our government
10 officials are causing this harm.
11 It is very important, therefore, that
12 we, the people of the United States, support
13 ending the Federal Coal Leasing Program.
14 This is our responsibility for our children,
15 grandchildren and great grandchildren. Thank
16 you.
17 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you. Is there
18 anyone else that has come in that wishes to
19 speak? Looks like no more speaker cards have
20 been given out so far. We are going to take
21 another 30 minute break.
22 During that time, though, our panelists
23 will still be around and available and able
24 to talk individually if you like. Anything
25 else that y'all would like to say before we

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1 break again? All right. We will be back in
2 another 30 minutes.
3 (Recess taken at 4:10 p.m.)
4 (Resumed at 5:20 p.m.)
5 MS. PATTERSON: Welcome back to the
6 Federal Coal Program Programmatic
7 Environmental Impact Statement, Scoping
8 Meeting. We have another comment.
9 Just a quick note, Neil Kornze had to
10 leave, but we are now joined at the stage by
11 Linda Lance, who is the Deputy Director of
12 the Bureau of Land Management. So we thank
13 her for joining us as well. Thank you for
14 being here.
15 And please remember to state your name
16 and the organization you represent and be
17 sure to speak slowly and clearly for the
18 court reporter so she can hear your comments.
19 GRIM REAPER (JACK TURNER): Good
20 afternoon representatives of the eastern
21 district of the Bureau of Land Management and
22 Deputy Director. I am the Grim Reaper. I am
23 submitting testimony today on my own behalf.
24 I favor the continued leasing of federal
25 public lands that they may be exploited for

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1 coal and other fossil fuels. The fossil fuel
2 business is very good for my own business.
3 According to the research by Dara (sp)
4 Daily Monitor, I collect an additional
5 400,000 souls annually thanks to global
6 warming, a direct result of fossil fuel use.
7 Assuming we don't see radical change in
8 the world's energy infrastructure and a
9 global commitment to adaptation to climate
10 change, which I oppose, I shall be able to
11 reach a full half million souls annually by
12 2030.
13 Furthermore, the contribution that
14 global warming makes to my business is only a
15 tip of the iceberg, so to speak, of the boom
16 that the fossil fuel industry provides to my
17 own business.
18 According to research by the World
19 Health Organization, air pollution provides
20 me, my company, with nearly 7 million souls
21 annually.
22 Fossil fuels, like coal and petroleum,
23 are important sources of both indoor and
24 outdoor air pollution. While it is difficult
25 to say how many souls I collect through water

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1 pollution, for which I have coal to thank,
2 the contribution of the mining industry in
3 this field is still worth mentioning.
4 One polluter that I would like to
5 specifically thank is Freedom Industries, a
6 coal mining company which managed to poison
7 the drinking water for 300,000 people in 2014
8 by dumping methylcyclohexane methanol into
9 the Elk River, a tributary of the Ohio River.
10 I'd like to thank Representative Keith
11 Rothfus of the Pennsylvania 12th
12 Congressional District for calling out the
13 job killing regulations of our current
14 administration earlier today.
15 I am a good capitalist job creator, but
16 I've had to delay hiring more minions of
17 death and even let some go because fossil
18 fuels are being threatened by wind and solar
19 energy.
20 It's not just my own business that is
21 hurting. Consider, to produce the same
22 amount of energy from solar power as from
23 coal costs less, but creates more jobs. That
24 might sound good on the surface, but without
25 the crushing poverty dependent on fossil fuel

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1 extraction, people might be less likely to
2 turn to substance abuse. This could erode
3 the heroin business that has been making
4 critical enhancements recently, and put drug
5 traffickers out of work.
6 And might I point out the harm that
7 medical enterprises will suffer if people are
8 healthier from cleaner air and water.
9 I do not think the administration has
10 thought through the consequences of this
11 proposed public land policy and it should be
12 stripped. Thank you for your time.
13 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you. Is anyone
14 else who would like to grab a card and speak.
15 If not, we will take another break for
16 another 30 minutes, see if we have anyone
17 else come. Thank you again for your comment.
18 We are going to reconvene at 6:30.
19 (Recess taken at 5:25 p.m.)
20 (Resumed at 6:35 p.m.)
21 MS. PATTERSON: Welcome back to the
22 Federal Coal Program, Programmatic EIS,
23 Public Scoping meeting. We have another
24 commentor who is going to provide comments.
25 Please just remember to state your name

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1 and organization you represent at the
2 beginning of your comment and speak slowly
3 and clearly. The court reporter will capture
4 your comments as well.
5 MARY RANII: Okay. Thank you. Thank
6 you guys for being here today. My name is
7 Mary Ranii. I'm from O'Hara Township, which
8 is right outside of Pittsburgh. And I'm here
9 to express my support for this pause on new
10 coal leases on public lands. This land
11 should be for recreational and educational
12 use and purposes.
13 Mining projects pose undue threats on
14 the health of nearby communities, not to
15 mention the health of the waterways, soil,
16 air and wildlife.
17 And as we also feel the impacts of
18 climate change more and more, we need to make
19 decisions that protect our future. So I'm
20 encouraging the Bureau of Land Management to
21 make this pause on new leases on public lands
22 permanent and to consider revoking leases on
23 existing coal projects on public lands that
24 do not meet strict health, environmental and
25 safety standards. Thank you.

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1 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.
2 LINDA LANCE: Sorry to make it so
3 formal, but we have to get you on live
4 transcript, plus we are live streaming this.
5 We appreciate your comment.
6 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you for being
7 here. We are going to break again until
8 anyone else shows up for this last portion of
9 the meeting. We will be around.
10 (Recessed at 6:40 p.m.)
11 (Resumed at 7:00 p.m.)
12 MS. PATTERSON: We are back with the
13 Bureau of Land Management, Federal Coal
14 Program, Programmatic Environmental Impact
15 Statement, Scoping Meeting. For anyone who
16 has been watching the live stream today, I
17 just want to thank you for watching and hope
18 that you will continue to participate in the
19 process as this EIS moves forward.
20 I'm going to turn it over to Linda
21 Lance, who has some closing remarks.
22 MS. LINDA LANCE: I just want to say
23 thanks on behalf of all of us at BLM to all
24 of you who have been watching this online and
25 the folks who have been here throughout the

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1 day. Means a tremendous amount to us that
2 you take the time to help us think through
3 these issues.
4 And I just remind you, this is our last
5 public meeting, but we are still accepting
6 written comments and the address for that is
7 on our website. So please do continue to
8 participate.
9 So it's 7:00. We appreciate everyone's
10 time and attention and participation today,
11 and we also thank the wonderful BLM team and
12 security team that's been with us all day
13 today. So much appreciate your wonderful
14 work on all these meetings.
15 So with that, we will close and thanks
16 again to everyone.
17 (Thereupon, at 7:00 p.m., the scoping
18 meeting was concluded.)
19 - - -
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24
25

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1 C-E-R-T-I-F-I-C-A-T-E
2 I, Deborah L. Endler, the undersigned, do
3 hereby certify that the foregoing one hundred
4 sixteen (116) pages are a true and correct
5 transcript of my stenotypy notes taken at the
6 Bureau of Land Management, Scoping Meeting, held
7 at the David Lawrence Convention Center, on
8 Tuesday, June 28, 2016.
9
10
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12 _____
Deborah L. Endler, Court Reporter
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