

FRANK SZOLLOSI: Good afternoon. My name is Frank Szollosi. I live in Toledo, Ohio. I'm here on behalf of the National Wildlife Federation working to unite all Americans to ensure wildlife thrive in natural habitation. National Wildlife Federation got its start as the general wildlife under former Secretary of the Interior Harold and Secretary Jewell and director had the opportunity to be just as consequential for the future of this country as Secretary Hinge was with the process as the coal mining. Rapidly changing world is part of our mission statement. It's why we need to reform coal leasing now. There is increased pressure on wildlife and habitat, especially from fossil fuel extraction. According to your own data, BLM data, in 2010, 2011, the eastern state's office leased 460,000 acres of public land for fossil fuel extraction which was up 71 percent from previous five years. I'd like to join my fellow Buckeye, special shout-out, for protections in the national forest in southern Ohio. We are here for coal reform. Taxpayers should not bail out the coal companies. Raise the royalty rate. Raise the minimum bid. It's a drag on our economy, not to mention the climate impacts for coal leasing impacts on public lands. We urgently need reform. Like the previous gentleman, my grandfather was born in Adena, Ohio, coal town near St. Clairsville, Ohio, 1922. My great grandfather and my grandfather worked there. Last week I was so proud of my organization. Our affiliates on behalf of 6 million National Wildlife Federation members endorsed a resolution encouraging the federal government to finance a just transition for coal miners and the people in those coal communities, extremely important. We need to improve reclamation performance. Last summer, my son and I drove through North Dakota and Montana to hike and fish. We drove through the Powder River Basin. I'd like his sons and daughters to have the same opportunity that we were able to provide for him. And I'm not alone. Although I live in Ohio, vast amounts of National Wildlife Federation commissioned an independent public research was also overwhelming. 83 percent of Ohioans consider it very important to protect national public lands. I encourage you to take their voices into consideration. They are our lands and belong to all of us and we owe it to ourselves to get this right. Thank you for your leadership on coal leasing reform.