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**Federal Coal Program Programmatic EIS**

**Public Scoping Comments by:**

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**Comments:**

Our federal coal program accounted for just 14 percent of our nation's electricity in 2015. Between 2008 and 2013, United States Coal production fell by 16 percent because coal is becoming less competitive as a fuel for generating electricity. Worldwide, demand for coal is also declining.

In addition to that, according to information from our Secretary of the Interior, recoverable reserves of Federal coal currently under lease are estimated to be sufficient to continue production from federal leases at current levels for only 20 years.

While these market realities have been eating into the coal industry, the world has been waking up to the fact that human caused climate change is not just a reality, but is a threat to the world as we know it: from the decreasing availability of fresh water due to changing weather and melting glaciers, to rising sea levels inundating some of our most fertile lands worldwide and displacing millions of people, to the shifting of our food belts,...and the list goes on.

The fact is, we are looking at a dying industry. And, yes, that means that coals jobs will go the way of the ferrier, horse drawn buggy builders, print media jobs for newspapers, and mechanical drafting. All of these, and many more, have been displaced by technological advancement. This is a fact, not a moral judgment. It simply has to do with the inevitable march of change in human activities and economies over time.

And so it will be with the coal industry as increased conservation, roof-top solar, solar farms, wind and geothermal power, along with an improved, smart energy grid, more efficient transmission lines, and far superior battery and other energy storage means are implemented.

The question before us today is this: Do we act today to help communities that are heavily dependent on coal to change to clean energy jobs, or do we wait 20 years to make that change, allowing human made climate change to forever impact the quality of our generation and all of those who come after us?

I hope that the result of your evaluation of our Federal coal program is that the program must be brought to an end as quickly as possible, with declining coal production each year for the next 5-10 years. This should be accomplished in an orderly manner that helps our coal communities transition to new jobs and a clean energy economy! Let's invest in their and our future now! If we do our part in reducing greenhouse gases and reversing the trend of warming our planet, millions of people in the world and innumerable species of animals and plants will benefit.