



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 15, 2008

The Honorable Dirk Kempthorne
Secretary of the Interior
1849 C Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Mr. Jim Caswell
Director, Bureau of Land Management
1849 C Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Kempthorne and Director Caswell:

We are writing to urge you to ensure that land use and travel plans now being developed by the Utah Bureau of Land Management provide appropriate protection for the remarkable wilderness-quality landscapes in Utah's Colorado Plateau region. Utah includes some of the most spectacularly scenic and culturally significant landscapes in the West. They are rich with archaeological treasures, threatened wildlife and habitat, and scarce desert riparian areas. The BLM's land use and travel plans represent a unique opportunity to preserve millions of acres of this nation's wilderness heritage.

Utah BLM is developing six Resource Management Plans and travel plans for 11 million acres of public land in the Colorado Plateau region. Within this area is approximately 3 million acres of roadless land that the BLM has identified as having wilderness character. This land should be managed in a balanced manner to protect its wilderness value, which BLM has assured is within its authority. Former Secretary Gale Norton stated in 2003 that BLM would use certain tools in the agency's tool belt to protect these wilderness-quality, roadless areas.

Unfortunately, the preferred alternatives in the draft plans offer virtually no protection for these 3 million acres. These roadless areas would be vulnerable to damaging off-road vehicle use; oil, gas, and hardrock mineral development; and other development threats. Indeed, the BLM's preferred plans would authorize nearly 1,000 miles of off-road vehicle routes in these roadless areas. Eighty-six percent of this land would be open for oil and gas development.

Alternative management scenarios exist, however. In particular, the draft plans identify "conservation alternatives" that, while not fully protecting wilderness values, would provide a measure of protection for these roadless areas. We urge you to protect the areas identified by the BLM as "non-Wilderness Study Area lands with wilderness characteristics" by adopting the most protective management prescriptions described in

Secretary Kempthorne
Director Caswell
Page 2
April 15, 2008

the draft Resource Management Plans. Decisive action at the highest levels of the Interior Department is necessary to ensure that these iconic roadless lands of the Colorado Plateau – many near the crown jewels of the National Park System – are protected from the scars of off-road vehicle routes and energy development.
Secretary Kempthorne

Before issuing a Record of Decision on the Utah plans, we request that you brief our offices on the BLM's rationale for its treatment of these wilderness resources in the agency's final decision.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Maureen Dunbar

Edward J. Markley

Norm Aich

George Miller

Raul M. Grijalva

Linda Love

Howard L. Berman

Jim Moran

Maude Watts

Henry A. Wagner

Michael R. Wadley

Richard E. Neal

Dorinda M. Payne

Colli C. Palmer

Eliza E. Zimmerman

Barbara Lee

Benny Lamb

Earl Blumenauer

John V. Nutcracker

Jose L. Serrano

Peter DeFazio

Glenn H. Stanton

Ed Pastor

Ellen Fauscher

Tommy Baldwin

Dennis J. Kucinski

Darin DeFette

Gene Bachman

Bobby L. Ruh

Jerry V. Costello

John Smith

Tom Am

[Signature]

Jewell Kadden

Walter M. Lacey

Carolyn B. Mabe

Joe Courtney

Patrick D. Kennedy

Frank Pallone Jr.

Brian Higgins

Pete Stark

Steve Israel

John Lewis

Wm. Lacy Clay

Mike G. B. B.

Jim Mc. Boren

W. Andrus

Roche

C. M. F.

John P. ...

Cheryl Sings

T. W. A.

John W. Oliver

Lois Capps

Phil Hare

J. B. Rame

Jim McDemott

Jan Schalenberg

Rush Holt

Hilda L. Solis

Rahn Emanuel

Jim Sangerin

Bee Lof

Mark Udall

Harry E. Mitchell

Grace J. Neapolitano

Patricia

Carol Shea-Power

Paul Siker

Ben Chandler

Betty Sutton

Tim Ryan

Daniel Lipich

Sam Farr

Betty McEllen

Keith Ellian

Michael W. Anderson

Hank Johnson

David Price

Alan E. Kildner

Rosa L. DeLuero

Lynn Woolsey

Tracy

John Snow

Paralya Kilpatrick

Liane E. Watson

Mazie Hirono

1. Maurice D. Hinchey (NY-22)
2. Edward J. Markey (MA-07)
3. Norman D. Dicks (WA-06)
4. George Miller (CA-07)
5. Raul M. Grijalva (AZ-07)
6. Sander M. Levin (MI-12)
7. Howard L. Berman (CA-28)
8. James P. Moran (VA-08)
9. Maxine Waters (CA-35)
10. Henry A. Waxman (CA-30)
11. Michael R. McNulty (NY-21)
12. Richard E. Neal (MA-02)
13. Donald M. Payne (NJ-10)
14. Collin C. Peterson (MN-07)
15. Elijah E. Cummings (MD-07)
16. Barbara Lee (CA-09)
17. Barney Frank (MA-04)
18. Earl Blumenauer (OR-03)
19. Luis V. Gutierrez (IL-04)
20. Jose E. Serrano (NY-16)
21. Peter A. DeFazio (OR-04)
22. Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC)
23. Ed Pastor (AZ-04)
24. Ellen O. Tauscher (CA-10)
25. Tammy Baldwin (WI-02)
26. Dennis J. Kucinich (OH-10)
27. Diana DeGette (CO-01)
28. Jesse L. Jackson Jr. (IL-02)
29. Bobby L. Rush (IL-01)
30. Jerry F. Costello (IL-12)
31. Adam Smith (WA-09)
32. Jane Harman (CA-36)
33. David Wu (OR-01)
34. Jerrold Nadler (NY-08)
35. Nita M. Lowey (NY-18)
36. Carolyn B. Maloney (NY-14)
37. Joe Courtney (CT-02)
38. Patrick J. Kennedy (RI-01)
39. Frank Pallone Jr. (NJ-06)
40. Brian Higgins (NY-27)
41. Fortney Pete Stark (CA-13)
42. Steve Israel (NY-02)
43. John Lewis (GA-05)
44. Wm. Lacy Clay (MO-01)
45. Charles A. Gonzalez (TX-20)
46. James P. McGovern (MA-03)

47. Jay Inslee (WA-01)
48. Paul W. Hodes (NH-02)
49. Christopher S. Murphy (CT-05)
50. John A. Yarmuth (KY-03)
51. Christopher Shays (CT-04)
52. Timothy V. Johnson (IL-15)
53. John W. Olver (MA-01)
54. Lois Capps (CA-23)
55. Phil Hare (IL-17)
56. John B. Larson (CT-01)
57. Jim McDermott (WA-07)
58. Janice D. Schakowsky (IL-09)
59. Rush Holt (NJ-12)
60. Hilde L. Solis (CA-32)
61. Rahm Emanuel (IL-05)
62. James R. Langevin (RI-02)
63. Zoe Lofgren (CA-16)
64. Mark Udall (CO-02)
65. Harry E. Mitchell (AZ-05)
66. Grace F. Napolitano (CA-38)
67. Dennis Moore (KS-03)
68. Carol Shea-Porter (NH-01)
69. Brad Miller (NC-13)
70. Ben Chandler (KY-06)
71. Betty Sutton (OH-13)
72. Tim Ryan (OH-17)
73. Daniel Lipinski (IL-03)
74. Sam Farr (CA-17)
75. Betty McCollum (MN-04)
76. Keith Ellison (MN-05)
77. Michael M. Honda (CA-15)
78. Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr. (GA-04)
79. David E. Price (NC-04)
80. Dale E. Kildee (MI-13)
81. Rosa L. Delauro (CT-03)
82. Lynn C. Woolsey (CA-06)
83. Timothy H. Bishop (NY-01)
84. Anna G. Eschoo (CA-14)
85. Carolyn C. Kilpatrick (MI-13)
86. Diane E. Watson (CA-33)
87. Mazie Hirono (HI-02)