

December 12, 2018

Ms. Jamie Connell
Director, Colorado State Office
Bureau of Land Management
2850 Youngfield St.
Lakewood, CO 80205

Dear Director Connell:

Welcome to Colorado and congratulations on your new position as Colorado State Director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Our businesses contribute to Colorado's \$28 billion outdoor recreation economy, which depends on Colorado's world class public lands. Yet these lands are under increasing pressure from the current administration's "energy dominance" policies, which are poised to do irreparable damage to Colorado's outdoor industry through the prioritization of oil and gas development.

For example, last year, the BLM offered almost 12 million acres of public lands across the West for oil and gas leasing. And this fall alone, between the September and December oil and gas lease sales, BLM began by proposing another 2.9 million acres for leasing, including in popular recreation destinations within or near Dinosaur National Monument, North Park, and the North Fork Valley. The process used to determine where oil and gas development can safely take place has been severely undermined. These decisions are happening with very limited public participation and almost no analysis of how oil and gas development will impact recreation resources and the businesses and communities that depend on public land in its natural state. No one wishes to live, vacation, or recreate near industrial sites with questionable air quality and constant truck traffic.

We understand the need for energy development, but it is essential for the overall health of the Colorado economy to take the time to use best practices for determining where and how that development will take place. This is especially critical not just to protect Colorado's current recreation economy, but also to make it possible for the power of the outdoor economy to reach other parts of the state. As you are aware, a federal judge recently blocked BLM's current leasing policies for violating bedrock environmental laws within habitat for greater sage-grouse. In reaching his conclusion, Judge Bush found "significant evidence" that BLM has regularly limited or precluded public involvement in leasing decisions.

We are hopeful that you will guide BLM back on course, by recommitting your staff to fulfilling BLM's true mission of multiple-use and sustained yield and restoring a rigorous public participation process for decisions about whether and where to allow oil and gas drilling on our public lands.

Additionally, we request that you take these public participation opportunities seriously, listening open-mindedly and engaging with all Colorado stakeholders, including recreation interests.

Otherwise, our state and our economy will suffer from the consequences of efforts to make energy development the “dominant” use of our public lands. We would welcome the opportunity to meet and discuss these important issues with you and your staff.

Best regards,

La Sportiva
Jonathan Lantz
Boulder, CO

Alpacka Raft
Sarah Tingey
Mancos, CO

Well Family Medicine
Paul Lee
Durango, CO

Avalanche Sports
Mark Storms
Breckenridge, CO

Aspen Skiing Company
Matthew Hamilton
Aspen, CO

Full Cycle
Jaime Jacoby
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Colorado Love Outdoors
Jeff Mobley
Cortez, CO

QARV Imports, LLC
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Earth Treks Golden
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Why Cycles
Adam Miller
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Earth Treks Englewood
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Underground Bike Works
Eric Burris
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Osprey Packs
Layne Rigney
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Shredly
Ashley Rankin
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Kelty
Eric Greene
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Raitman Art Galleries
Brian Raitman
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Lovejoy Consulting
Vernon Lovejoy
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Merithew Law
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Carver Brewing
Bill Carver
Durango, CO

BE HIPPIY LLC
Bart O'Brien & Leigh Pearson
Denver, Colorado

El Cap
Robert Cohen
Denver, CO

Timberline Events
Paul Vanderheiden
Englewood, CO

Women's Empowerment Workshop
Susie Kincade
Eagle, CO

Skratch Labs
Annie Dwyer
Boulder, CO