



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

JUL 27 2007

The Honorable Ken Salazar
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Salazar:

I appreciated the opportunity to meet with you on Wednesday, July 25, 2007, to discuss your concerns regarding public land use and resource development matters in the State of Colorado that are currently before the Department. I recognize that these matters are important not only to the Department, but also to Colorado and its citizens.

Given my experience and background in State and local government, as well as in the Senate, I am keenly aware of the need to solicit State and local input before making Federal land use decisions. In order to meet our stewardship responsibilities, it is not only appropriate, but necessary, that we have a cooperative and productive relationship with States. I consider it a priority that the Federal Government recognize and coordinate with leasing or development actions being taken by the State and on private lands. I agree that we want and need continued and extensive involvement by the State of Colorado, as well as local government and the public.

Regarding the Roan Plateau, I want to reiterate that, while the Record of Decision (ROD) has been signed, there will be additional opportunities for State and local input as we move forward. We will continue to work with the State of Colorado to make certain that it has that opportunity. As I mentioned, the comment period for the ROD pertaining to the designation of new Areas of Critical Environmental Concern is currently open. I would encourage you, as well as the State and local communities, to submit comments relative to this decision. This is a good opportunity for further input by the State and a chance to discuss additional questions.

With respect to oil shale, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is currently reviewing the comments it received from cooperating agencies, including the State of Colorado, on the preliminary draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS). Upon completion of that review, the BLM will be discussing potential changes with the cooperating agencies, including the State of Colorado, prior to the development of the draft PEIS. When the draft PEIS is published in the Federal Register, the comment period will be open for 90 days and if more is needed, we will grant it.

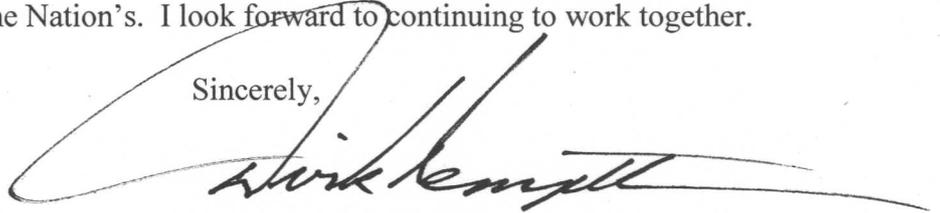
The Honorable Ken Salazar

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I have asked Mr. C. Stephen Allred, my Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, to continue the Department's productive dialogue with Governor Bill Ritter. If you or Governor Ritter have any concerns, he, as well as I, will be available to assist in resolving them.

Based on our discussions, I am confident we will work closely together to meet Colorado's needs as well as the Nation's. I look forward to continuing to work together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dirk Kempthorne". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "D" and a long horizontal flourish at the end.

DIRK KEMPTHORNE