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COLORADO

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ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
FINANCE
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United States Senate

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October 26, 2007

Honorable Craig Meis
Honorable Steve Acquafresca
Honorable Janet Rowland
Mesa County Commissioners
P.O. Box 20000
Grand Junction, CO 81502-5010

Honorable Lela McCracken
Honorable Wayne Wolf
Honorable Olen Lund
Delta County Commissioners
501 Palmer Street
Delta, Colorado 81416

Honorable Bill Patterson
Honorable Gary Ellis
Honorable Allan Belt
Montrose County Commissioners
161 South Townsend
Montrose, CO 81401

Dear Commissioners:

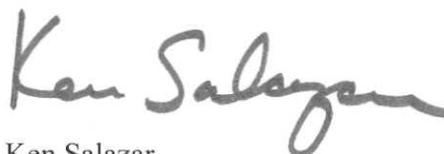
I write to solicit your input on a recent proposal drafted by the Natural Resources and Land Policy Institute (NRLPI) at Mesa State College, which recommends designating lands in the Dominguez-Escalante area as a national conservation area (NCA).

In August, 2006, I wrote in support of your efforts to establish a formal public process to examine alternatives for improving the management of public lands in the Lower Gunnison River basin. I appreciate your leadership in moving this process forward and for commissioning the NRLPI and the Public Lands Partnership to lead a series of public forums. The goal of these public forums was to determine the level of public support for an NCA designation in the Dominguez-Escalante area, including a wilderness designation of certain lands within the NCA. After thousands of hours spent by staff, volunteers, stakeholders, and the public, the NRLPI has drafted a report that summarizes the discussions from the public process and provides recommendations for further action.

In my view, this level of public input and discussion is vital to the type of land management decision that is being discussed. Local communities should have a strong voice in determining how adjacent public lands are managed. For this reason, I am anxious to hear your response to the NRLPI report and to work with you to draft legislation, if appropriate, to help fulfill the communities' shared management goals for the Dominguez-Escalante area.

I look forward to hearing your recommendations and remain committed to ensuring the continued protection and enjoyment of the Lower Gunnison.

Sincerely,



Ken Salazar
United States Senator

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