

February 11, 2011

The Honorable Ken Salazar  
Secretary  
US Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington DC 20240

Estimado Ken Salazar:

As elected officials, we would like to express our strong support for your balanced and far-sighted Wild Lands Policy. We take issue with a letter from the National Association of Counties, of which many of us are members, requesting the Department of Interior to rescind its Wild Lands policy.

We believe your Wild Lands Policy helps strike a fair compromise between supporting responsible energy development and other extractive activities on DOI public lands and guaranteeing protection of those lands for the future.

Decisions about which areas should be leased for energy development or set aside for hunting, fishing and other recreation are not easy and, as elected officials, we would hope to have an important voice in these discussions. We are often at the forefront of land management issues as they affect the economic health and quality of life in our respective communities.

The American West is synonymous with open spaces and clean water and the activities they afford, like hunting, hiking, camping, skiing and fishing. It is these activities that have sustained local economies for generations. The protection of lands with wilderness characteristics as Wild Lands, per Secretary Salazar's Order 3310, is vital because those lands provide important environmental services to our communities. Protected wild lands are critical complements to the bulk of public lands that provide opportunities for hunting, fishing, hiking, ranching, mining and forest industries – all the multiple uses that gateway counties and towns depend upon for their survival.

We want you to know that as representatives of many Western communities as well as communities around the country, we applaud your Wild Lands Policy and we look forward to working with the Department of Interior and BLM to implement this policy.

Sincerely,

Art Goodtimes,  
San Miguel County Board of Commissioner  
(Colorado)  
Chair of NACo's Gateway Communities Subcommittee

Forest Whitman  
Chair of the Gilpin County Board of Commissioners  
(Colorado)

Karn Stigelmeier  
Summit County Commissioner  
(Colorado)

Will Toor  
Boulder County Commissioner  
(Colorado)

Rep. Sal Pace  
House District 46  
(Colorado)

Kevin O'Malley  
Chair of the Clear Creek County Commissioners  
(Colorado)

Joan Drury  
Clear Creek County Commissioner  
(Colorado)

Tim Mauck  
Clear Creek County Commissioner  
(Colorado)

Annabelle Jaramillo,  
Benton County Commissioner  
(Oregon)

Kathryn McKenzie  
Douglas County Commissioner  
(Wisconsin)

Dan Gibbs  
Summit County Commissioner  
(Colorado)

Pete McKay  
San Juan County Commissioner  
(Colorado)

Wally White  
La Plata County Commissioner  
(Colorado)

Bob Greenberg  
former Grand County Councilmember  
(Utah)

Charles McGlashon  
Marin County Supervisor  
(California)

Kendall Smith  
Mendocino County Supervisor  
(California)

Ben Pearlman  
Boulder County Commissioner  
(Colorado)

Susan Adams  
Marin County Supervisor  
(California)

Jim Johnson  
Hardin County Supervisor  
(Iowa)

Lynn Padgett  
Ouray County Supervisor  
(Colorado)

Dave Somers  
Chair of the Snohomish County Council  
(Washington)  
Chair of NACo's Solid Waste Subcommittee

Thomas Davidson  
Summit County Commissioner  
(Colorado)

Linda Parks  
Ventura County Supervisor  
(California)

Salud Carbajal  
Santa Barbara County Supervisor  
(California)

Joan May  
Chair of the San Miguel County Commissioners  
(Colorado)

Peter Runyon  
Eagle County Commissioner  
(Colorado)

Sam Pace  
Saguache County Commissioner  
(Colorado)

Rep. Daniel Patterson  
House District 29  
(Arizona)

Pete Sorenson  
Lane County Commissioner  
(Oregon)