



February 9, 2016

The Honorable Rob Bishop
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jason Chaffetz
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Public Lands Initiative Discussion Draft

Dear Representatives Bishop and Chaffetz,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the discussion draft of the Public Lands Initiative (PLI).

We engaged in the PLI because we believe that collaboration among diverse stakeholders is the best way to resolve long-standing public land disagreements in a way that advances conservation, recreation, and economic development in eastern Utah.

Over the past three years, we have engaged in many conversations with stakeholders across eastern Utah. Through these efforts we have found significant areas of agreement. We reached agreements in Daggett and Summit counties, and made considerable progress in Grand, Emery, and Uintah counties.

However, the discussion draft takes a dramatic turn away from this collaborative approach. The discussion draft ignores much of the progress made over the past three years, disregarding both the scope and specifics of stakeholder agreement and interests.

Instead, the discussion draft imposes deeply objectionable and unnecessary policy provisions, and includes a broad array of poison pills that no one had ever agreed to and, in many cases, never discussed. Management language undermining the Wilderness Act, National Conservation Lands and special management areas are but a few examples. Hard release of millions of acres of BLM land, vast energy zones, extensive and unacceptable R.S. 2477 rights-of-ways, and extraneous but significant provisions like Scofield are just a few of the others.

While many of these issues have never been discussed or proposed as part of the PLI, throughout the process we provided you and your staff with feedback on the types of

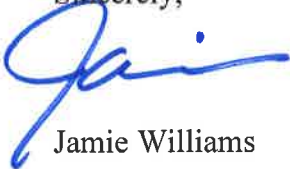
James C. Williams, President

policy provisions which, if included in your legislation, would force us to oppose the bill. That input was clearly disregarded.

The discussion draft abandons the process and progress of the PLI, and instead seeks to impose unsupportable policies. This approach is unlikely to succeed, and jeopardizes the success of the initiative to the detriment of all stakeholders.

From the beginning, we have suggested scaling back the geographic and substantive scope of the PLI, to focus on areas of agreement, and to either collaboratively resolve or abandon areas of disagreement. This approach is the only way to secure the broad support necessary to succeed.

Sincerely,



Jamie Williams