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Tuesday, March 1, 2011
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State and Local Officials Decry Administration's Wild Lands Order *Cite Job Loss, Economic Impacts, Blocked Energy Production*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the House Committee on Natural Resources held an oversight hearing on the impact of the Administration's "Wild Lands" order. The Committee heard from Western governors and elected local officials who expressed their concern over the proposed Wild Lands order and its negative impact on jobs, economic growth and American energy production.

What They Are Saying about the Wild Lands Order:

"I urge Congress to take back its authority and prevent further development and implementation of Secretary Salazar's Order. This Order exempts stakeholders, threatens the spirit of collaboration and cooperation, weakens the process, discounts state sovereignty, and sends the message to the citizens of Idaho that the federal government will continue to treat the valuable and diverse open spaces of the West not as lands of many uses, but rather as lands of no use and no access for the people who live and work in Idaho and other western states," **said Idaho Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter.**

"We're being told by oil and gas exploration companies that, due to regulatory uncertainty, they'll likely be curbing their activities in Utah. They are telling us that they will not invest the time and capital necessary to prepare new bids on new exploration, until the regulatory situation is steadied. The lack of this new investment means not only a loss of jobs for Utah residents but also the loss of natural resources that only increases our nation's dependence on fuel from foreign, often hostile countries," **said Utah Governor Gary Herbert.**

"Special designation such as Wild Lands historically creates more restrictions on the land. This leads to the loss of families in our community. If even one ranch or gas company family leaves the county due to increased restrictions it will have a noticeable negative impact to our economy due to loss of income and fewer volunteers. Our ambulance, fire departments and several other local services are run by volunteers," **said Lesley Robinson, Philips County Commissioner (Montana).**

"It is unclear what the Wild Lands Policy will add, except to remove more public land from the FLPMA's principal multiple uses, for rights-of-way and mining and mineral development, popular forms of outdoor recreation, such as snowmobiles and ATVs, and imposing additional restrictions on rangeland projects that are needed to meet rangeland health standards and to address sagebrush habitat. The Wild Lands Policy is less about protecting resources and more

about stopping economic uses of the public lands,” **said Joel Bousman, Sublette County Commissioner (Wyoming).**

“We are concerned that the Wild Lands Policy now creates de facto wilderness. In our County, this policy is already negatively affecting areas that were open for multiple use activity. Recently signed Resource Management Plans are being turned upside down by this policy. For example, current road improvement requests, oil and gas leases, and permits to drill are being affected based on Wild Lands Policy,” **said Mike McKee, Uintah County Commissioner (Utah).**

“Secretarial Order 3310 promises to make an intolerable situation even worse, by locking up even more BLM land, creating de facto wilderness areas without Congressional action or oversight, and without the support of local communities that will be adversely impacted. This Order will not only prevent consideration of normal forestry, it will eliminate recreational uses such as snowmobiling, trail biking, motorcycling and other motorized access. The elderly and handicapped will be shut out entirely. Order 3310 is elitist and exclusive, rather than inclusive,” **said Dennis C.W. Smith, Jackson County Commissioner (Oregon).**

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