



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

JAN 10 2011

The Honorable Doc Hastings
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your December 1, 2010, letter regarding my recent forum on hydraulic fracturing on public lands. We brought together this group to discuss a way forward to allow the United States to continue to realize the benefits of oil and gas development in a safe and effective manner.

Natural gas development has significantly increased on Federal lands over the last 20 years, resulting in a nearly 60 percent increase in gas production on these lands. In Fiscal Year 2009, approximately 13 percent of onshore, domestically produced natural gas came from public lands, principally in Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico, Utah, and Montana. Hydraulic fracturing is used in about 90 percent of wells currently drilled on federally-managed lands.

As the Department of the Interior continues its consideration of this important issue in support of this Administration's comprehensive plan for a diverse energy portfolio, I look forward to working closely with Members of Congress, industry, other Federal agencies, state agencies, and the public to help ensure that natural gas is developed in an effective and environmentally sound manner on the public lands. Should the Department move forward with disclosure requirements, which some in industry have supported, we will do so in a fashion that fully considers public and Congressional concerns. I look forward to working closely with you in your important role on the Natural Resources Committee.

Sincerely,

Ken Salazar