

May 13, 2011

U.S. Rep. Cynthia Lummis
113 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Lummis;

Not everyone is watching decisions on where and how our public lands are used to provide resources for our country, but they are watching the numbers on the gas pump as they fill their cars. Unfortunately, the connection between the two is complex, not obvious, and frequently misunderstood. We cannot afford to make the mistake of sacrificing some of our most productive wildlife lands and recreation areas in a futile attempt to produce energy. Taking steps to help energy independence and our national security are important measures. However, our public lands should not fall prey to proposals that can destroy other values and yet not provide solutions.

Bridger-Teton National Forest Supervisor Jacque Buchanan has decided to enhance the scientific study regarding drilling within the Wyoming Range in order to more thoroughly look at this complex issue in our back yard. Wyoming is a leader in gas and coal production and has the potential to be a leader in renewable energy. Residents and visitors can also find unmatched landscapes full of abundant and diverse wildlife, as well as opportunities to hunt, hike, camp, fish, ride and appreciate these undeveloped spaces. Supervisor Buchanan's extra effort can make sure that we are not sacrificing irreplaceable values for an action that will neither further our nation's energy independence nor make our country safer. The Conservation Alliance is hopeful that this decision will help raise the bar on future studies on energy development.

The decision to further study the impact of 35 leases on 44,720 acres in the Wyoming Range is a positive step in ensuring that science and professional analysis determine what is best for public lands. We applaud this courageous step to establish a more comprehensive and focused document that will guide activities on these lands with better scientific understanding of their ramifications.

The Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance will continue our involvement in policy decisions, expressing the voice of our membership and advocating for the greatest protection of our wildlife and wild lands.

Sincerely,

Louise Lasley, Public Lands Director
Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance