

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 12, 2023

Tracey Stone-Manning
Director, Bureau of Land Management
1849 C Street NW
Room 5646
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Director Stone-Manning,

We write to express our strong concerns with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)'s Rock Springs Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP). On August 17, 2023, the BLM announced their Draft Resource Management Plan Revision (RMP) and accompanying Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the 3.6 million acres of surface land managed by the Rock Springs Field Office. Given the outsized impact this policy change will have on communities across the nation and the lack of local support, it is imperative that the BLM withdraw this RMP draft entirely.

Over the past 12 years, Wyoming has diligently worked to ensure a proposed RMP would be efficient, practical, and successful for the land and surrounding communities. Various public meetings, stakeholder engagements, and technological and scientific advancements have taken place to ensure that an RMP best serves the 3.6 million acres of BLM land. This draft RMP unfortunately falls short of including over a decade's worth of time, knowledge, and input.

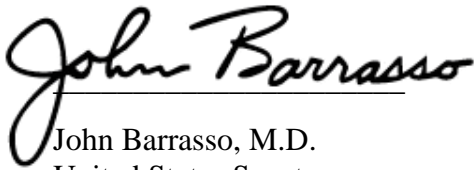
The 1.8 million-acre designation of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) included in this RMP will have a negative impact on those who live, work, and recreate here. It will also present economic and environmental impacts for the greater American West region. This ACEC designation, if enforced, will inevitably end grazing, critical transmission line improvements, and gas production that powers the region. Under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), which governs the BLM's policies regarding land usage, these 1.8 million acres will be reduced to a single use. Multiple use, which this area has historically been utilized for, could be ended in the quick publishing of a federal rule if public comments are not thoroughly considered.

Further, this designation creates more ambiguity around the BLM's use of ACECs. The BLM national office has no accurate database of ACECs. There is no standard format for reporting information about ACECs within the agency or to the public. The BLM in recent years has used ACECs to restrict recreational demands, obliterate grazing rights, and hinder economic development in lower-income communities. The absence of a standardized format of ACEC data, while the BLM pushes for more land to be designated as ACECs, is already leading to a

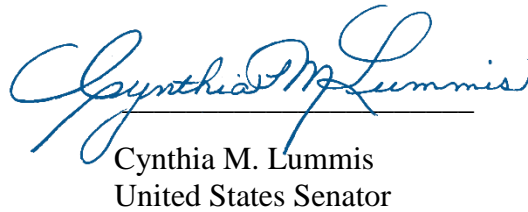
growing delta of distrust of what this draft RMP could mean for future BLM land decisions. This designation must incorporate rigorous input to ensure a collaborative plan is created.

We urge the BLM to fully consider the impact that this proposed designation will have on Wyoming and Utah communities. Over a decade's worth of Wyoming input should not be scrapped for a broad Washington mandate. We request that this draft as written, including the impractical choice of Alternative B as the agency's preferred alternative, be completely withdrawn. We urge you to consider drafting a new proposal that takes into consideration stakeholders and local partners in Wyoming and Utah.

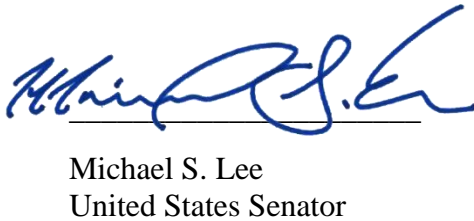
Sincerely,



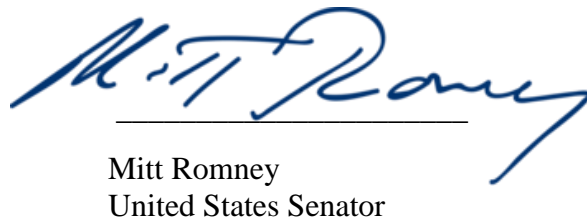
John Barrasso, M.D.
United States Senator



Cynthia M. Lummis
United States Senator



Michael S. Lee
United States Senator



Mitt Romney
United States Senator