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COUNTY OF PARK
Board of County
Commissioners



May 12, 2016

Neil Kornze
Director
Bureau of Land Management
1849 C Street N.W., Room. 5665
Washington, D.C. 20240

Re: the Bureau of Land Management's Proposed Resource Management Planning Rules, 81 Fed. Reg. 8674 (February 25, 2016)

Dear Director Kornze:

The undersigned representatives of local government are writing to share their support for provisions of the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) Proposed Resource Management Planning Rules, 81 Fed. Reg. 8674 (Feb. 25, 2016) (the Proposed Rules). In particular, we support the provisions of the Proposed Rules that provide additional opportunities for public involvement earlier in the planning process, including the chance to review preliminary resource management alternatives and preliminary rationales for those alternatives.

Each of undersigned representatives come from local jurisdictions whose land bases include substantial amounts of public lands managed by BLM. The management of these public lands is vitally important to the citizens we represent. Our citizens and local economies depend on these lands for sustainable multiple uses, from outdoor recreation to livestock grazing to mineral exploration and development.

The current BLM planning methodology lacks adequate opportunities for public involvement, particularly early in the process. It also lacks transparency. It often results in a range of alternatives that fails to address the concerns of all stakeholders. The proposed changes would provide the public with an opportunity to raise concerns and review potential management alternatives before these alternatives become solidified in a draft Resource Management Plan (RMP). This early public involvement will hopefully help resolve conflicts and produce RMPs that better reflect the needs of our citizens as well as others who use the public lands and have a stake in their future.

In addition, we note that the Proposed Rules also expand opportunities for states and local governments to have meaningful involvement in the development of BLM's land use decisions. The Proposed Rules continue to provide for coordination with state and local representatives in order to ensure, to the extent available under federal law, that RMPs are consistent with state and local land use plans, as provided in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

Sincerely,

Mike Brazell, Chairman County of Park

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