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CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY | FOOD & WATER WATCH | FRIENDS OF
THE EARTH | GREAT OLD BROADS FOR WILDERNESS | GREENPEACE |
RAINFOREST ACTION NETWORK | WILDEARTH GUARDIANS**

9 November 2015

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Re: Take action to cancel the 12 November 2015 Bureau of Land Management Colorado oil and gas lease sale

Dear Mr. President:

We, the undersigned organizations, write to urge you to cancel the 12 November Bureau of Land Management oil and gas lease sale scheduled for Lakewood, Colorado.

This lease sale, as do all new federal fossil fuel leases, continues a dangerous disconnect between your administration's climate goals and its "all of the above" energy policy. Federal leasing of publicly owned fossil fuels contributes significantly to U.S. and global greenhouse gas emissions. Over the past decade, the burning of fossil fuels from federal leasing has resulted in nationally and globally significant greenhouse gas emissions. Despite this pollution and the looming climate threat, your administration continues to lease publicly owned fossil fuels, endangering the health and welfare of communities and the planet.

As you may know, earlier this year more than 400 organizations and leaders called on your administration to end new federal fossil fuel leasing because the cost of continuing federal fossil fuel leasing to our communities, land, and climate is too high. The science is clear. To maintain a good chance of avoiding catastrophic levels of warming, the world must keep the vast majority of its remaining fossil fuels in the ground. Federal fossil fuels — those that belong to the people and that you control — are the natural place to begin. Each new federal fossil fuel lease opens new deposits for development that should be deemed unburnable. By placing those deposits off limits, stopping new leasing would help align your administration's energy policy with a safer climate future and global carbon budgets.

Moreover, under your administration the Department of Interior has failed to even attempt to quantify the cumulative greenhouse gas emissions of past and new leasing; nor has it

attempted to quantify the potential emissions of remaining unleased federal fossil fuels. This ongoing failure amounts to flying in the dark amidst a dangerous and worsening climate crisis. Independent analyses have shown that (1) over the past decade, the combustion of federal fossil fuels has resulted in nearly a quarter of all U.S. energy-related emissions, (2) about 67 million acres of federal fossil fuels are already leased to industry, representing, as of earlier this year, up to 43 billion tons of potential greenhouse gas pollution, and (3) remaining unleased federal fossil fuels contain up to 450 billion tons of additional potential greenhouse gas pollution.

Here, the Bureau of Land Management's 12 November lease sale continues this dangerous pattern by opening new fossil fuel resources and their resulting greenhouse gas emissions to development. This action is being taken in the absence of any analysis of the direct, indirect and cumulative greenhouse gas emissions. The Council on Environmental Quality, in a 2014 "Revised Draft Guidance for Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change Impacts," and BLM itself, in 2015 memo entitled "UPDATE Addressing Climate Change under NEPA," provide clear guidance to state and field offices to provide quantitative assessments of greenhouse gas emissions in environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act. Sadly, the Colorado State Office continues to ignore these requirements, dismissing the greenhouse gas emissions, climate impacts, and costs to society from this 66,000-acre oil and gas project as no more than "negligible."

The Secretary's Office of the Department of the Interior and the Director's Office of the Bureau of Land Management are both well aware of these shortcomings yet refuse to act to provide an honest accounting of the federal oil and gas program and its projects to the American public. That is why we are asking you to intervene.

For these reasons, we to urge you to cancel the 12 November Bureau of Land Management oil and gas lease sale scheduled for Lakewood, Colorado. Business as usual under the federal oil and gas leasing program is simply no longer a viable option.

Respectfully,

/s/
Micah Parkin
Executive Director
350 Colorado

/s/
Emily Wurth
Water Program Director
Food & Water Watch

/s/
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Great Old Broads for Wilderness

/s/
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/s/
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/s/
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/s/
Marissa Knodel
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/s/
Tim Ream
Climate and Energy Campaign Director
WildEarth Guardians

/s/
Teresa Mills
Fracking Coordinator
Buckeye Forest Council

/s/
Jason Kawolski
Policy Director
350.org

/s/
Diana Best
Campaigner
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Cc: Sally Jewell, Secretary
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