

Date submitted (UTC): 5/22/2015 4:46:31 AM

First name: Christopher

Last name: Lish

Organization:

Title:

Official Representative/Member Indicator:

Address1:

Address2:

City: Olema

State: CA

Province/Region:

Zip/Postal Code:

Country: United States

Email:

Phone:

Comments:

Thursday, May 21, 2015

Colorado Roadless Rule

740 Simms Street

Golden, Co 80401

Subject: No Roadless Bulldozing Loophole for Arch Coal. Keep 350 million tons of coal in the ground -- Rulemaking for Colorado Roadless Coal Exception #46470

Dear Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack and USFS Chief Tidwell,

I am very disappointed to learn that the U.S. Forest Service has proposed to create a loophole that would give the second largest coal company in the U.S. access to 19,000 acres of public forest and 350 million tons of taxpayer-owned coal in a roadless area of Colorado. I strongly urge the U.S. Forest Service to not reopen the coal mining loophole in the Colorado Roadless Rule.

"Our government is like a rich and foolish spendthrift who has inherited a magnificent estate in perfect order, and then has left his fields and meadows, forests and parks to be sold and plundered and wasted."
-- John Muir

Any way one looks at this proposal, it is a really bad deal for the American people. This unnecessary trade-off is terrible for our forests and public lands, bad for our climate, and bad for the American people. Reopening the loophole will apparently benefit just one company--Arch Coal--while paving the way for mining up to 350 million tons of dirty coal. This could unleash more than half a billion tons of carbon pollution--more than three years' worth of carbon emissions from all human sources in the state of Colorado.

"It is horrifying that we have to fight our own government to save the environment."
-- Ansel Adams

The Obama Administration has shown modest leadership on addressing the challenge of preventing catastrophic climate change, but this would be a big step backwards. By paving the way for more coal mining, this loophole will undermine President Obama's commitment to reducing climate pollution. Recent research shows that if we want to halt the worst potential damage from climate change, we must keep much of the world's known fossil fuel reserves in the ground. It's not surprising that Arch Coal wants this loophole, but the Forest Service shouldn't undermine the President's climate goals just to appease one coal company. The Forest Service should draw the line here.

"Do not suffer your good nature, when application is made, to say 'Yes' when you should say 'No'. Remember, it is a public not a private cause that is to be injured or benefited by your choice."
-- George Washington

In addition, the loophole will set the stage for dozens of miles of roads to be bulldozed across 19,000 acres of roadless forest, destroying habitat for black bear, elk, goshawk, and lynx. Valued recreation and hunting areas

will be scarred for years to benefit one corporation.

"Every man who appreciates the majesty and beauty of the wilderness and of wild life, should strike hands with the farsighted men who wish to preserve our material resources, in the effort to keep our forests and our game beasts, game-birds, and game-fish--indeed, all the living creatures of prairie and woodland and seashore--from wanton destruction. Above all, we should realize that the effort toward this end is essentially a democratic movement."

-- Theodore Roosevelt

The Forest Service should not sacrifice 19,000 acres of important roadless habitat and open up half a billion tons of carbon pollution just so Arch Coal can line its pockets. Please keep the Colorado Roadless Rule as it is. The Forest Service should reject the Arch Coal Loophole to protect our public lands and our climate for the good of the American people.

"A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise."

-- Aldo Leopold

Thank you for your consideration of my comments. Please do NOT add my name to your mailing list. I will learn about future developments on this issue from other sources.

Sincerely,
Christopher Lish
Olema, CA