



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

OCT 21 2009



The Honorable Mark Pryor  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Pryor:

Thank you for your letter dated September 18, 2009, to Secretary Ken Salazar expressing your strong support for the 2010–2015 Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Draft Proposed Program (DPP). Secretary Salazar asked me to respond. A similar letter is being sent to each signer of your letter.

The comment period on the DPP closed on September 21, 2009. The Minerals Management Service (MMS) received over 530,000 comments on the DPP. The MMS will summarize and analyze those comments as quickly as possible in order to move expeditiously to the next steps in the process, which include scoping of the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and publication of the Proposed Program and draft EIS. Your comments will be considered carefully in that endeavor.

On July 28, 2009, the U.S. Court of Appeals clarified that its ruling on the 2007–2012 Program delays only those sales in the Chukchi, Beaufort, and Bering Seas. However, it will be necessary to re-balance all sales in the 2007–2012 plan once the revised environmental sensitivity analysis is complete.

Thank you for your interest in the OCS program. Secretary Salazar and I look forward to working with you to move forward in developing a comprehensive Federal offshore energy plan for the benefit of the Nation. If you have any questions you may contact me or Ms. S. Elizabeth Birnbaum, Director, MMS, at (202) 208-3500.

Sincerely,

ACTING

Wilma A. Lewis  
Assistant Secretary  
Land and Minerals Management

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 18, 2009

The Honorable Ken Salazar  
Secretary  
Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing to convey our strong support for the Draft Proposed Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program (DPP) proposed by the U.S. Minerals Management Service (MMS). By opening up new offshore areas for natural gas and oil leasing and development and also allowing for the development of renewable energy as proposed in the DPP, the Department of the Interior can provide the United States with an opportunity to responsibly produce our own energy. This development will bolster our nation's economy, create new jobs and decrease our dependence on foreign sources of energy.

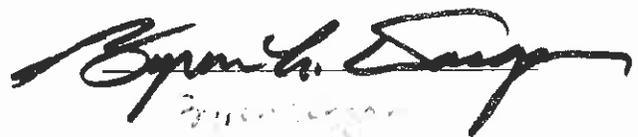
It is more important than ever that the federal government allow for development of domestic offshore energy supplies made available in the DPP. By offering new leasing opportunities, the DPP is appropriately expansive and provides the Department with maximum flexibility to properly utilize our nation's domestic resources.

Now is the appropriate time to promote long-term policies that responsibly encourage job creation while growing the economy. Important offshore areas, like those in Alaska, offer tremendous natural gas and oil resources. By some estimates, the Chukchi Sea alone off Alaska's coast contains as much natural gas and oil as the country has produced in the Gulf of Mexico since 1942.

Additionally, we urge MMS to move forward with the 2007-2012 Leasing Program while working to approve and finalize the new DPP. Implementing a sensible, forward-thinking energy policy will allow for responsible leasing and development of America's energy resources and will help industries and businesses here at home that rely heavily on natural gas and crude oil. It will also further our national security and energy security interests and, of course, spur jobs and economic growth as we open new areas to leasing and development.

In conclusion, we are pleased to see that the MMS has included new leasing areas in the DPP and has acknowledged the need for the United States to begin responsibly developing the abundant energy resources located off our coasts. We believe that the DPP is an important step in creating a robust, diverse, national energy policy which will help secure our energy future. We urge you to move forward on the DPP as you work to finalize a new five-year OCS plan. Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of assistance to you.

Sincerely,



September 18, 2009

Page Two

Joe Neuharth

Art Bond

Michael B. Enzi

Richard Shelby

John McCain

Jan Rhoads

John Thune

John Warner

John Cornyn

Blanche L. Lincoln

Chris Coons

Joni DeMint

Jeff Sessions

Sally Chaudin

Jim Cooper

Mike Johanns

Paul Cook

Ben Ray Lujan

September 18, 2009

Page Three

Dil Vitt

Pat Roberts

Chris Z. Benner

Tom Cole

Sam Froulock

Ray Dwyer

Lamar Alexander

Mark Royce

George V. Voinovich

Don Stutz

Chuck Grassley

John Barrasso

Jim Bunning

Mark Begich

Ben Ray

466795

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

DH  
12/6

November 30, 2012

Lena McDowell  
Associate Director for Business Services  
National Park Service  
1849 "C" Street, NW  
Room 2276  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. McDowell:

We are writing to you today about the implementation of risk management strategies in National Parks, specifically with regard to the contract under consideration for canoe rental operations at Buffalo National River in Arkansas. Ms. Jo Pendry graciously agreed to meet with us recently about several contracting issues which we think undermine visitor services in National Parks, including high liability insurance requirements.

Among our concerns in the Buffalo River contract are the Operating Plan, Exhibit B, and the manner in which the National Park Service arrives at solutions for risk management issues in general. The language in Contract Exhibit B, Operating Plan paragraph 2N(4) prohibits put-in activity by concessioners when river levels are determined to be "High", which represent swift water or Class II conditions on the Buffalo National River, unless:

- "The concessioner can verify that their client, and all members of the clients party, have canoeing experience on swift moving rivers;
- They possess good river canoeing skills, and;
- They are familiar with rescue procedures."

In response to an inquiry by concessioners on May 29, 2012, the Service wrote that this verification could be obtained by use of a "self-certification form". I think you will agree that "self-certification" is quite different legally and in practice than requiring the concessioner to "verify" or attest to the paddling skills of their clients. Therefore, a contradiction with confusing, potentially serious legal consequences may be created if the language in (4) remains as written. Is NPS going to allow concessioners to develop this document and self-certification language, which may not adequately fulfill the legal verification requirements outlined in (4) of the Operating Plan as it is currently written?

Providing appropriate warning and orientation to visitors at various water levels is an appropriate risk management consideration at Buffalo National River. However, if this risk management concern is appropriate for the visitors of concessioners then it would appear that the Service is obligated to apply the same concern and policy to the safety of those who rent boats outside the purview of NPS regulations and those who borrow or bring their own boats to the Buffalo River during similar water levels. If the river is only closed to the customers of concessioners, would that not encourage visitors to rent canoes or craft elsewhere without proper safety orientation or insurance coverage? We want to emphasize that we are not advocating procedures that

DEC 06 2012

complicate reasonable public access, increase the Service's or visitors' costs, or require the Service to raise fees for access to Buffalo National River. We are simply pointing out the incongruity in the Service's policy and its potential for unintended consequences which may increase risks to Park visitors.

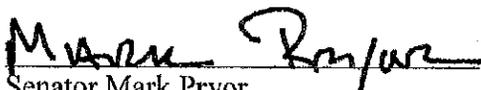
This leads us to the process for arriving at these risk management solutions for concessioners in National Parks and at Buffalo River. While the operating plan is the appropriate place to address this specific issue, that plan and risk management strategies in general should be developed in collaboration with concessioners so that contradictory direction, which is inconsistent with the legal obligations of the contract and operating plan, are not created as may have occurred in this instance.

We ask that Exhibit B (4) and the verification process it refers to be revised before requiring concessioners to sign contracts which obligate them to abide by this provision. As an alternative, the contract may, for example, obligate concessioners to work in collaboration with NPS to develop appropriate risk management strategies when "High" water conditions are present.

The fact that we are writing to you on issues of such detail is indicative of a failure of the current concessions contracting process, which does not provide an avenue through which concessioners may effectively address legitimate issues. We suspect that operating plans may be developed with a higher level of collaboration in some Parks than occurred in this instance. However, we also know this issue continues to be a concern for several of the Buffalo River applicants especially if the language is not adjusted.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns about this issue. We very much appreciate and support your desire to get this contract issued in a timely fashion so that Buffalo River concessioners can begin preparing for the 2013 season. We look forward to receiving your response as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

  
Senator Mark Pryor

  
Senator John Boozman

MARK PRYOR  
ARKANSAS

COMMITTEES:  
APPROPRIATIONS

COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND  
TRANSPORTATION

HOMELAND SECURITY AND  
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

SMALL BUSINESS AND  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

255 DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510  
(202) 224-2353

500 PRESIDENT CLINTON AVENUE  
SUITE 401  
LITTLE ROCK, AR 72201  
(501) 324-6336  
TOLL FREE: (877) 259-9602  
<http://pryor.senate.gov>

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 6, 2010

The Honorable Thomas L. Strickland  
Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks  
Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Strickland,

Per our conversation yesterday, I write to you to express concern over the Department of Interior's policy on commercial filming on Department of Interior properties, especially on National Park Service (NPS) properties. My particular concern is in regard to the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) Arkansas Affiliate, AETN.

Producer Chuck Dovish has a weekly TV series called, "Exploring Arkansas with Chuck Dovish" that airs on AETN. He has highlighted state and national parks and other outdoor adventure spots in Arkansas for 30 years. The last five years he has been a producer for AETN so every show he produces is seen statewide by thousands of our viewers.

He recently planned a film shoot at the lower portion of the Buffalo River to do a segment on the Native American Rock House. The 10,000 year old site once inhabited by Native Americans is a lesser known spot to visit in Arkansas. His segment would have educated Arkansans about a unique part of our history and culture, raised awareness of the Buffalo National River, and promoted tourism to the NPS facilities.

Unfortunately, he and his crew were told they were required to fill out permit papers and pay certain "cost recovery" fees that they were not accustomed to paying. According to AETN, these fees are not reasonable and are cost prohibitive.

Recent laws, including P.L. 106-67, were enacted in efforts to recover costs incurred as a result of filming activities taking place on park properties. These laws were primarily designed to recoup costs from the filming of high-grossing motion pictures like "Dances with Wolves." However, AETN's products are educational in nature and are composed for non-profit purpose. In addition, they do not have the resources that large production companies may have. Their programs educate the public, raise awareness of park facilities, and drive visitors to parks.

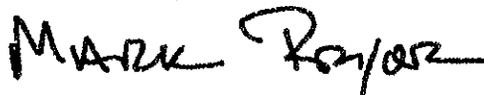
Existing laws, regulations, and NPS reference manuals grant authority and discretion to set reasonable fees and make waivers in certain instances where the NPS may see significant benefits from the production of certain public awareness programming that is consistent with the mission of the NPS.

Due to the public interest nature of AETN's programming, I encourage Secretary Salazar or the NPS Director to notify Arkansas NPS superintendents in writing that AETN should be treated differently under commercial filming regulations in accordance to Reference Manual 53 Appendix 13-3 "Other Media Coverage," and should have all Cost Recovery fees eliminated or significantly reduced.

I appreciate your consideration of this request. I look forward to working with you to clarify the intent of existing laws and regulations regulating filming on NPS properties to preserve unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. We hope the Park Service will cooperate with partners like PBS and its affiliates to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

If you have any questions, please feel free to follow up with my Legislative Assistant, Andrew Grobmyer, at (202) 224-2353. Additionally, Carole Adornetto, Director of Production for AETN, would be happy to answer any of your questions. She can be reached at (501) 682-4124.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "MARK Pryor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "M" and "P".

Mark Pryor

MARK PRYOR  
ARKANSAS  
COMMITTEES  
APPROPRIATIONS  
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND  
TRANSPORTATION  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND  
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS  
SMALL BUSINESS AND  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

255 DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510  
(202) 224-2353

500 PRESIDENT CLINTON AVENUE  
SUITE 401  
LITTLE ROCK, AR 72201  
(501) 324-6336  
TOLL FREE: (877) 259-9602  
<http://pryor.senate.gov>

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 13, 2010

The Honorable Ken Salazar  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ken:

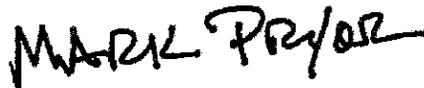
I am pleased to write in support of the City of McGehee, Arkansas', grant application which has been submitted to the National Park Service. I understand the proceeds will be used to renovate the Railroad Depot in McGehee which will be used as a museum and house the Japanese American Confinement Site display.

As you may know, Desha and Ashley County in Arkansas had the only Japanese American Confinement sites east of Wyoming. This museum will be of great benefit to the people of southeast Arkansas and, also, recognize and pay tribute to those interned in these camps.

This is an important project that is certainly worthy of funding. It is my hope that the United States Department of Interior will give positive consideration of the City of McGehee's application.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Mark Pryor

MLP/sj

RECEIVED  
2010 APR 19 PM 2:48  
485582

# SENATOR BLANCHE LINCOLN

State of Arkansas



Phone: 202-224-4843  
Fax: 202-228-1371  
Little Rock Office  
Phone: 501-375-2993  
Fax: 501-375-7064

DATE: 6-18-10

FAX TO: Director Marcia McNutt

OFFICE: USGS

FAX NUMBER: 703 648 4454 DIRECT DIAL: \_\_\_\_\_

FROM: Senator Blanche Lincoln, Senator Mark Pryor, Congressman Mike Ross

SUBJECT: Letter to Secretary Ulsack and Chief Tidwell  
regarding recent flash flooding in Arkansas.

NUMBER OF PAGES 2 (including cover sheet)

**Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515**

June 18, 2010

The Honorable Tom Vilsack  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Chief Tom Tidwell  
U.S. Forest Service  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Chief Tidwell:

We are writing in reference to the recent flash flooding at the Albert Pike campground in southwest Arkansas that claimed the lives of 20 people. First, we would like to thank you for your agency's efforts in recent days to assist the many families in Arkansas that were impacted by the tragic flash flood. Your presence at the campground Saturday meant a great deal to Arkansas. We commend you and your staff for your response efforts and your ability to coordinate with state and local officials in their attempts to rescue and recover victims.

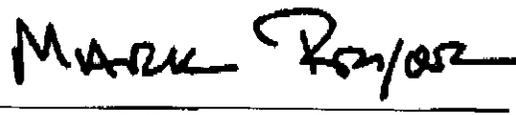
We hope that going forward we can continue such a coordinated effort to cleanup, rebuild, and reopen this majestic campground. In doing so, we would like for you to work with the United States Geological Survey, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and state and local officials to determine how to improve emergency warning systems for campground visitors at Albert Pike. We know the rugged terrain and remote location of Albert Pike, conditions that exist at a number of campgrounds located in our country's National Forests, pose cumbersome barriers to effective communication with the outside world. Innovative solutions will be needed to meet the challenges the terrain presents so we can help ensure the safety of the visitors in the area. We also ask that you work with us to find a way to properly memorialize those lives that were lost in this tragic flood.

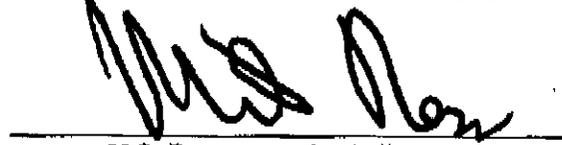
We are deeply saddened by the loss of life, and we believe we must consider additional measures going forward in an effort to prevent a similar event in the future. We look forward to working with you to enhance campground safety and emergency warning systems so that we may make this very popular campground better than ever.

Thank you for your attention to this letter.

Sincerely,

  
U.S. Senator Blanche L. Lincoln

  
U.S. Senator Mark Pryor

  
U.S. Representative Mike Ross

cc: The Honorable Marcia McNutt, Director, United States Geological Survey  
The Honorable Jane Lubchenco, Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

MARK PRYOR  
ARKANSAS  
COMMITTEE  
APPROPRIATIONS  
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND  
TRANSPORTATION  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND  
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS  
SMALL BUSINESS AND  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

**United States Senate**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 8, 2011

755 DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510  
(202) 224-7253

500 PRESIDENT CLINTON AVENUE  
SUITE 401  
LITTLE ROCK, AR 72201  
(501) 324-6336  
TOLL FREE: (877) 259-9602  
<http://pryor.senate.gov>

The Honorable Ken Salazar  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar,

As you know, every penny the government spends is being scrutinized for potential savings as we seek to reduce our bloated budget and budget deficit. We can begin by eliminating inefficient, duplicative or outdated programs.

In a report released last week, the Government Accountability Office provided Congress with 81 areas of potential savings as a result of duplicative programs. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee and Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, I am prepared to turn many of their findings into cost-savings.

I would appreciate hearing from you whether you agree with the report's findings concerning the Department of Interior and the actions your agency has or plans to take in the short- and long-term as a result of the report to achieve cost-savings. If you are aware of duplicative or unnecessary programs within your agency that the GAO did not cite, please include a plan of action to eliminate those programs as well.

For your reference, the report, *Opportunities to Reduce Potential Duplication in Government Programs, Save Tax Dollars and Enhance Revenue*, addressed the following regarding the Department:

- Fragmented federal efforts to meet water needs in the U.S.-Mexico border region have resulted in an administrative burden, redundant activities, and an overall inefficient use of resources.
- Enterprise Architectures: Key mechanisms for identifying potential overlap and duplication.
- Consolidating Federal data centers provides opportunity to improve government efficiency.
- Strategic oversight mechanisms could help integrate fragmented interagency efforts to defend against biological threats.

- 
- Further steps needed to improve cost-effectiveness and enhance services for transportation-disadvantaged persons.
  - Ensuring the Federal government receives fair market value for its oil and gas resources could enhance Federal revenues
  - Agencies could realize cost savings by disposal of unneeded Federal real property.

I would appreciate a response no later than March 21, 2011. If you have any questions, please contact Andrew Grobmyer at 202-224-2353.

Sincerely,



Mark Pryor

2011 MAR 23 P 11:02  
OFFICE  
OF THE  
SECRETARY

819667