



# United States Senator Craig Thomas

307 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510

To: Congressional and Legislative Affairs

From: Cindy Reed  
Legislative Aide and Special Projects Manager  
U.S. Senator Craig Thomas (R-WY)  
(202)224-6441

Regarding: Centennial Challenge Letter

4 Pages following this cover sheet.

**NOTES:**

Please contact me with any questions.

- Cindy 202-224-1386

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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 26, 2013

The Honorable Sally Jewell  
Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001

Dear Secretary Jewell:

We write in regard to the National Blueways System and the designation of the White River and the White River Watershed as the nation's second National Blueway. As part of the America's Great Outdoors initiative, we understand that the National Blueways System is intended to empower local communities. As the Department of Interior stated in announcing the designation of the White River Blueway, this designation "does not establish a new protective status or regulation, but rather is intended to recognize and support existing local and regional conservation, recreation, and restoration efforts."

However, recently many of our constituents have raised questions and concerns regarding the National Blueways System and the designation of the White River and its watershed as a National Blueway. They have informed us that they do not feel that they have been provided with the necessary information regarding the designation, or a fair opportunity to be involved in the process. Specifically, many of our constituents have expressed concerns about the impact of the Blueways designation on regulatory actions and private property rights.

Given that your program seeks to empower local communities, effective outreach from your agency and collaboration with local communities is essential. Unfortunately, based on the feedback we have received from our constituents, we do not believe that the Department of Interior has worked effectively to date with residents of the White River Watershed.

We respectfully request that you provide our offices with information regarding the steps your agency will take to improve the availability of information and communication regarding the National Blueways System and the designation of the White River Blueway.

Finally, we request that you promptly respond to the following questions, which have been raised by our constituents:

- 1) Please explain the Department's interpretation of what statutes authorize the National Blueways System.
- 2) Please provide the factors that were used to determine whether a "committed, diverse, stakeholder partnership or association" existed and the process used to make this determination.

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- 3) What is the Department's vision for the White River and its watershed if the designation continues?
- 4) Are any additional costs caused by or associated with this designation? Is there potential for savings?
- 5) Is there a process through which a State, non-federal entity, or individual may request to opt out of the Blueway designation? What would be the effect of this action, if it were to occur?
- 6) Will the Blueways designation result in the implementation of recommendations from the Blueways Nomination from the 26 organizations?
- 7) Will the Blueways designation have any effect on dams within the region?

We will be closely monitoring developments in this important matter. Thank you, in advance, for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

MARK ROYER

Gene McCallister

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

April 15, 2013

The Honorable Sally Jewell  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, Northwest  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Jewell,

We write in regard to Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 funding for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) National Fish Hatchery Operations. We strongly support our nation's mitigation fish hatcheries and request that they be fully funded for FY 2013.

The U.S. FWS National Fish Hatchery Operations account has historically supported two mitigation hatcheries in Arkansas – Greers Ferry and Norfolk. According to the U.S. FWS, these two hatcheries received approximately \$1.5 million in federal funding in FY 2012 and were responsible for a total local economic impact of approximately \$166 million. Further, these hatcheries support an estimated 2,000 jobs in rural Arkansas and generate approximately \$5.8 million in federal tax revenues. We believe that a program costing the federal government an estimated \$1.5 million annually and resulting in an estimated \$166 million in economic output annually should serve as a model for other federal programs.

Public Law 113-6 requires the Department of Interior and many other Federal agencies to submit a spending, expenditure, or operating plan for FY 2013. Within those plans, we request that the U.S. FWS ensure that there is sufficient funding to provide for the continued operation of the mitigation fish hatcheries.

Congress addressed mitigation fish hatchery funding in FY 2012 through H.Rept. 112-331, which accompanies P.L. 112-74. This report states that “future budget requests must ensure that Federal partners have committed to make sufficient funding available to reimburse the Service before the Service proposes to eliminate funding for mitigation hatcheries so that operations at these hatcheries are not disrupted.” We request that the FY 2013 spending, expenditure, and operating plan reflect the intent of Congress on this issue.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. We look forward to your response. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide additional information.

Sincerely,



Senator Mark Pryor



Senator John Boozman



Congressman Rick Crawford



# United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Washington, D.C. 20240



**MAY - 2 2013**

The Honorable Mark Pryor  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Pryor:

Thank you for your letter of April 15, 2013, to Interior Secretary Jewell, co-signed by Senator John Boozman and Congressman Rick Crawford, expressing concerns with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 budget and operating plan and its impact on the future operations of Greers Ferry and Norfolk National Fish Hatcheries in Arkansas. Secretary Jewell requested that the Service respond directly to you.

The Service shares your views about the economic and recreational benefits provided by the production of fish at these mitigation hatcheries. In the past decade, the Service intensified efforts to obtain reimbursement for mitigation fish production so the National Fish Hatchery System base funds could be redirected to recovery and restoration of native species and their habitats. The President's FY2012 budget proposed that mitigation fish hatcheries be funded by the Federal agencies that operate the projects for which the mitigation is occurring. This type of user-pay approach would allow federal water development agencies to mitigate for the adverse effects of their projects. The President's FY2013 and FY2014 budgets propose the same user-pay approach.

In the FY2013 continuing resolution, funds have been provided for the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation to reimburse the Service for these costs. The Service has signed an agreement with the Tennessee Valley Authority to obtain reimbursement as well. We're pleased to respond that mitigation fish production at the Arkansas hatcheries is funded through the combination of reimbursement funding and the Service's FY2013 operating plan.

The Service supports production of fish for these important recreational fisheries. However, the Service believes responsible agencies should reimburse for the cost of these fish. In these tight budget times, the Service is funding the highest aquatic species conservation priorities.

If you have any questions please contact me directly or have your staff contact Mr. Jeffrey Underwood, the Service's Acting Assistant Director for Fish and Aquatic Conservation at (202) 208-5317.

Sincerely,

DIRECTOR

MARK PRYOR

ARKANSAS

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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 3, 2012

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

Dear Secretary Salazar,

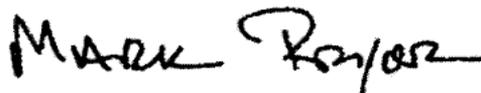
I write to you today to recommend Mr. (b) (6) to serve on the national Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board (Advisory Board). Enclosed is a copy of Mr. (b) (6) nomination letter and resume.

(b) (6) is uniquely qualified to serve on the Advisory Board. He spent over thirty years with the United States Department of Agriculture. With the USDA, he was responsible for working daily with farmers and ranchers on a range of issues, including loans, land management, and livestock management. As (b) (6) for the United State Department of Interior (b) (6) advised management officials of (b) (6) (b) (6)

Outside of his professional work (b) (6) has extensive experience that would be beneficial to his service on the Advisory Board. Serving as a volunteer for ten years with BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program, (b) (6) has conducted mustang demonstrations, assisted with adoptions, and completed compliance reviews. He has also taught numerous classes at North Arkansas College covering areas such as horse production, farm management, and pasture management.

With (b) (6) breadth and depth of experience, I believe he would add an important perspective to the work of the Advisory Board, and I am happy to recommend him. If I may provide any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Mark Pryor

Enclosures (2)

Cc: Sharon Kipping. Wild Horse and Burro Program. Bureau of Land Management

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**Ms. Sharon Kipping  
Wild Horse and Burro Program  
Department of Interior/BLM  
1849 C Street, N.W. Room 2134 LM, WO-260  
Washington, D.C. 202040**

**Dear Ms. Kipping,**

**Please accept this as a nomination letter for the Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board.**

**Name:  
Address:**



**Email:  
Phone :**

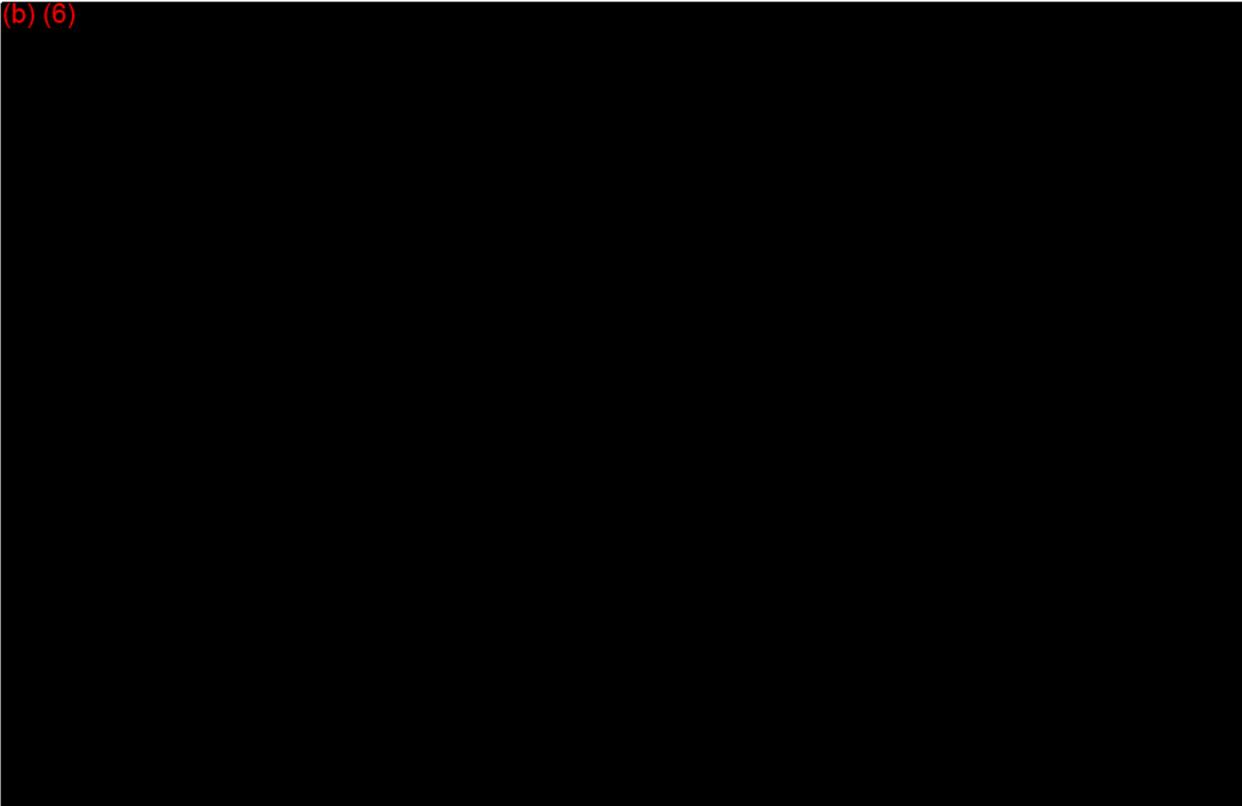
**Enclosed is my educational background, relevant biographical information, references and endorsements.**

**There are two categories I am highly qualified to fill: Public interest (with special knowledge of wild horses and burros) and Livestock Management.**

**I believe I am unique qualified to serve on the Bureau of Land Management's Wild Horse and Burro National Advisory Board.**

The controversial issues involved requires someone who has experience in working with groups and individuals with polar opposite opinions and finding the middle ground.

(b) (6)



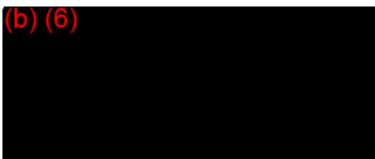
My over 30 years of working with farmers and ranchers, providing loans, management support and supervision also enables me to understand the issues involved with land management, stocking rate, managing a large livestock population and explaining the "why" of policies and procedures to diverse special interest groups.

Being a volunteer for the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program has given me detailed knowledge about the adoption process. I have successfully adopted mustangs and demonstrated them at adoptions

and other venues. I fully understand the problems facing BLM and the mustangs. I have completed compliance reviews, handled problem cases and represented BLM at events. I have trained and owned horses for a lifetime and have worked with or have had contact with the groups concerned with the welfare of horses. My knowledge, skills and experiences will enable me to work with these groups in a positive manner.

Thank you for your consideration.

(b) (6)

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# RESUME

(b) (6)

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## Work History:

(b) (6)

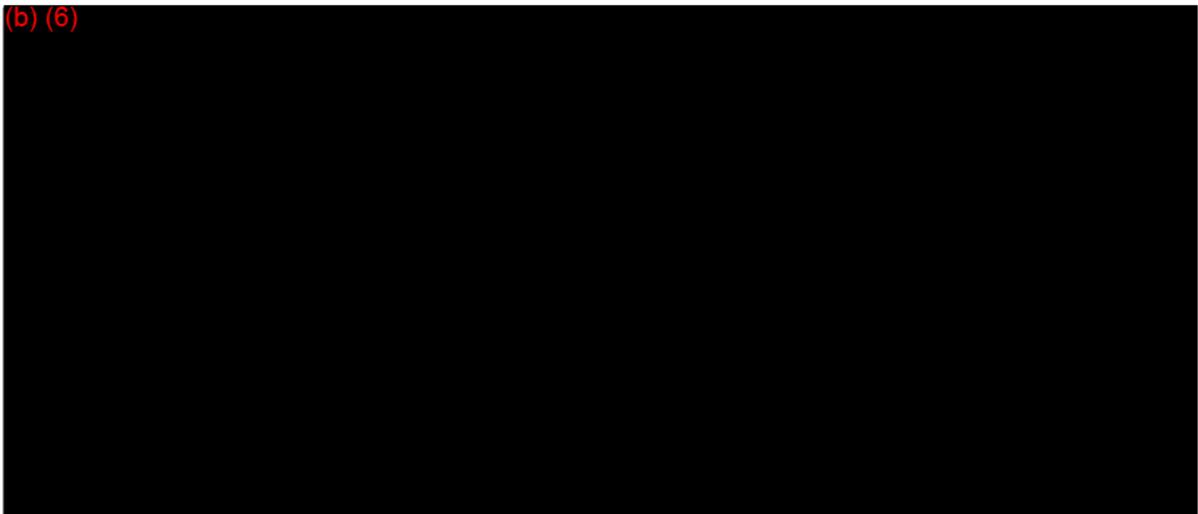
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Supervisor:

(b) (6)

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(b) (6)

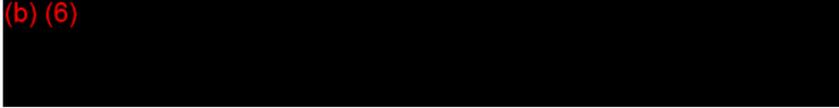
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(b) (6)

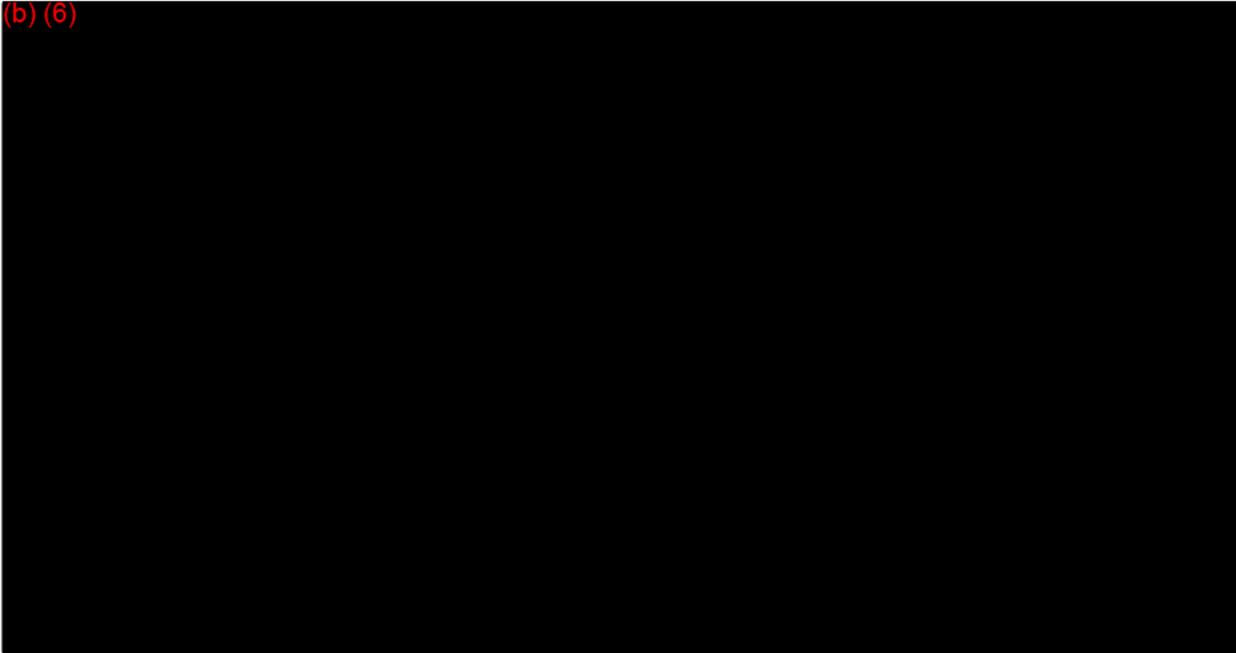


**Supervisor:**

(b) (6)



(b) (6)

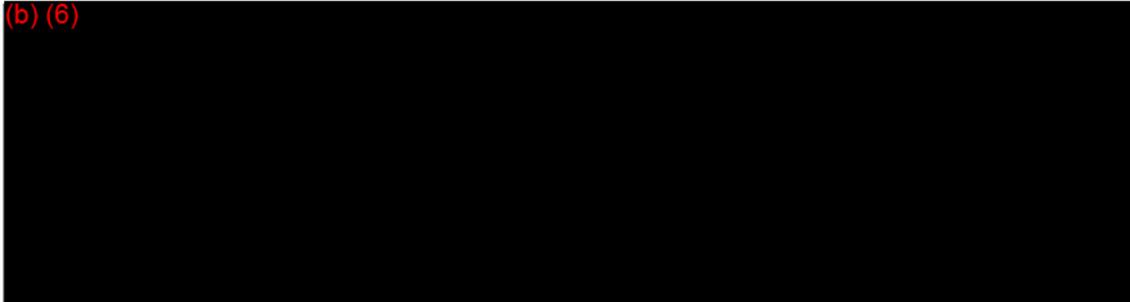


**Supervisor:**

(b) (6)



(b) (6)



**Other Activities:**

(b) (6)



**Educational background:**

**BS Degree in Agriculture-Business/Animal Science 1980**

(b) (6)

**Numerous (over 30 years) job related courses in management, personnel, appraisals, performance reviews, government regulations, policies and procedures.**

**Educational experience of operating a livestock operation (horse and cattle) for over 30 years.**



United States Department of the Interior  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Washington, D.C. 20240  
<http://www.blm.gov>



**AUG 23 2012**

The Honorable Mark Pryor  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Pryor:

Thank you for your August 3, 2012, letter regarding the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board (Board). I appreciate your support for appointing (b) (6) to the Board. His nomination, along with others for this Board, is proceeding through the selection process.

The Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act established this Board of citizens who represent various interests, including wild horse and burro advocacy groups, research institutions, veterinarians, natural resource organizations, humane advocacy groups, wildlife associations, livestock organizations, and members of the public with a special knowledge of equine behavior. The Board is solely advisory, and the BLM greatly values the contributions of its members.

Thank you for your interest in the Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board.

Sincerely,

Mike Pool  
Acting Director

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## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 8, 2011

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.

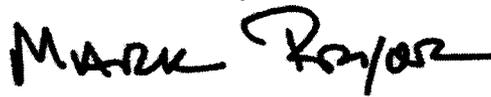
For your reference, the report, *Opportunities to Reduce Potential Duplication in Government Programs, Save Tax Dollars and Enhance Revenue*, addressed the following regarding the Department:

- 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

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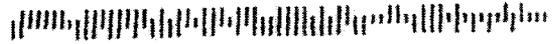
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THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR  
WASHINGTON

MAY 27 2011

The Honorable Mark Pryor  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Pryor:

This responds to your March 8, 2011, letter regarding the Government Accountability Office (GAO) report *Opportunities to Reduce Potential Duplication in Government Programs, Save Tax Dollars and Enhance Revenue*. I regret we were not able to meet your request to respond by March 21. We did not receive your request until March 23.

I share your interest in reducing the costs of government and identifying areas of savings. The Department of the Interior continues to be aggressive in identifying improvement and efficiencies to make programs work better and redirecting funding to mission critical needs.

I have reviewed the GAO report and can share the following responses relative to your specific questions:

1. **Federal Efforts to Meet Water Needs in the Border Region:** I agree that we can improve the coordination of efforts among Federal programs that deliver water and wastewater systems to rural areas. The GAO's recommendation to improve the targeting of resources in the border region is to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment. It is important to understand that the programs and projects funded by the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) are specifically authorized by Congress and existing authority does not allow the completion of a comprehensive needs assessment of rural water in the border region. Reclamation does have authority to provide limited cost-shared assistance to communities through competitive funding opportunities under its Rural Water, WaterSMART Basin Studies, and Title XVI Water Recycling and Reuse programs. It is a significant benefit to all agencies – Federal, state, and local – that our Fiscal Year 2012 budget for the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) includes \$10.9 million to commence comprehensive water supply and demand inventories that will provide baseline information needed by public and private water managers to work toward sustainable water supplies. This would begin an effort to estimate freshwater supplies, how they are distributed, and how they are changing over time. The USGS has targeted the Colorado River Basin, an area encompassing significant border regions, as one of the three basins where this assessment will be conducted with FY 2012 funding. An assessment of the availability and use of water resources in the United States was last completed over 30 years ago in 1978. We are hopeful that Congress will support this program that will go a long way toward helping to prioritize rural water needs.
2. **Enterprise Architecture:** Just as GAO recommends, the Department is using its award-winning enterprise architecture to guide the modernization of information technology infrastructure. The Department is underway with an Information Technology Transformation effort that will

leverage systems and investments from across the Department's diverse and geographically dispersed bureaus and offices in order to improve integration with business services and create an environment that better supports mission areas and program delivery.

3. **Consolidating Federal Data Centers:** Consistent with GAO's recommendations we are consolidating data centers throughout the Department as part of our Information Technology Transformation Initiative. We are working collaboratively with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on its Data Center Consolidation Initiative to reduce hardware, software, rental space, and other costs related to data center operations.
4. **Strategic Oversight Mechanisms:** The Department has clear roles in defending against biological threats, including maintaining awareness, surveillance, and detection. Working through our coordinating mechanisms led by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), we are able to support these efforts with the expertise of the USGS. The USGS provides technical information and support to the DHS on newly emerging diseases, collaborates with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to investigate wildlife disease outbreaks, works with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on the detection of highly pathogenic avian influenza in wild birds, and provides expertise to Federal agencies on the role of wildlife and the environment in disease events. As the expert in wildlife health the USGS serves as the leader in this area.
5. **Transportation-Disadvantaged Persons:** The majority of the Department's programs relating to transportation are funded through the Department of Transportation (DOT), and we have significantly expanded our efforts to coordinate with DOT and our sister agencies, including the USDA Forest Service, to improve coordination of programs and services. In addition, our internal roads and transportation programs are conducted in a manner that leverages the DOT programs. Our recent involvement with OMB, DOT, and USDA has been to ensure coordination and collaborative approaches to transportation programs funded in upcoming transportation authorization legislation.
6. **Fair Market Value for Oil and Gas:** The Department is taking steps to encourage diligent development of oil and gas leases, ensure a fair return, and ensure that oil and gas produced are measured accurately.

To respond to GAO's specific recommendations we are taking the following actions:

- **GAO Recommendation:** Congress may need to take action to authorize or encourage Interior to revise its rental fee structure for non-producing leases.
  - To encourage diligent development of Federal oil and gas leases, both onshore and offshore, the Department included a \$4 per acre annual fee on non-producing, onshore Federal oil and gas leases in the FY 2011 and FY 2012 budgets, which would become effective upon Congressional action. Additionally, in 2009, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE) began charging escalating rental rates for offshore leases extended beyond the initial term and shortened the length of the primary term for offshore oil and gas leases in 2010.

- GAO Recommendation: Interior should complete its study examining how other oil and gas resource owners select fiscal parameters for leasing and adjusting oil and gas royalty rates and use that information to adjust, as appropriate, its royalty rates to a level that ensures the government a fair return. In doing so it should ensure opportunities for substantive, two-way communication with program stakeholders.
  - In 2010, BOEMRE and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) initiated an economic study to compare the Federal Government's share of profits from Federal oil and gas leasing with 700 fiscal systems around the world. The report will include a composite index, including an index of revenue risk. The final report is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2011.
  
- GAO Recommendation: Interior should implement GAO's recommendations from prior reports addressing a variety of oil and gas measurement factors.
  - BLM is in the process of revising Onshore Oil and Gas Orders 3, 4, and 5. These Orders establish requirements for storage, site security and measurement of produced oil and natural gas. Onshore Orders 3-5 are scheduled to be issued in draft this summer. These Orders will help BLM to ensure a fair return for onshore oil and gas through production verification and accountability and are scheduled to be completed in FY 2012.
  - BLM is also developing Onshore Order 9, which will limit the amount of vented and flared natural gas permitted to be released without incurring royalty obligations. However, the Order will be unable to prevent the release of all fugitive natural gas from oil and natural gas operation facilities. This new Order is scheduled to be completed in FY 2012.
  - To fortify its inspection and production accountability processes, BOEMRE has issued inspection goals to ensure the accuracy of reported volumes of oil and gas produced from offshore Federal resources. The BOEMRE issued policy on September 13, 2010, addressing site-security inspections of measurement locations and the witnessing of royalty meter provings and/or calibrations. The BOEMRE policy requires more frequent inspections for "higher risk" measurement locations.
  
- 7. Unneeded Federal Real Property Disposal: One of the key missions of the Department is to serve as the custodian of a vast collection of national treasures and properties including the Washington Monument, Liberty Bell, and Statue of Liberty. The Department manages a collection of 159,400 constructed assets that is second only to the Department of Defense. Our efforts to manage these assets are challenged by ownership of lands and facilities that are geographically dispersed and visited extensively by the public. Our facilities management programs put a premium on the identification of assets that are not needed in order to focus our construction and maintenance budgets on highest priority needs and to reduce operating costs. In our 2009 report from the Federal Real Property Profile we identified 1,920 assets that are excess and are in the disposal process. Of those, 517 have already been disposed.

I hope this is informative to your questions.

Sincerely,



Ken Salazar

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## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 8, 2011

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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.

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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.

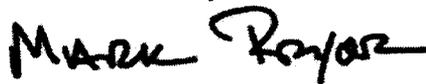
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- Further steps needed to improve cost-effectiveness and enhance services for transportation-disadvantaged persons.
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I would appreciate a response no later than March 21, 2011. If you have any questions, please contact Andrew Grobmyer at 202-224-2353.

Sincerely,



Mark Pryor

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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 13, 2010

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

Dear Ken:

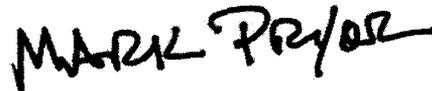
I am pleased to write in support of the City of McGehee, Arkansas', grant application which has been submitted to the National Park Service. I understand the proceeds will be used to renovate the Railroad Depot in McGehee which will be used as a museum and house the Japanese American Confinement Site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

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# United States Department of the Interior



National Park Service

Midwest Region  
601 Riverfront Drive  
Omaha, Nebraska 68102-4226

A3615(MWR-PCL/PAL)

MAY 3 2010

The Honorable Mark Pryor  
United States Senate  
255 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Pryor:

Thank you for your April 13, 2010, letter to Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar (Secretary) stating your support for the City of McGehee's (City) grant proposal for the National Park Service's (NPS) Japanese American Confinement Sites (JACS) Grant Program. I have been asked to respond because the State of Arkansas is one of my areas of responsibility.

The City's proposal to rehabilitate the historic train depot as a museum to honor the two confinement sites located in Arkansas was a notable contribution to the fiscal year 2010 submittals. This project seeks to establish a location for an exhibit about the experiences of Japanese Americans held in the Jerome and Rohwer Relocation Centers during World War II.

The NPS received a total of 42 applications for the fiscal year 2010 grant cycle, requesting more than \$7.7 million in Federal funds. This amount is more than double the \$3 million appropriated by Congress for the 2010 JACS program. Proposals received by the NPS reflected a wide range of project types, including oral history, interpretation and education, documentation, planning, preservation, and capital projects.

During the week of March 15, 2010, an NPS review panel evaluated applications received for the fiscal year 2010 grant cycle. The review panel then submitted its recommendations to Secretary Salazar for final approval of the selected grant awards. We anticipate that the grant recipients and projects will be announced in late spring 2010 and the grant agreements will be finalized soon thereafter.

Again, thank you again for your endorsement of the City of McGehee's proposal submitted to the JACS Grant Program. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Regional program contact Rachel Franklin-Weekley at 402-661-1948.

Sincerely,

Ernest Quintana  
Regional Director

TAKE PRIDE<sup>®</sup>  
IN AMERICA 



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR  
WASHINGTON  
OCT 01 2009

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

Dear Senator Pryor:

Thank you for your letter of September 18, 2009, co-signed by your colleagues, expressing support for the Draft Proposed Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2010-2015. The Department of the Interior received your letter on September 30, 2009.

I sincerely appreciate your interest in this matter and you will receive a more detailed response in the near future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ken Salazar".

Ken Salazar

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.

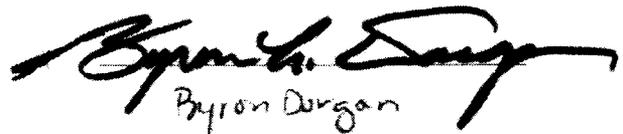
It is more important than ever that the federal government allow for development of domestic offshore energy supplies made available in the DPP. By offering new leasing opportunities, the DPP is appropriately expansive and provides the Department with maximum flexibility to properly utilize our nation's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



Byron Dorgan

The Honorable Ken Salazar

September 18, 2009

Page Three

Dil Vitt

Pat Roberts

Chris Bennett

Tom Cole

Sam Frankel

Ray Winter

Lamar Alexander

Mark Royce

George V. Kenovich

John G. Hatch

Chuck Grassley

John Barrasso

Jim Bunning

Paul Begala

Ben Ray

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Richard Shelby

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John Cornyn

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Tommy

Joni DeMint

Jeff Sessions

Sayby Claiborne

Jim Cooper

Mike Johanns

Paul Cook

Baucus



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

**OCT 21 2009**



The Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchinson  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Hutchison:

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,

~~Wilma A. Lewis~~

*Adm*

Assistant Secretary  
Land and Minerals Management

Similar letter being sent to:

The Honorable Byron L. Dorgan  
The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
The Honorable John Barrasso  
The Honorable Mark Begich  
The Honorable Robert F. Bennett  
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