

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David L. Bernhardt
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Bernhardt:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) released the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment (PRMPA) for the Converse County Oil and Gas Project (Project) in July 2020. It has taken over six (6) years to get to this point in the EIS process, with the Notice of Intent having been filed in May 2014. As such, the analysis contained in the 2,500+-page Final EIS is comprehensive and the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Project needs to be approved in a timely manner.

An essential component of the Project is year-round development within non-eagle raptor nest buffers which are widespread in the project area. As you are aware, the year-round drilling concept will not only provide economic benefits, it will also provide safety benefits by reducing the truck traffic associated with rig moves, as well as ecological benefits by reducing the timeframes between drilling pad disturbances and the interim reclamation that will take place on those same pads.

We strongly urge BLM to adopt the clarifications provided by the proponents of the Project to both the PRMPA and Appendix G4 (BLM's Option #6, the preferred alternative) in order to ensure it is implementable and durable. These clarifications include recommendations for how to clearly differentiate the approval process for both "occupied active" and "unoccupied" nests within the project area. The selection of this modified Option #6 will be consistent with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) as the Project is designed to allow year-round drilling without incidental take of raptors.

In light of the robust analysis that has taken place and the significant benefits the Project will provide to surrounding communities and the state of Wyoming, we request that the ROD for the Final EIS and the PRMPA be promptly finalized and published within the next six (6) weeks.

Sincerely,



Liz Cheney
Member of Congress



John Barrasso, M.D.
United States Senator



Michael B. Enzi
United States Senator