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July 5, 2023

The Honorable Deb Haaland  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable Tracy Stone-Manning  
Director  
Bureau of Land Management  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland and Director Stone-Manning:

We write to express our support for putting land health and conservation on equal footing with other public land uses, consistent with the goals of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) “*Conservation and Landscape Health*” proposed rule (Public Lands Rule) published in the Federal Register on April 3. The proposed Public Lands Rule outlines tools for the agency to meet its multiple use and sustained yield mission, as provided by *the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act of 1976*. The proposed rule will help the BLM improve our public lands’ resilience as climate change leads to prolonged drought and aridification, and will promote biodiversity by restoring valuable wildlife habitat and protecting intact landscapes. Additionally, it will enable the BLM to improve planning for responsible development and better recognize and manage irreplaceable indigenous cultural and natural resources.

We urge the BLM to meaningfully respond to public feedback and continue to engage directly with stakeholders, including in the grazing community and the renewables industry, as it crafts the final rule. While the proposed rule defines helpful tools for restoring and conserving our public lands, the BLM should further refine the rule to clarify how these tools will work in coordination with other multiple uses on BLM lands. As an example, we encourage a transparent fee structure and approval process for conservation leases. A clear process is particularly important for lands that are concurrently used for grazing or other multiple uses.

Close coordination and clear communication with the multiple users of BLM lands will strengthen the rule and ensure its successful implementation. In particular, we urge the BLM to meaningfully engage with Tribal governments while finalizing the rule to ensure it respects

Tribal sovereignty, and to continually engage with Tribes on collaborative stewardship opportunities and indigenous knowledge inclusion in the decision-making process.

We support your commitment to our public lands, including balancing multiple uses and improving management across the West. The Public Lands Rule takes a meaningful step to ensure the BLM can meet the needs of the American public, face the challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss, and maintain the health of our public lands for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Hickenlooper". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

John Hickenlooper  
United States Senator