



## SAN JUAN COUNTY COMMISSION

Willie Grayeyes	Chairman
Kenneth Maryboy	Vice-Chair
Bruce Adams	Commissioner
Mack McDonald	Administrator

February 26, 2021

Nada Culver, Director  
Bureau of Land Management  
1849 C St. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Bureau of Land Management  
760 Horizon Dr.  
Grand Junction, CO 81506

Dear Director Culver,

The Board of Commissioners, San Juan County, UT, is concerned about the oil and gas leases that were offered in the greater McCracken Mesa – Akali Ridge – Montezuma Canyon area of southeastern San Juan County, in the Bureau's September and December 2019 lease sales. As noted in Commissioners Grayeyes' and Maryboy's previous letter (June 2019), these leases are located in areas that the Dine` recognize as aboriginal lands. Significant Dine` traditional use areas and cultural sites that would be put at extreme risk of damage and vandalism if the leases are developed in the future.

It is important to note that the Navajo Utah Commission, via Resolution NUCFEB-777-19, objected to the Bureau's leasing proposals in this area due to the "extreme risk of damage and vandalism" to "sensitive and significant traditional and ancient culture sites" from oil and gas development on the parcels (Resolution attached). The Navajo Utah Commission further expressed concern about the sensitive plants in the lease areas that "are important for Navajo traditional and ceremonial uses" that would be put in harms' way if the leases were developed.

We understand that these lease sales were protested by several Native American tribes due to this cultural significance of this area to various tribes. We concur that future development of these leases would certainly threaten irreplaceable cultural artifacts and traditional areas important to various Native American tribal entities.

We have recently learned that the Bureau of Land Management has not yet issued these leases, due to the pending protests by various Native American Tribes and others. Based on the above, the San Juan County Commission requests that the Bureau reject the lease offers, return the bid monies received and **not issue the oil and gas leases located in the greater McCracken Mesa – Alkali Ridge – Montezuma Creek area in order**

**to honor Native American cultural values and heritage.** In addition, we request that the Bureau of Land Management not proceed with any future lease sales in the greater McCracken Mesa area, for the reasons discussed above.

Sincerely,

Willie Grayeyes,  
Chairman, San Juan County Commission