

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

Oct. 3, 2013

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary of the Interior
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250


Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

Despite the federal government shutdown making national parks, monuments, wildlife refuges and many other important sites unavailable to the public, oil and gas drilling and other extraction activities continue on our federal public lands. The lack of oversight of these potentially hazardous activities greatly concerns me, especially because of the scarcity of manpower to respond to emergencies, pollution issues or other rapid response needs.

I am equally concerned about the many businesses that rely on our public lands. Concessionaires that operate facilities within our public parks and other federal lands have been locked out by the shutdown. So have river and trail guides who rely on public lands and waterways to make a living. Small businesses cannot afford to be cut off from their main – in some cases sole – source of income.

This disparity greatly disturbs me, as does the ongoing environmental risk to sensitive outdoor areas. I urgently request the immediate cessation of mining, drilling and other extractive activities on our federal public lands until we end the shutdown and cease the lockout of federal employees and visitors.

Very respectfully,



Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva
Ranking Member, House Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation