



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

May 12, 2009

Honorable Robert Bennett
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Bennett:

Thank you for the extensive dialogue we have had concerning David Hayes to be Deputy Secretary of the Interior and your concerns relating to my withdrawal of 77 parcels from a Utah oil and gas sale. In the past three months, the Department of the Interior under my direction has conducted more than ten lease sales onshore making available more than 1.5 million acres of land for oil and gas exploration. We also have conducted lease sales for 1.7 million acres in the Gulf of Mexico. With respect to the Utah lease sale of the 77 parcels, the leases were the subject of a Federal Court injunction concerning violations of federal law. I have announced that I will undertake a complete review of those 77 parcels and determine how the federal law violations found by the United States District Court can best be resolved.

As part of this review, upon the confirmation of David Hayes to be Deputy Secretary of the Interior:

1. I will direct David Hayes to make a site visit to the state of Utah within 10 days;
2. I will direct David Hayes to meet with the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, and other governmental entities in Utah concerning the 77 lease parcels;
3. I will direct David Hayes to meet with all interested stakeholders in a community forum in Utah;
4. I will direct David Hayes to review the administrative record concerning the 77 lease parcels and to provide a report with recommendations on the 77 lease parcels by May 29th; and
5. I will make the report available to you and meet with you and David Hayes to review the report.

I am hopeful that we can move expeditiously on the confirmation of David Hayes. Upon his confirmation, I will direct him to move expeditiously in completing the tasks I have described above.

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Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to working with you on matters of importance to Utah and the Nation.

Respectfully,


Ken Salazar

cc: Honorable Harry Reid
Honorable Mitch McConnell
Honorable Richard Durbin
Honorable Jon Kyl
Honorable Jeff Bingaman
Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Honorable Orrin Hatch