



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0603

March 15, 2021

The Honorable Deb Haaland
Secretary-designee
Department of the Interior
1849 C. Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary-designee Haaland:

Congratulations on your confirmation to lead the Department of Interior (DOI) as Secretary. We write to formally invite you and your staff to visit Colorado and the Bureau of Land Management Headquarters in Grand Junction. We would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate our strong support for keeping and establishing a full national headquarters in Grand Junction and would like to have a dialogue and consult with you on this important issue.

According to U.S. News and World Report, Colorado offers four of the five best places to live in the United States. Colorado has amenities that attract and retain a highly educated and productive workforce. Grand Junction was selected for the headquarters location because of its substantial cost savings, travel accessibility, quality of life attributes, and increased representation among the communities affected by land management decisions. The national headquarters in Grand Junction is already providing an \$11 million initial local economic impact.

The West has unique challenges as you know. The value of having senior BLM leadership staff on the ground that understand these issues and is immersed in our communities cannot be understated.

There is strong bipartisan and bicameral support for keeping BLM's headquarters and existing jobs out West. We encourage you to continue work with us and other Westerners to ensure we get this right. Grand Junction should operate as a real headquarters and have all staff necessary to ensure that occurs.

Reversing the move at this juncture would impose hardships on public servants that were recently hired or willingly made the move West. Such action would be destructive and result in the loss of even more agency employees. More than 80 agency employees and families now reside in Colorado as a result of the move. More than 300 employees now reside in the West as a

result of the relocation including dozens of employees in your home state of New Mexico that support important cultural, paleontological, and tribal programs.

The posting of western BLM jobs drew a larger volume of highly-skilled applicants than what the agency would have traditionally received in Washington D.C. It is also important to note that not one employee was removed as a result of the move West. The agency found jobs for people that wanted to stay in D.C. and paid expenses to help employees make the move West. BLM's move West also successfully avoided any formal Equal Employment Opportunity or U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board complaints, legal challenges or adverse union activities.

BLM's multiple-use mission aligns closely with the values of Coloradan's who use public lands for tourism, conservation, outdoor recreation, grazing, resource development, and other multiple uses. Improved customer service and better decisions earlier in the decision-making process also occur when senior agency officials are part of local communities. Keeping the BLM staff closer to the land they manage and the people they serve has everlasting benefits.

We would be happy to coordinate with you on your visit and connect you with other local stakeholders to discuss the positive impacts the Grand Junction Headquarters has had on the West and in our communities. Thank you for considering this invitation and we look forward to your visit.

Sincerely,



Lauren Boebert
Member of Congress



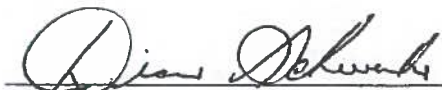
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Mesa County Board of Commissioners



Cody Davis, Commissioner
Mesa County Board of Commissioners



Scott McInnis, Commissioner
Mesa County Board of Commissioners



Diane Schwenke, President/CEO
Grand Junction Area Chamber of Commerce