

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
STATE OF MONTANA

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November 10, 2025

Mr. Bill Groffy  
Acting Director  
Bureau of Land Management  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C St. NW, Room 5646,  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Acting Director Groffy,

I write today in strong support of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)'s proposal to rescind the Conservation and Landscape Health Rule (Rule), which was finalized on President Joe Biden's way out the door. I applaud the efforts of President Donald J. Trump and Secretary Doug Burgum to restore the rule of law to land management decisions. The decision to revisit the Rule is just the latest example of the Trump administration keeping its promises to the American people.

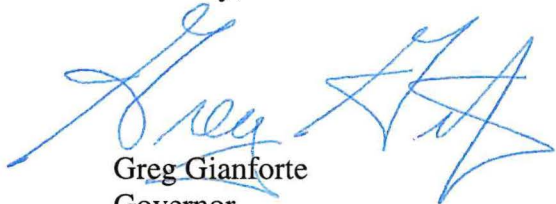
Since the Rule was initially proposed back in 2023, the State of Montana has consistently raised numerous concerns about the blatant disregard and substantive overreach by the previous administration. In May 2023, I highlighted that the proposed Rule was one of the most expansive and substantive changes to federal land management policy since Congress passed the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) in 1976. The previous administration chose to move directly to a draft rule without any stakeholder consultation. There were minimal public engagement opportunities during its brief public comment period, which left little time for landowners as well as state and local government officials to provide comment. BLM also offered few in-person public meetings and completely ignored the State of Montana, which further diminished opportunities for public input to be heard.

Section 103(c) of FLPMA directs that public lands be managed for "multiple use and sustained yield," meaning "the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people" across grazing, minerals, recreation, wildlife, and timber uses. The Rule's attempt to elevate conservation to an equal status runs completely afoul to the law as clearly codified by the Congress. If left in place, the Rule risks tilting decisions toward non-use, even where productive uses are consistent with the land's capabilities. Because of this, I am concerned that lands suitable for responsible development could be sidelined or constrained, particularly in our rural areas that rely on grazing, energy, and resource development. This is why a clear rescission of this Rule is of immediate necessity.

In addition, the Rule significantly expanded Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) under FLPMA. The scope and discretion of BLM to designate ACECs, including provisions for temporary management without the full procedural safeguards typically required, such as robust public input, environmental review, and intergovernmental consultation is also concerning. This expansion raised concerns, both actual and perceived, about transparency and accountability, as it allowed for land use restrictions to be imposed without the standard land use planning process. The rescission seeks to restore prior ACEC regulations, recognizing the need for balanced, multiple-use management and reaffirming the importance of public participation in land use decisions.

The rescission of this Rule is what is best for Montana and our nation. On behalf of the State of Montana, thank you for doing the right thing so Montanans and the public can share in the benefits of healthy and productive public lands for generations to come. Should you have any questions about this letter, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. My door is always open.

Sincerely,



Greg Gianforte  
Governor

cc: The Honorable Doug Burgum, Secretary of the Interior  
The Honorable Katharine MacGregor, Deputy Secretary of the Interior  
The Honorable Leslie Beyer, Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management