



### **Action Alert: Tell the Department of Interior Not to Swallow Up OSM in BLM**

OSM, BLM, DOI – what does all of this alphabet soup mean to you? OSM is the Office of Surface Mining and is the federal agency charged with regulating our nation’s coal mines under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act. BLM – the Bureau of Land Management – as many of you are all too familiar with is the agency charged with leasing federal minerals, including coal. BLM is in the process of carrying out an aggressive push to lease federal coal in Wyoming – to the tune of 6 billion tons. The Department of Interior, or DOI, has put forth an ill-advised idea to combine these two agencies, which would create a large conflict of interest surrounding coal mine inspection and enforcement amongst other problems. This idea has shocked and garnered opposition from citizen groups around the country and even the coal industry and agency staff.

We need your voices to tell the Department of Interior to drop their bad idea and keep coal mine regulation with the Office of Surface Mining. Even if you don’t live near a coal mine, it’s important for Secretary Salazar and the Department of Interior to hear from you.

Please tell Secretary Salazar that:

- Combining inspection and enforcement duties of OSM and BLM will create conflicts of interest for both agencies and will violate the fundamental principles of SMCRA. We learned a hard lesson from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill about problems that can happen when an agency has a monetary interest in producing energy and places its inspection and enforcement duties in a second tier. We don’t want coal mine permitting and enforcement to turn into another Deepwater Horizon.
- OSM is already underfunded and should not be burdened with doing the job of a much larger agency – BLM. This proposal is not likely to save either agency any money and it won’t help OSM do better oversight of coal mine permitting and enforcement, which is needed in coalfield communities across the country.
- OSM and BLM should put more emphasis on reclamation of abandoned mines, but this proposal isn’t the way to do that.

You can submit comments online at <http://www.doi.gov/bureaus/blm-osm/Comments.cfm> or via an in-person public meeting in Billings, MT on January 23<sup>rd</sup> from 8:30-11:30 a.m.

Director Pizarchik (OSM) & Director Abbey (BLM) are required to provide a written report to the Secretary on February 15th based on stakeholder input and consultation, **so please submit your comments by February 1<sup>st</sup>!**

If you have any questions about this issue or if you are interested in attending the public meeting in Billings, please contact Shannon at [sanderson@powderriverbasin.org](mailto:sanderson@powderriverbasin.org) or 307-672-5809. More information on the Department of Interior’s proposal can be found at: <http://osmrewatch.wordpress.com/osm-blm-merger/>

Thanks for your action!