

The Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary of the Interior
1849 C St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

August 3, 2010

Dear Secretaries Salazar and Vilsack:

As members of Oregon's community of faith, we are deeply concerned about the health of God's Creation and therefore encourage you to consider supporting efforts that will result in better stewardship of our public lands, specifically in the Siskiyou Wild Rivers area, by exercising your authority to withdraw the area from the 1872 Mining Law.

We see this incredibly diverse and complex world as a gift not meant for destruction, for "the earth is the Lord's and all that is in it (Psalm 24:1) and does not belong to us to do with as we please. Instead, we are honored and privileged to be called as its stewards (Genesis 2:15).

It is clear the 1872 Mining Law does not provide for care of the land. The outdated law gives priority to the mining industry over other, less destructive activities. Worse, the law itself does not require miners to reclaim the land, and past practice has often left behind scarred and toxic landscapes that poison the air and water. Thanks to conservation laws such as the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, mining operations are now subjected to some reclamation requirements, but in too many instances, those requirements are not fully heeded or enforced. The Siskiyou Wild Rivers area in Oregon is potentially at risk from the poor stewardship that is encouraged by this outdated law.

Our faith compels us to act and speak out, and we are doing so in increasing numbers. We celebrate that our collective beliefs in care for the earth have brought to the table a diverse group of people of faith. As Christians, Jews, Muslims and people of other faith traditions with diverse theological and political perspectives, we are finding that our faith traditions have much to say about land and its relationship to justice and the care of all of Creation.

As we also celebrate our joy in the marvelous world the Creator has entrusted to us, we are mindful of our accountability to heal the damage we have already done and, just as importantly, to prevent future damage. Please help us all be good stewards by supporting meaningful and responsible efforts to withdraw the Siskiyou Wild Rivers area from the 1872 Mining Law. This action will protect the air, land, and waters of our state of Oregon, and help us fulfill our obligations to this small, and very beautiful, corner of Creation.

Sincerely,

Patricia Evans, First Christian Church of Albany, Albany

Reverend Sue Ayer, Unitarian Universalist Community Church, Aloha, Oregon
Reverend Vernon Groves, Oregon Interfaith Power and Light, Aloha, Oregon

Reverend Barbara Neason, First Presbyterian Church, Bandon, Oregon

Sandi Schwarm, First Presbyterian Church, Bandon, Oregon

Reverend Mark Brocker, St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Beaverton, Oregon

Pastor Peg Pfab, Southminster Presbyterian Church, Beaverton, Oregon

B. Btuer, Mission of the Atonement, Beaverton, Oregon

Anne Dale, Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington County, Beaverton, Oregon

Laura Good, Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington County, Beaverton, Oregon

Scott Lundtown, Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington County, Beaverton, Oregon

Glenda Sims, Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington County, Beaverton, Oregon

Richard Umana, St. Pious X, Beaverton, Oregon

Joe Walkcki, Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington County, Beaverton, Oregon

Sandra Croney, First Presbyterian Church, Bend, Oregon

LeBron Hardie, First Presbyterian Church, Bend, Oregon

Fred Karsledt, First Presbyterian Church, Bend, Oregon

Julie Nelson, First Presbyterian Church, Bend, Oregon

Reverend Eugene Luttmann, Blue Sage Ministries of Harney County, Burns, Oregon

Cammi Bella, Spiritual Director & Lay Preacher, Episcopal Church of the Good Samaritan, Corvallis, Oregon

Bill Becker, Chair, Environmental Group, Episcopal Church of the Good Samaritan, Corvallis, Oregon

Bruce Black, Episcopal Church of the Good Samaritan, Corvallis, Oregon

Henry Burrige, Episcopal Church of the Good Samaritan, Corvallis, Oregon

Brenda Downum-VanDevlder, First Presbyterian Church, Corvallis, Oregon

Linda Gelbrich, Episcopal Church of the Good Samaritan, Corvallis, Oregon

Father Stephen Tyson, Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Coos Bay, Oregon

Rabbi John Berman, South Coast Jewish Community, Coquille, Oregon

Tracy Durfee, First Presbyterian Church of Cottage Grove, Cottage Grove, Oregon

Revered Daniel Houghton, Drain-Yoncalla United Methodist Church, Drain, Oregon

Michael Graney, First United Methodist Church, Eugene, Oregon

Len Hockley, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Eugene, Oregon

Peggy Mahon, Westminster Presbyterian, Eugene, Oregon

Jo Miller, St. Matthew Episcopal Church, Eugene, Oregon

Emma Newman, Climate Justice League and Unitarian Universalist Church, Eugene, Oregon

Patricia Russell, Church of Resurrection, Eugene, Oregon

Rabbi Jonathan Seidel, Or HaGan, Light of the Garden Jewish Community, Eugene, Oregon

Phyllis Weare, First Christian Church of Eugene, Eugene, Oregon

Sharon Adame, Forest Grove United Church of Christ, Forest Grove, Oregon

Eric Cannon, Chair, Forest Grove United Church of Christ, Forest Grove, Oregon

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Michael Fox, Forest Grove United Church of Christ, Forest Grove, Oregon
Shirley Gamble, Forest Grove United Church of Christ, Forest Grove, Oregon
Ingrid Hesser, Forest Grove United Church of Christ, Forest Grove, Oregon
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Christine Luczkow, Forest Grove United Church of Christ, Forest Grove, Oregon
Betty Ludlam, Forest Grove United Church of Christ, Forest Grove, Oregon
Rhoda Markus, Forest Grove United Church of Christ, Forest Grove, Oregon
Lois Oakburg, Forest Grove United Church of Christ, Forest Grove, Oregon
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Karla Lewis, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Gold Beach, Oregon
Katherine Wood, St. Matthews Episcopal Church, Gold Beach, Oregon

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Emmer Holbrook, Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington County, Hillsboro, Oregon
Margaret Johnson, Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington County, Hillsboro, Oregon
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Missy Martin, Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington County, Hillsboro, Oregon
Anne Matthes, Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington County, Hillsboro, Oregon
Christine Navarro, Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington County, Hillsboro, Oregon
Elaine Nelson, Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington County, Hillsboro, Oregon
Kathleen Newman, Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington County, Hillsboro, Oregon
Catherine Strahn, Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington County, Hillsboro, Oregon

Reverend Lawrence Jung, First Presbyterian Church, Jacksonville, Oregon

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Reverend Paul Katzmar, Congregational United Church of Christ, Medford, Oregon

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Alan Paulson, Atonement Lutheran Church, Newport, Oregon

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Kitsie Parkinson, Oregon City United Methodist Church, Oregon City, Oregon

Allison Anderson, Chair, Planet Church Committee, First United Methodist Church, Portland, Oregon

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Reverend Chuck Currie, United Church of Christ, Portland, Oregon

Jordan Epstein, Chair, Shomrei Teva, Neveh Shalom, Portland, Oregon

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M. Ruth Smith, First United Methodist Church, Portland, Oregon
Alice Speers, Episcopal Diocese of Oregon, Portland, Oregon
Charles Turner, West Hills Friends Church, Portland, Oregon
Alison Warren, Portland Mennonite Church, Portland, Oregon
Eric Wergeland, Bridgeport United Church of Christ, Portland, Oregon
Britten Witherspoon, West Hills Friends Church, Portland, Oregon
Elliot Witherspoon, West Hills Friends Church, Portland, Oregon
Pamela Wood, St. Andrew Catholic Church, Portland, Oregon
Cathy Zheutlin, P'nai Or of Portland, Portland, Oregon

Marney Reed, St. Matthews Episcopal Church, Port Orford, Oregon

Pastor Jim Ives, United Methodist Church, Reedsport, Oregon

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Michael King, Community of Christ, Roseburg, Oregon
Eleanor Pugh, Umpqua Valley Worship Grace Society of Friends, Roseburg, Oregon

Reverend Stewart Shaw, First United Methodist Church, Salem, Oregon

Reverend Ronnie Chittim, Retired, Selma, Oregon

Edwin Luckman, Tillamook United Methodist Church, Tillamook, Oregon

Doug Plambeck, Living Savoir Lutheran Church, Tualatin, Oregon

Donald Swygard, Atkinson Memorial Church, Tualatin, Oregon

Cc: Senator Ron Wyden
Senator Jeff Merkley
Congressman Peter DeFazio
Congressman Earl Blumenauer
Governor Ted Kulongoski
Robert Bonnie, Senior Advisor to the Secretary, USDA
Harris Sherman, Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, USDA
Thomas Tidwell, Chief, US Forest Service
Amy Salzman, Associate Director, Policy Outreach, CEQ
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