



Sample Letter

No Loophole for Coal Mines and Roads in Roadless Forests

Dear U.S. Forest Service,

I oppose the Forest Service proposal to re-open the coal mining loophole in the Colorado Roadless Rule.

Re-opening the loophole will benefit one company--Arch Coal--while paving the way for mining more than 170 million tons of dirty coal. This could add 130 million tons of carbon dioxide pollution into the atmosphere, and cause as much as \$13 billion in damage to the world's economy and environment. The climate costs of this proposal are simply too high.

The loophole will also set the stage for up to 65 miles of road being bulldozed on 30 square miles of roadless forest, degrading habitat for black bear, elk, goshawk, lynx, and cutthroat trout. Valued recreation and hunting areas used by the public will be scarred for years.

President Obama and climate scientists agree that if we want to halt the worst potential damage from climate change, we must keep some of the world's known fossil fuel reserves in the ground. The Forest Service should draw the line here, where mining coal will spew huge amounts of methane and destroy wild forest.

Please keep the Colorado Roadless Rule as it is. Reject the coal mining loophole to the Colorado Roadless Rule.

Key Talking Points

The U.S. Forest Service is trying to revive the coal mining loophole by endorsing it as an alternative in a recently completed Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement.

1. **Support Alternative A, the no change alternative.** Alternative B allows a full exception for mining and roads in 19,500 acres; Alternative C would open 12,600 acres to mining.
2. **More than two miles of road per square mile** will fragment 19,500 acres of roadless area in a significant wildlife habitat area.
3. Economic analysis shows the proposal will cause up to **\$12 billion in damage to the global economy and environment** due to climate pollution, six times what the mining expansion in the forest is projected to earn.
4. Each day, **millions of cubic feet of methane will go into the air**, without any effort for capture. Methane is a powerful heat trapping gas, 80 times more than CO₂ over a 20-year period.
5. **The federal government should support a clean energy economy to boost jobs.** Coal mining jobs have been in decline, and just one wind turbine manufacturer (Vestas) now employs twice as many people as work in the state's coal mines.

Can you tell a personal story? Share your experience of the affected area, and why you don't want to see this proposal go forward.