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The new management plan of the BLM that calls for disposal of huge tracts of public lands is quite worrisome to this public lands advocate. My rhetorical comments follow.

1- What is the benefit to the public?

Will the lands be sold at fair market value and the proceeds be used to reduce the public tax burden? Or, is the scenario going to benefit the energy industry only by giving land and assets away at little or no cost. Then, after assets are stripped, the land will be sold at fair market value to land developers.

The public deserves a thorough examination of the lands and process. Some of the lands have great attributes for the public and for the environment that need protection from human development. Attributes such as recreational and tourism, historical, ecological preservation for native flora and fauna, etc.

2- Some areas are already known as being worthy of protection, including the southern Bighorn Mountains and the North Platte River from Alcova to Casper, etc.

3- The South Fork of the Powder River would be a wonderful wilderness area and deserves to be proposed as such.

4- What steps are planned to monitor and control the development in the disposed areas to prevent degradation of the surface ecology?

Richard C. Lee

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