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February 24, 2011

The Honorable Robert W. Bishop
U.S. House of Representatives
123 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-4401

Dear Chairman Bishop:

We, the undersigned businesses from Utah Congressional District 1, urge you to stop your attack on Secretarial Order 3310, the Bureau of Land Management's Wild Lands policy. As business people whose companies benefit from the economic utility of protected public lands of our fine state, we believe the wild lands policy is good for business, good for jobs and good for Utah. The active outdoor Industry contributes \$5.8 billion annually to Utah's economy, supports 65,000 jobs across Utah, and generates nearly \$300 million in annual state tax revenues. This vibrant and growing sector of Utah's economy produces nearly \$4 billion annually in retail sales and services across the state — accounting for almost 5% of gross state product.

Public lands are a proven economic driver in the West and protecting them provides laboratories for our products, escape for our employees and wilderness opportunities that bring us more customers. Several communities within UT-01 can credit their recent growth and prosperity to the establishment of companies such as ours in the area – decisions based largely on the quality of life available to our employees.

Secretarial Order 3310 simply reinstates the BLM's authority to inventory and manage lands for their existing wilderness values – a policy that was in place for over 25 years until it was arbitrarily withdrawn by then Interior Secretary Gale Norton. At that time, Utah's outdoor industry spoke with a clear and unified voice against this short-sighted decision, and now we speak with one voice in favor of the restoration of wilderness as a multiple use value.

In UT-01, we stand to see special lands protected, such as Pilot Peak, Deep Creek, and Silver Island – lands that are known and loved locally for skiing, hiking, wildlife viewing and hunting opportunities. The more iconic red rock portions of Utah – places like Labyrinth Canyon, White Canyon and Muddy Creek – provide world-class boating and canyoneering opportunities that attract both Utahns and tourists alike. These and other important BLM lands in our state and throughout the West stand to gain important interim protections from the wild lands policy until Congress acts on final wilderness designation.

As you hold a hearing on March 1, we urge you to consider the jobs that exist now in all parts of Utah's economy and help find the necessary balance in protecting wilderness quality lands in Utah. Please support the wild lands policy.

Sincerely,

Mark (Roody) Rasmussen, President / CEO
Petzl America, Inc.

Joined by the following Supportive Businesses from Utah Congressional District 01:

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