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**Sent:** Tuesday, July 25, 2006 8:52 PM

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**Cc:** Jerry McNeely; Bruce Adams  
**Subject:** RPLCC--Vernal Oil & Gas Summit Outcome

Dear Commissioners/Council Members:

Last week on July 18th, Uintah County hosted the 2nd RPLCC Oil & Gas summit for counties. The outcome was encouraging. The key to ultimate success will be how effective counties can be in working with the new acting BLM State Director, Henry Bisson, who showed everyone in attendance at the summit that he is a take-charge leader. Henry is expected to stay in Utah through the end of this year which means counties have between now and then to take full advantage of his talents and desire to favorably resolve controversial public land issues.

The primary topic in Vernal was how to complete the outstanding Resource Management Plans (RMPs) across the state while President Bush's Administration remains in office with a cooperative attitude. We focused on the Vernal, Price and Richfield RMPs but discussed an array of related issues which act as impediments to economic growth. On behalf of BLM, Jim Hughes, Deputy Director from Washington D.C. and Henry Bisson announced several significant changes which will promote economic growth and reduce restrictions on access to

the public lands. BLM handed out update sheets for each BLM District's RMP and outlined the positive steps the agency has taken or is about to take on behalf of counties--the changes are substantive and real.

Lynn Stevens represented the State of Utah at the meeting and expressed continued full State cooperation with BLM on behalf of both the counties and the Governor. This is the first time in 28 years that I have seen the State, the counties and the BLM all on the same page with respect to resource development. We as counties owe it each other to strike while the iron is hot in finalizing these RMPs. As the governing documents over public lands for the next 20 years, working with the new State BLM Director and the State to "fix" these RMPs is an opportunity which may never come again!

I will be happy to send each of you a copy of the BLM handout for your region of the state. Additionally, Henry has requested County participation with BLM and the State to help define for the public the benefits of the proposed August 16th oil & gas lease sale. To pre-empt SUWA and other critics of resource development, his request is for commissioners to attend a press conference in Salt Lake just prior to August 16th. The exact date will be forthcoming from State BLM.

When was the last time a BLM State Director asked counties to join him in defining the benefits of oil & gas development in Utah in order to get the truth out? I believe, we have an obligation to support this new State Director who has the ear of the Director Kathleen Clarke and the Bush Administration.

Please call if you have questions about what I believe was a beneficial accountability session from BLM in Vernal last week. Counties represented were the primary oil and gas producing counties in the state: Uintah, Duchesne, Wasatch, Carbon, Emery, San Juan & Sevier. Some 50 people attended including 10 oil and gas companies operating in Utah along with local and national BLM officials and the State.