

STATE OF COLORADO

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

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Denver, Colorado 80203-1792
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Bill Owens
Governor

August 12, 2003

Ms. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Xavier Street
Denver, CO 80212

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for taking the time to contact me about the important issue of public roads and access to public lands governed by the old law known as RS-2477.

Please be assured that I, too, would be concerned about a "secret deal" being made. The specific agreement entered into by the US Department of Interior (DOI) and the State of Utah -- which you address in your letter -- was accomplished in secret, closed-door meetings with no public process whatsoever and with involvement of no stakeholders on either side. I strongly object to that process, as you do.

In Colorado, no solution to this contentious issue could work unless developed by a very public process with all sides fairly represented. This is precisely why I contacted the Secretary of Interior and requested a different process for Colorado, and it's why we have insisted that the Utah deal cannot be used as a national model. If Interior agrees to address the issue in Colorado, we are committed to a process that will bring to the table interested stakeholders from across the state to ensure that all concerns are represented in a fair and open discussion.

Colorado and Utah are not the same. No one-size-fits-all national solution can work. Our state's public lands situation is unique and we hope to find a solution that will meet the diverse needs of our state. The interspersed nature of our state's rural private lands and federal lands create a mosaic that must be examined on a Colorado-specific basis.

I look forward to working with the Department of Interior and the citizens of Colorado to come up with a solution that works for all Coloradans. I hope you will want to participate in helping find a solution that can resolve this age-old debate.

Sincerely,

Bill Owens