



Texas Office ★ 309 E 11th St, Suite 2, Austin, TX 78701 ★ 512/477-1155 ★ www.citizen.org

Feb. 18, 2016

VIA FAX (505) 954-2010

Amy Leuders
Bureau of Land Management
New Mexico State Office
P.O. Box 27115
Santa Fe, NM 87502-0115

Re: Protest of April 20, 2016 Lease Sale

Dear Ms. Leuders:

The Texas office of Public Citizen is sending this fax to file our nonprofit organization's Protest of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)'s planned April 20, 2016 oil and gas lease sale and Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-NM-040-2015-61-EA, pursuant to 43 C.F.R. § 3120.1-3.

We are sending this Protest out of concern for our 18,400 members and supporters who live across Texas including those that live in the DFW area, Houston, Corpus Christi, Denton, and Brenham. Many of our members and supporters get their drinking water or live downstream of Lewisville Lake, Lake Conroe, Somerville Lake, and Choke Canyon Reservoir. Many of our supporters also live near or recreate at the Davy Crockett, Sam Houston, and Sabine National forests.

We are protesting the more than 34,000 acres in Texas including: NM-201604-012, NM-201604-013, NM-201604-014, NM-201604-015, NM-201604-016, NM-201604-017, NM-201604-018, NM-201604-019, NM-201604-020, NM-201604-021, NM-201604-022, NM-201604-023, NM-201604-024, NM-201604-025, NM-201604-026, NM-201604-027, NM-201604-028, NM-201604-029, NM-201604-030, NM-201604-031, NM-201604-032, NM-201604-033, NM-201604-034, NM-201604-035, NM-201604-036, NM-201604-037, NM-201604-038, NM-201604-039, NM-201604-040, NM-201604-041, NM-201604-042, NM-201604-043, NM-201604-044

We are protesting due to the following reasons:

A) Flawed public process

The public was given both the dates of Feb. 18 and Feb. 19 for a deadline to file this protest. This was published both with the agency and in newspapers with these conflicting dates.

Officials with vested interests in these parcels received no notification of this sale. The only notice given was within a quarterly notice on BLM's website in the New Mexico office.

B) Fails to meet the basic requirements of the National Environmental Protection Act

The most fundamental information is missing in this document. There are missing maps i.e. for the Davy Crockett National Forest, St. Augustine and Walker County parcels, which are necessary for the public to know where these parcels are. There are references given which don't apply to any of the parcels, i.e. Lake Texoma, the Ogallala aquifer, etc.

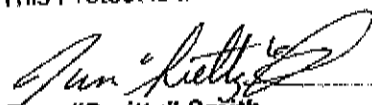
There is an inadequate analysis of the issues identified as part of the BLM's charge to address in the Environmental Assessment including no real analysis of these issues:

- **Air Quality** – There is not an adequate analysis regarding possible air impacts that additional drilling may pose for both established nonattainment and near nonattainment areas. DFW is considered "serious" by EPA as a nonattainment area for not meeting federal standards for healthy air. In early 2015, the EPA was taking comment for bumping up the region into "severe." The Lake Lewisville parcel is just south of the most severely impacted air monitor in Denton. Due to prevailing winds, additional pollution will impact that air monitor and impact the region's ability to meet attainment.
- **Emissions** – Drilling on parcels in South Texas will impact the region with additional emissions. San Antonio is in direct line of emissions from drilling in the Eagle Ford shale southeast of the city. There is no discussion in the EA regarding how additional drilling may affect areas near nonattainment areas.
- **Water Impacts** – None of the aquifers surrounding these parcels were even mentioned regarding the surface and groundwater affiliated with these parcels. Lake Texoma was mentioned which is hundreds of miles away from Live Oak and McMullen counties where this reference was included. The Ogallala aquifer mentioned in the EA is totally unrelated to any of these parcels included in the sale. No discussion of the fact that all four lake parcels are drinking supplies for major cities and other communities in Texas are discussed, when contamination or induced seismicity from drilling could negatively impair water quality or the integrity of the impoundments that secure these water supplies.
- **Climate Change** – This issue was not analyzed sufficiently to address how drilling on these parcels could impact Texas. No analysis was given on how additional drilling could impact drought – which has played a major factor in Texas on some of the water supply lakes adjacent to these parcels. There has been no analysis given to the potential for weather extremes, or negative impacts to public lands in Texas.

We find the BLM's proposed decision to lease the parcels listed above is substantively and procedurally flawed and in violation of the National Environmental Protection Act.

Therefore, the sale of these parcels that are planned for April 20, 2016 should be pulled. Due to the potential short term and long term impacts that drilling could have on these public assets for drinking water, air quality, climate change, etc., an Environmental Impact Statement should be required for these critical public lands.

This Protest is filed on behalf of Public Citizen's Texas office:



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