

Jesse Juen  
US Bureau of Land Management  
New Mexico state Office  
PO Box 27115  
Santa Fe, NM 87502

August 10, 2014

Dear Director Juen:

My name is Tracy McBride and I am writing to protest the proposed sales of parcels NM-201410-001, and NM-201410-004 through -005, that will be offered up for lease in the BLM Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale on October 22, 2014.

Interest in Protesting:

I have lived in Rio Arriba County since November 2000, almost 14 years. I care deeply about the history, environment and preservation of this delicate land, all of which affect my daily life.

Reasons for Protesting:

First, the BLM needs to follow the rules, just as we all must. The rules call for an accurate, complete Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed lease parcels. There isn't one. A finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the October 22, 2014 Oil and Gas Lease Sale is not adequately supported by the EA as it stands now.

In addition, the 2003 Resource Management Plan does not take into consideration shallow shale (above the watertable) hydraulic fracturing in the Mancos shale. Studies must be undertaken by non-partial scientists to study fracturing this Mancos shale and its ramifications even before updating the Resource Management Plan. So, the BLM has a lot of work yet to complete before offering these parcels for lease.

I protest also for all the environmental reasons that would impact residents, farmers, ranchers and consumers from the village of Chama south to El Paso. Fracturing uses millions of gallons of water for each well. The potential for contaminating the water supply for millions of people, with chemicals used in this process, is enormous, and frightening, especially given the number of people affected and the scarcity of water in this region. Every drop is precious. (Recommended reading: The Secret Knowledge of Water, by Craig Childs.)

This area may appear arid and desolate, but it is much more. Its

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fragile ecosystem supports delicate birds and animals, and this ecosystem can be disrupted by even slight changes. Injecting millions of gallons of poisonous water into the ground, under pressure, can in no way be considered a slight change. Neither can flaring, burning off hydrocarbons directly into the low atmosphere. Neither can increasing the real possibility of seismic activity under and near the Abiquiu Lake dam, where fault lines have already been found. A breach in the dam, or any type of leaching of waste water, would be catastrophic for everyone and everything downstream.

In addition to insulting the ecosystem, hydraulic fracturing could spell disaster for local businesses. One example: I buy most of my fresh produce (3 seasons, i.e.  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the year) from certified organic farmers in the Chama River Valley. Every year they must renew their certification, an essential document in their business plan. If the water they use to irrigate is tested and found to be contaminated with chemicals, their business is ruined.

I moved to northern New Mexico for clean air, clean water, healthier rural living and leaving a much smaller carbon footprint than I did on the East coast. I use as little propane as possible (less than 100 gallons per year) and hope to convert to solar in the near future. I burn wood to heat my small adobe house in the winter only, and use as little as possible, to prevent polluting the air. I catch all of my gray, and much of my black, water to re-use wherever I can. I do all of this out of respect for this dramatic, stark place in which I live.

And I trust the BLM to protect its lands in the same way, on a much larger scale. Please, the BLM must do its due diligence before turning over these parcels to companies that will decimate them beyond repair, that will defile them to such a large extent that one person's conscientious efforts to protect the environment are reduced to futility.

I am a well-educated, thoughtful and informed citizen, a registered voter and resident of Rio Arriba County. As such, I deserve respect for my opinions, which are supported by scientists, just not necessarily those employed by oil and gas companies. Once the BLM had obtained the appropriate, required studies, it would have my wholehearted support in leasing these or other parcels for the exploration of solar and wind power, instead of oil and gas.

Please use common sense here. Follow the rules. Defer leasing the 13 parcels noted in paragraph 1. Have a new EA performed, that deals explicitly with the parcels up for lease on October 22, 2014. Update the 2003 Resource Management Plan and Mancos Shale / Gallup Formation EIS, neither of which addresses shallow shale hydraulic fracturing. The risks of fracturing in

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these thirteen parcels pose the same geological risks as the neighboring parcels to the east, the lease/sale of which has been deferred. Be careful. Be thorough.

The odds of the oil and gas companies' actually finding oil and gas stores are extremely low, and the risks are sky high and earth shattering (literally and figuratively). Why take such enormous and irreparable chances with the health and viability of people, wildlife and businesses of this precious region in Northern New Mexico? No amount of income can offset protecting these resources and way of life.

Sincerely yours,

Tracy A McBride

Tracy A. McBride

Please send your mandatory reply to my address:

P.O. Box 1211

Abiquiu, NM 87510