

Aug. 12, 2014

Jesse Juen
U.S. Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico State Office
Postoffice Box 27115
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502

Re: Proposed Lease Sale, BLM Parcels NM-201410-001, 004-015

Mr. Juen:

I am writing to strongly protest the above-referenced proposal. From information that I have received, it seems incomprehensible that the BLM has even considered such a sale. If the government's consideration persists, any action to allow such sales should be delayed until such time that a major study has been conducted to determine the effects of oil and gas fracking in those parcels, not only on the environment but on the very culture of the people who live and thrive along the valleys of the Rios Chama and Grande.

I am a resident of Rio Arriba County, and the land I own borders the Rio Chama. Even if I did not live on the Chama in Rio Arriba County – if I lived in Santa Fe, or Albuquerque, or Las Cruces, or any of the many small towns and villages and pueblos along the Rio Grande in this state, or in communities in Texas -- the intensity of my protest would be no less.

The reasons for my protest are many, and include the following:

- Those of us who live here don't want our rivers and air polluted. Unless it is proven to us that fracking poses no danger of pollution we will continue to strongly protest these and other similar proposals that endanger our way of life. Such proof has not been forthcoming and evidence of fracking's dangers continue to mount, prompting responsible governments elsewhere to diminish or halt fracking operations.
- You no doubt have received well-supported geologic information that shows clearly that the hazardous, mysterious fracking chemicals injected into our earth could easily infiltrate and pollute the Rio Chama's watershed, a water system that sustains us, and contributes substantially to the Rio Grande valley.
- You no doubt have been made aware of studies of fracking in other areas of this nation that show dangers ranging from airborne health hazards to earthquakes. Today in Rio Arriba County there are dams susceptible to earthquakes. And today our air is clean. We'd like to keep our dams intact and our lungs healthy.

- You no doubt have been made aware of the massive amounts of water needed to conduct fracking operations, and that our water is scarce. Resources are overburdened, and becoming moreso with each passing day.

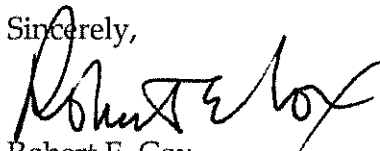
We need our water, Mr. Juen. We need it much more than we need oil or gas. Those of us who grow crops along our rivers – we who strive to continue traditional ways of living in our valleys, cannot understand where the additional millions of gallons of water necessary for oil and gas extraction would come from, if not from us. We can't give up any more water, or we give up our livelihood, our lifestyle, our reason for being here. And, even if we did have the water to spare, that which remains in our rivers would be worthless when polluted by the residue of fracking.

- Finally, we are aware of the fact that the BLM's has NOT fulfilled its responsibility to verify that studies conducted truly substantiate a "finding of no significant impact", or FONSI. The BLM, it seems, should not even consider such a lease sale without first having done its required due diligence.

The proposals you are considering threaten Rio Arriba County and its downstream neighbors in many ways, ranging from destruction of a fragile environment to increased health hazards for thousands of people. This isn't a proposed lease sale, Mr. Juen. It is a proposed sellout of our culture.

Please, heed the appeals of so many of us in these valleys. If you can't simply abandon this abominable proposal, wait until such time that it can be proven that our traditional cultures can exist in harmony with the dangers fracking presents. I think you, and we, will wait a long time.

Sincerely,



Robert E. Cox
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