

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

July 24, 2014

Dear Director Juen,

My name is Jan Bachman and my address is 72A Private Drive 1685, Hwy 554, El Rito, NM 87530. I am a landowner in Rio Arriba County and I often visit archeological ruins in Northern New Mexico. I also have a telescope and spend many evenings observing the beautiful night sky from my property.

I am aware that 13 parcels in the Santa Fe National Forest are up for lease sale in the October 22, 2014 Oil and Gas Lease Sale through the BLM Farmington Field Office. I am writing to ask that these 13 parcels (NM-201410-001, -004, -005, -006, -007, -008, -009, -010, -011, -012, -013, -014, -015) be deferred for many reasons.

One very important reason is the quality and quantity of our water. We have been in drought conditions for some time. We in El Rito have been asked to limit our water usage for the last two years—to not even water our trees. Fracking uses millions of gallons of water and risks poisoning our water and the water of users downstream.

Our fire danger has increased with the drought and we had a lightning-caused fire near Coyote this summer in the Santa Fe National Forest. I was just recently informed that flaring, commonly used in fracking, can cause fire danger and affects air quality.

I worry about the fault lines beneath Abiquiu Reservoir. There are reported earthquakes from fracking in Oklahoma. We should not put the Abiquiu Reservoir at risk. I worry about spills and the carcinogens in many of the fracking products. I understand that at least 30 spills in 2011 and 2012 impacted a waterway or groundwater supply.

Highway 96 is a road taken by locals and tourists alike—certainly tourist O'Keeffe country and the road taken to visit Pedernal, The Black Place, and ruins at Chaco Canyon up to the Salmon Ruins and the Aztec Ruins, not to mention the ruins less well known around the area. Big trucks running on this road day and night would disrupt the communities, as would generators and bright lights. We all like seeing the stars here, with or without a telescope.

The finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the October 22, 2014 Oil and Gas Lease Sale is not adequately supported by the Environmental Assessment as it now stands.

These parcels, which are in the same geologic and geographic area as 22 other parcels that were deferred, also need to be deferred in order to protect the Rio Chama Watershed east of the Continental Divide. Our quality of life depends on it.

Sincerely,


Jan Bachman
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