

Dr. John Lyon  
Eastern States Office Director  
United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management, Eastern States  
7450 Boston Boulevard  
Springfield, Virginia 22153

October 7, 2011

**RE: Protest of the Bureau of Land Management's Notice of Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale Concerning Parcels in Perry, Gallia, and Athens Counties, Ohio**

Dear Dr. Lyon:

I hereby protest the agency's planned offering of ES-043-12/11, OHES 57246 ACQ (264.93 acres, Athens County); ES-044-12/11, OHES 57247 ACQ (1,238.06 acres, Athens County); ES-045-12/11, OHES 57248 ACQ (1,120.58 acres, Athens County), OHES 57245 ACQ (150.65 Acres, Gallia County); and ES-041-12/11, OHES 57244 ACQ (528.15 acres, Perry County) at the December 7, 2011 lease sale in accordance with 43 CFR 3120.1-3. The five parcels are publicly owned lands of the Wayne National Forest.

I am protesting this action because these sales will severely jeopardize several counties' water supplies, negatively impact the forest itself, impair our air quality, and negatively impact our region's economies. I am concerned that the stipulations in your lease do not protect the Hocking River, the aquifer on which our public water supplies depend, and the forest ecosystem itself.

My interest is as a resident of Athens City, Athens County, and southeast Ohio; as a recreational user of both the Hockhocking-Adena Bikeway, which abuts one parcel, and the Wayne National Forest itself; as a researcher of environmental pollution and its consequences on public health, forest health and local economies; and as a former member of The City of Athens (Ohio) Wellhead Advisory Committee.

I have an interest in these sales as a resident of the City of Athens, whose sole source riparian aquifer drinking water supplies will be severely impacted by these sales. The city's drinking water supply, as well as those of Nelsonville, LeAx, and Burr Oak Water districts, is a shallow sole-source aquifer that lies immediately under and adjacent to the Athens County parcels to be sold. The Athens and Perry county parcels all abut the Hocking River or its tributaries, which are likely to be irreparably harmed by these sales.

Water withdrawals will threaten our water supply: According to the USEPA, 2-10 million gallons of water per well are used for the deep-shale horizontal drilling, hydraulic fracturing, and production. Our public water systems already use close to the capacity of the aquifer to support them. Their supply and functioning will be threatened by these sales.

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Toxic chemicals used in drilling, fracking, and production and the extremely toxic, radioactive waste produced by horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing operations will threaten our water supply.

Our cities can neither financially nor technically cope with the burden of these wastes. Our local economies and the viability of our cities will be irreparably harmed by these sales. Our water-treatment facilities can neither monitor for nor adequately remediate the chemical and radioactive pollution that will be likely from these sales. The very presence of horizontal drilling operations could put our cities' budgets and financial stability in jeopardy due to the monitoring burden these sales would place on our cities.

These operations, including temporary and possibly long-term waste handling and storage, will be adjacent to or directly over our shallow, *highly porous* riparian aquifer. Because chemicals used by the gas and oil industry for drilling, fracturing, and production are exempted from regulation by the Safe Drinking Water Act, Clean Water Act, RCCRA, and other regulation of toxic and radioactive pollutants, toxic chemical pollution and radioactivity are neither monitored nor reported by the oil and gas corporations or the state or federal government.

The sales are also in violation of Ohio law (ORC 743.25) and the National Environmental Policy Act, the latter because appropriate and necessary environmental assessments were not performed prior to announcement of these sales as required by law.

Furthermore, federal law requires the U.S. Forest Service to serve the public interest. These sales clearly do not serve the public interest and are therefore in violation of USFS's Congressional mandate.

I hereby request that BLM withdraw the protested parcels from the December 2011 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale because this sale will violate ORC 743.25, NEPA, and USFS's public mandate; will irreparably harm the drinking water supplies and economies of the City and County of Athens, Ohio; and will cause irreparable, unnecessary and avoidable harm to the lands of the Wayne National Forest.

Sincerely,



Heather Cantino  
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