



**(no subject)**

**Noffke, Louise** <louisen@wmcms.org>

Mon, Jul 22, 2013 at 2:45 PM

To: "ES\_EOI\_Nominations@blm.gov" <ES\_EOI\_Nominations@blm.gov>

Cc: "dstrohl@blm.gov" <dstrohl@blm.gov>

Attached please find attached our response during public comment period concerning the following:

3110(030), NEPA # DOI-BLM-ES-030-2013-0017-EA, Michigan Meridian, Pentwater Township, Oceana County, Michigan; T. 16N., R. 18W., Sec. 2, NE1/4NE1/4 and NE1/4SE1/4.

We've also faxed this same info to you. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Many thanks,

Jim and Louise Noffke

231-869-8902



BLM-Oceana County, MI-072213.tif  
174K

5851 West Bone  
Pentwater, MI 49449  
231-869-8902

July 22, 2013

Bureau of Land Management  
7450 Boston Blvd.  
Springfield, VA 22153

Re: 3110(030)  
NEPA #: DOI-BLM-ES-030-2013-0017-EA  
Michigan Meridian, Pentwater Township, Oceana County, MI  
T. 16 N., R. 18 W., Sec. 2, NE1/4NE1/4 and NE1/4SE1/4

Dear BLM Associates & Derek Strohl:

I am resubmitting my May 3, 2013 letter to you to be included in the formal public comment period regarding above.

We have read the environmental assessment three to four times and have considered many items mentioned. Most specifically, the EA gives a green light to surface drilling providing all necessary forms and petitions are properly filed and various permits given. This is quite disturbing to us in that, first and foremost, 80% of our 40 acres is considered a "severe" erosion hazard revealed on page 33 of the EA – Figure 2. In your site analysis and physical inspection, you see that most of our hilly terrain is sand with some topsoil. The EA states that 1.5 acres for a well head would be permanently clear cut and up to 3+ acres disturbed including an access road. We have absolutely no desire to allow this. We have nurtured this property for posterity for 32 years and are completely opposed to destruction of any of our property in search of what may be a low-performing well or wells. We understand that a purchaser of the lease to our mineral rights must have access to those, but any negotiations regarding this will be very difficult from our stand-point. We will demand an environmental impact report.

Your report states that there is no "human harm" in this endeavor, but admittedly, there could be gas emissions or even a flare – something we would have to endure and that is harm to my "peace and tranquility" as well as my health. So does no human disturbance mean to great numbers of people or does a single family or a few families within close proximity have to be "sacrificed" for the pursuit of our never-ending need for energy? If the BLM feels a low density population area is of no matter, then this issue will be contested at every turn, during every permit application and at every public hearing.

Your EA also states the southern 40 acres are really not a potential drilling site, so that leaves my wife and I to contest the 1 to 2 wells possibly targeted on our property. We have been preparing for this day for 32 years and will take any necessary steps to protect our pristine land.

Bureau of Land Management  
July 22, 2013  
Page 2

A much simpler and far less costly solution would be horizontal drilling from a remote site. If the operator (mineral rights lessee) wants to negotiate that form of extraction with accompanying royalties paid to us, we will be in a much more receptive negotiating mood. It seems the 3 existing wells within close proximity to our land would be ideal for this.

We understand the EA is the formal preliminary step and numerous steps at the State, County and Township levels must be taken. We will vigorously follow this on a daily basis, lending our voice as the surface owners. We also understand that this split estate situation must allow for both parties to be made whole. Our plan is to make sure we are comfortable with the results from our perspective.

We would like to know the results of this public comment period and where things are to proceed. We would also need to be kept informed of the time and place for the lease auction. We do appreciate the courtesy that Derek and the BLM staff have given us. You have been quite pleasant and more than fair in answering our questions and providing us with all the information we have requested. We look forward to working with you in the near future.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Jim and Louise Noffke in cursive script.

Jim and Louise Noffke

Cc: Derek Strohl  
Natural Resources Specialist, BLM

5851 West Bone Avenue  
Pentwater, MI 49449  
231-869-8902; cell 231-343-6054; fax 231-869-602

May 3, 2013

Derek Strohl, Natural Resources Specialist  
Bureau of Land Management  
626 East Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 202  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Derek:

Thank you, and Teresa Bodus and Becky Metz, for taking the time to answer my questions regarding the proposed leasing of our mineral rights here in Pentwater Township, Pentwater, Michigan. I have also received the email and your replies from Paul Mohai. We would also like copies of the deeds demonstrating Federal Government mineral rights ownership of our property.

Since our 40 acres is separate from the other 40 acres that encompass Duna Vista and other properties to our south, I wanted to explain our situation better. We have owned this parcel since 1982, but I have been visiting and hiking on it since 1959. The property is complete with very steep hills and, for the most part, heavily wooded. The woods are pristine, complete with deer, foxes, coyotes, turkeys, bear and bobcat sightings and plenty of squirrels, porcupines, raccoons, chipmunks and tons of birds including humming birds, eagles, hawks, falcons, black birds and turkey vultures to name a few. When we purchased the property, a small two-track crossing four other privately held pieces terminated on our land. Great physical damage due to dirt bikes, four-wheelers and even sand dragsters had scarred the land. Since then, the property has somewhat repaired itself. Since there is little flat area, the damage to climbing these hills was quite evident.

Since we built our home and moved here in 1995, we have gotten to know neighbors on all sides of our property. Our 40 acres is used by many for hiking due to its serene nature. This property should not be spoiled by bulldozers and drills since it is one of the last large tracts that remain intact as Mother Nature provided.

Problems abound for surface drilling on the property. To the north, west and south, private property borders our land with no ingress or egress unless a wildcatter can convince the owners to allow a road. To the west, is land in Michigan's critical dune area, so a road would be virtually impossible. To the east, are 14-foot-wide dirt roads out to Business 31. These amount to our neighborhood's access, but many are just driveways. Since the land sectioning dates back to the early 1900's, houses in many locations are within 5 to 10-feet of the deeded road, so use of those roads would be problematic. I have checked with our county road commission and a legal minimum road size is 16-feet so my building even a second house on my land would require that I buy 2-feet from numerous land owners or get county variances which is quite difficult.

Derek Strohl  
May 3, 2013  
Page 2

In summary, my property needs a physical inspection with my conducting a lot line-to-lot line tour. I am convinced surface drilling which would include cutting thousands of trees and massive excavating to get to any flat, level site would bring extreme destruction to our woods.

As new technology has improved mineral extraction, this site would be within the slant or directional drilling description. Flat, easily accessed sites from which to drill exist within one mile of our property. If this is chosen and normal financial remuneration is in place, then we would like to discuss this further.

Please send us copies of replies to any of our Pentwater Township inquiries. I will be gone May 14-21, 2013. Since I have a 54-year history here, I would like to be present when someone comes to do the environmental assessment. If the physical inspection absolutely must be between those dates, my wife, Louise, can show you around our property.

Please save our beautiful woods from great scarring and destruction. Also, please keep us informed on scheduling and when and where the lease auction will take place.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Jim and Louise Noffke in cursive script.

Jim & Louise Noffke