

Dear Bureau of Land Management Managers:

I urge you on behalf of myself and my family not to allow the sale of leases by the BLM for deep shale horizontal fracturing on the Wayne National Forest along the Hocking River near Nelsonville, Ohio. This is a very grave development for our county's air quality, local economy and downstream drinking water supplies, due to potential massive water withdrawals and likely contamination. The sales threaten the drinking water supplies of Athens, Nelsonville, LeAa, and Burr Oak Water Districts. I urge you intervene on behalf of southeast Ohio and call for a halt of these illegal and dangerous sales.

Ohio and federal regulations permit

- unlimited water withdrawals onsite, which will likely come from the aquifer and/or river
- long-term toxic waste storage in open pits, which don't have to be netted or fenced
- burial of toxic sludge onsite, which may well be immediately over the aquifer
- reinjection of liquid waste in wells not designed for hazardous waste and without associated monitoring wells
- flaring of unwanted gas
- volatilization rather than capture of highly toxic volatile organic compounds

Furthermore, waste and "produced water" from Utica shale can be highly radioactive, which downstream water systems can neither adequately monitor nor remedy.

Fracking waste is exempt from the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Clean Water Act, and RCCRA, (hazardous waste regulation). Local communities cannot afford the monitoring and remediation that these wells will likely require. Lack of regulation will mean lack of liability for the corporations that own the wells. Our local economy, dependent on healthy farms and food, tourism, and vibrant communities, is severely threatened by this BLM action.

The lack of an environmental impact statement as required by NEPA, which would assess risks to water, air, and surrounding communities, makes this sale illegal. Please help protect the public lands over which we have some legal redress. The stakes are unfathomable and the need to act urgent.

This area continues to recover from years of water supply insolvency from the coal mining era and from C-8 exposure from the Dupont Corporation.

Thank you for your attention to this extremely serious matter.

With grave concern


Michele M. Papai, Athens, OHIO

10/5/11