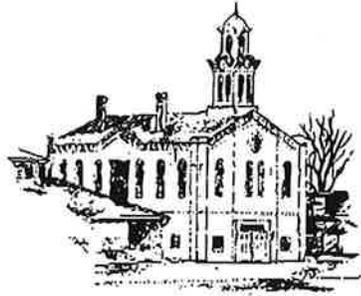


ATHENS CITY COUNCIL
Third Floor
City Building
Athens, Ohio 45701
Telephone 740/592-3342
FAX 740/593-8220



City of Athens

ATHENS, OHIO

William Blas
President of Council

FAX TRANSMISSION

TO: Dr. John Lyon, Eastern States Office Director
United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

FROM: Debbie Walker, Clerk, Athens City Council

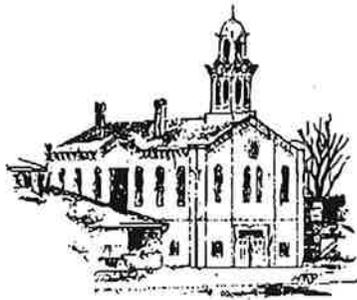
DATE: October 4, 2011

RE: PROTEST OF THE BUREAU OF LAND
MANAGEMENT'S NOTICE OF COMPETITIVE OIL AND
GAS LEASE SALE ON 2623.57 ACRES IN ATHENS
COUNTY, OHIO

PAGES: 3 including cover page

**Please acknowledge receipt of this document by
return FAX to 740-593-8220. Thank you!**

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City of Athens

ATHENS, OHIO

William Blas
President of Council

October 3, 2011

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

RE: Protest of the Bureau of Land Management's Notice of Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale on 2623.57 acres in Athens County, Ohio (OHES 57246 ACQ, ES-044-12/11, OHES 57247 ACQ; and ES-045-12/11, OHES 57248 ACQ)

Dear Dr. Lyon:

Athens City Council, Athens City, Athens, Ohio, protests the agency's planned offering of OHES 57246 ACQ (264.93 acres, Athens County); ES-044-12/11, OHES 57247 ACQ (1,238.06 acres, Athens County); and ES-045-12/11, OHES 57248 ACQ (1,120.58 acres, Athens County) at the December 7, 2011 lease sale in accordance with 43 CFR 3120.1-3. These parcels are publicly owned lands of the Wayne National Forest.

Athens City Council, Athens City, Ohio is a statutory city that relies upon a riparian aquifer as the sole source for its municipal water system. That aquifer is downstream from the parcels above. We are concerned that the leasing, drilling, and operation of the potential wells in the Utica Shale will have a deleterious effect on our sole source municipal water supply. It must be noted that we have a meager water supply in general in unglaciated Ohio, and our water source is inextricably bound to the health of the Hocking River (http://ohioline.osu.edu/aefact/0480_05.html). We are also concerned that the leasing and drilling of these parcels could negatively impact human health, wildlife, habitat, and recreational enjoyment.

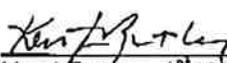
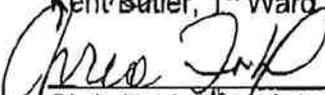
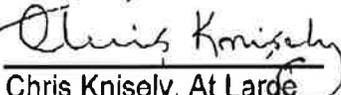
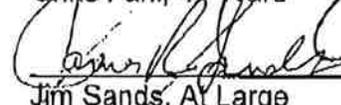
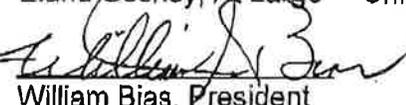
BLM's and Forest Service's reliance on the 2006 Forest Plan FEIS in the leasing for this new technology does not live up to the letter and spirit of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that all major federal actions assess

the impact of the actions on the environment. We are concerned that the proposed technology and in fact the Utica Shale exploitation are so new that the negative impacts on our water source are real and must be considered. The 2006 FEIS that BLM and U.S. Forest Service rely upon does not consider the potential water pollution impacts of high volume horizontal drilling of shale formation such as the Utica. This is a highly significant omission, as the Athens County parcels offered for lease sit atop the Utica shale and include water sources that the City of Athens ultimately relies upon for its drinking supply.

Given the experiences of our adjacent state, Pennsylvania, in the exploitation of the Marcellus Shale, we request that the Forest Service's determination be reconsidered for the parcels upstream from our municipal water supply. The required NEPA work and potential mitigation must be completed before the leasing process. We trust that you will see that the 2006 FEIS is inadequate to protect our water. We request the withdrawal of the lease sale until the proper environmental analysis is conducted and our water supply is protected.

Sincerely,

Athens City Council

 Kent Butler, 1 st Ward	 Sherry Coon, 3 rd Ward	 Nancy Bahr, 2 nd Ward
 Chris Fahl, 4 th Ward	 Elahu Gosney, At Large	 Chris Knisely, At Large
 Jim Sands, At Large	 William Bias, President	