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DEPT. OF INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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March 12, 2009

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Montana State Office
6001 Southgate Drive
Billings, Montana 59101-4669

Dear Chun C. Wong:

I am writing in response to your letter written February 27, 2009 regarding testing an initiative to notify private surface owners when the Bureau of Land Management advertise for leasing federal oil and gas underlying their surface.

As stated in your brochure on Split Estate Rights, Responsibilities, and Opportunities, private surface Owners have the right to protest and or comment on pending lease sales. I am writing to protest the lease sales.

I am basing my protest on the environmental impact of selling leases. Our Earth is radically changing every day because of global warming which is mainly caused by the burning of fossil fuels. It seems to me that our government should be protecting land from development rather than encouraging the burning of more fossil fuels. Every time I leave the house, I see people (usually one person per vehicle) driving huge Land Rovers, Navigators, Expeditions, Explorers, Hummers, large pick-up trucks (to name just a few) that would be very costly to operate if they were not able to purchase fuel at such a low price. All of these vehicles are contributing way more to the carbon footprint on this Earth than smaller economical vehicles. In my opinion, soccer Moms could get by with a Honda Element just fine and save some resources for generations to come. If anything, the government should be encouraging the advancement of renewable energy sources like using algae to make an alternative fuel source. It's time for the World to get their priorities straight and especially the United States of America since this country is the number One country burning fossil fuels.

I was on a road trip in Montana last summer and we drove by oil wells that had fires burning off natural gas. What a waste to see a huge flame burning day and night probably just because they hadn't made a pipe line yet to make it productive. This was common practice during the fifties and sixties, but I sure didn't expect to see it happening in 2008! It seemed like it made the atmosphere hazy as well as contributing to global warming.

Since the climate has changed, California has suffered the worst year for fires. Montana also had a very bad year for fires in 2008. Australia has had an unbelievable year of drought, fires, loss of homes, business and lives. If this isn't evidence of global warming and climate change, what other proof is needed? It seems like the harsh winter in much of the country is another result of climate change that experts have been predicting with the change of climate. As predicted there will be more extreme weather conditions. It seems like the tornados and hurricanes in this country are also getting more frequent and severe.

California is experiencing the third year of drought and water rationing is a must. Farmers are having to declare bankruptcy. What if the drought continues like the dirty thirties? Or have all of the bureaucrats never studied History?

Some of our land is still undisturbed and I want it protected for wildlife as much as possible. There are so few areas left for the Meadowlark to nest just for one example. They are a beautiful bird and use prairie for nesting. There is very little undisturbed prairie left and the meadowlarks are on the decline. I used to see and hear them here in Southern California during the winter when they migrate South. But, I haven't seen or heard one now for many years even though I go birding and do a lot of walks that are popular places for birds.

The March-April issue of the magazine, Montana Outdoors has a lengthy article entitled, 'Feeling the Heat-Climate Change is Altering Montana's Wildlife and Fish Populations, Habitats, and Recreation. I suggest that it should be required reading for BLM.

It seems to me that a \$2.00 minimum bid is absolutely ridiculously low. If this lease sale does go through, you would think that the Government would at least get a reasonable amount per acre for the benefit of taxpayers. Landowners got as much as \$10.00 per acre for leasing their mineral rights back in the 1950's and that was before any oil was discovered let alone anyone had discovered the Bakken Formation.

Lastly, I have contacted our attorney and he told me that because of our land was homesteaded (my Dad) acquired the land by homesteading, we own the mineral rights. Therefore, I do not believe that the proposed lease sale/sales should affect us personally. Please advise, if my understanding is incorrect.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Twila Ketterman". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Twila Ketterman