

Lupita

Jesse Juen
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
New Mexico State Office
PO Box 27115
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502

RECEIVED
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BY: _____

Dear Director Juen,

I am writing in regards to the parcels NM-2014-001, 004 through 015 that are up for lease in our watershed. I am entirely against the exploitation of this land for oil and gas exploration and drilling. My family has been in this area for generations, and our livelihoods depend on our reciprocal relationship with the land. We are dependent on a clean and healthy ecosystem to survive.

The first reason of my protest, is that I have learned that the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the October 22, 2014 Oil and Gas Lease sale is not adequately supported by the Environmental Assessment. There has been insufficient study of this area, the geology, and the potential negative impacts due to oil and gas exploration. Because of the unique geology oil and gas exploration, and especially shallow shale hydraulic fracturing pose a huge risk for transmitting toxic chemicals into our aquifer and contaminating our region.

Our region relies on clean water to keep our families living and thriving as well as our farms, ranches, and wildlife upon which we depend. The people of northern New Mexico live in a fragile balance between tradition and modernity, in which we base our traditions and livelihoods off of the land, as well as are contributing to greater society by sharing what we have and working in wage-earning jobs. Our initial most basic reason for living where we are living is the presence of water. It enters and nourishes our bodies, as well as our streams, rivers, aquifers, crops, and mountains.

We have been in a drought for the past few years in northern New Mexico, and have historically have had a limited water supply because of the aridity of our region. Fracking not only risks poisoning the little water that we already have, but also over-drawing water resources in order to provide millions of gallons of the purest water to frack each proposed well. There is no way of restoring the water

back into the environment in its pure form, it returns as a toxin.

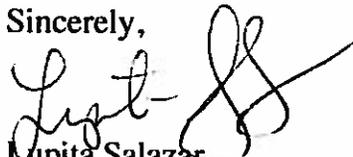
I also question the changes this development will bring to our region. With my understanding of how fracking has worked in other regions in the United States, there are few skilled jobs that are offered to local people. We would not only have an influx of traffic, including massive semis, but also of new people that will require housing, food, etc. Most of these people have historically been men from other regions of the U.S. This will have a societal effect by the influx of these people that have no investment in the community because they are going to leave as soon as their job is done. As well as the traffic, noise, fumes, spills, and pressure put on the surrounding community to accommodate such an unnatural and exploitative enterprise.

On a personal level, my family has lived in northern New Mexico for generations. Our livelihoods are based off of the land. As a student of sustainable communities at Northern Arizona University, I have learned about the need for pure resources for people to live and thrive. I hope to return soon after I finish my studies to farm on our family ranch, and without clean water, this most basic occupation will be impossible. Our most sacred land will be useless to us because we cannot use the water. We look to your branch of our modern social structure to protect the people from threats that will cause long-term damage for the short-term gain of the few.

Our communities do not have very much in this world in regards to material wealth or political power. But what we do have, is our connection with our land, and with that connection comes an understanding that we must protect it from exploitation. In closing I would like to reiterate that I write to protest the parcels NM-2014-001, 004 through 015 that are up for lease. The deferral of these parcels can help our state focus more on alternative forms of creating energy. Using solar, wind, and other clean forms that do not negatively affect our water and bodies as hydraulic fracturing will. I protest on the grounds of inadequate study, contamination of our aquifer and bodies, and negative impacts to our society.

Sin Agua, no hay Vida

Sincerely,


Lupita Salazar