

## Schuller, Pamela N

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**From:** BLM\_UT\_MB\_Comments  
**Sent:** Monday, October 24, 2011 10:01 AM  
**To:** Ogaard, Donald H; Schuller, Pamela N  
**Subject:** FW: Comments on EA for the February 2012 Oil and Gas Lease Sale

Good Morning,

Below are comments for on the February 2012 oil and gas lease sale that we received. I believe the comment period for this closes COB tomorrow (Oct.25?) I will pass the comments on as I receive them.

Becky

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**From:** John Weisheit [<mailto:john.weisheit@gmail.com>] **On Behalf Of** John Weisheit  
**Sent:** Monday, October 24, 2011 8:35 AM  
**To:** BLM\_UT\_MB\_Comments  
**Cc:** John Weisheit  
**Subject:** Comments on EA for the February 2012 Oil and Gas Lease Sale

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October 24, 2011

Re: Comments on the Environmental Assessment for the February 2012 Oil and Gas Lease Sale

Dear BLM Moab Field Office:

The following comments are provided by Living Rivers & Colorado Riverkeeper, which is a non-profit organization based in Moab, Utah. We also provided scoping comments on this Environmental Assessment in an email dated July 5, 2011.

We would like to thank the Department of Interior for reducing the total lease parcels from 35 to 17. We appreciate how this decision will especially protect the groundwater and air quality of Arches National Park.

We still have concerns about the parcels that remain, especially in regards to those located in San Juan County because of the groundwater in the area that is used for culinary purposes by residents in the vicinity. Hydraulic fracking procedures remain controversial for reasons of potential groundwater contamination, and for hyper emissions of greenhouse gases.

[Chemicals Used In Hydraulic Fracturing. April 2011. United States House Of Representatives Committee On Energy And Commerce Minority Staff.](#)

[Howarth, R.W., R. Santoro, and A. Ingraffea. 2011. Methane and the greenhouse gas footprint of natural gas from shale formations.](#)

We hope that these comments of ours will be shared with Secretary Salazar, Deputy Secretary Hayes, Assistant Secretary Castle, and the various members of our natural resource committees. We are very much aware that watershed protection in the Colorado River basin is a very high priority to these individuals.

We would like to state for the record that many of the features of the 2005 Energy Policy Act will cumulatively cause harm to the watershed of the Colorado River basin. We insist that initiatives to improve the quantity and quality of Colorado River water resources, such as the SECURE Water Act of 2009, will be compromised by energy development in the Colorado Plateau.

We also want to acknowledge that we appreciate how the natural resource committees are trying to initiate programs to reduce pollution threats in the Colorado River basin, with such examples as the Lower Colorado River Protection Act (HR-3481) and Grand

Canyon Watershed Protection Act (HR 644). However, if enacted, this proposed legislation will also be defeated if the upper basin of the Colorado River continues to expand the extraction of fossil and nuclear fuels in the watershed.

We ask that Interior and Congress please do what it can to initiate leadership to ensure that something meaningful is completed soon, so that the water resources of the Colorado River will not be compromised any further by the 2005 Energy Policy Act. It makes sense to complete legislation to protect not only the lower basin, but the upper basin of the Colorado River as well. To be specific, a basin wide Colorado River Protection Act is what is required at a minimum.

As to the Energy Policy Act of 2005, the preference to extract energy fuels should be modified to instead provide programs of energy conservation, energy efficiency, reclamation of extraction sites, and watershed restoration, which is basically the model provided in the SECURE Water Act. Such programs will provide a diversity of jobs and, hopefully, alleviate the acknowledged water crises that will soon occur in the Colorado River basin.

If we can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to ask us.

Sincerely yours,

John Weisheit  
Living Rivers & Colorado Riverkeeper  
Conservation Director  
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