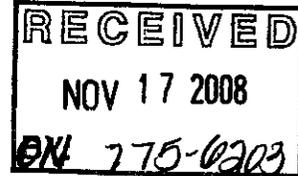




November 13, 2008

Don Simpson, Acting State Director  
Bureau of Land Management Wyoming State Office  
5353 Yellowstone Road  
Cheyenne, WY 82009



Re: PROTEST OF Dec. 2, 2008 COMPETITIVE OIL AND GAS SALE

Protest of 14 parcels. Specific parcels protested include: Parcels WY-0812-177, WY-0812-178, WY-0812-179, WY-0812-180, WY-0812-181, WY-0812-182, WY-0812-183, WY-0812-186, WY-0812-187, WY-0812-188, WY-0812-189, WY-0812-190, WY-0812-191, And WY-0812-192.

Attention Director Simpson:

I hereby protest the inclusion of the above referenced parcels in the lease sale advertised by the Bureau of Land Management on October 17, 2008. I request that the above parcels be withdrawn from sale because they are: 1) Much too important to the wildlife habitat, and the watershed of a vast area. 2) The scenic, esthetic, and recreational value of the included area is priceless, and therefore of great economic value to the entire state as well as the surrounding communities.

Director, not all of our Wyoming landscape has the same value or necessity to wildlife. Some areas are more important to the survival and continuation of wildlife. The proposed lease parcels overlap crucial ranges for elk, antelope, a fledgling population of moose, and mule deer. At a time when moose populations are in a rather dramatic decline in their historic ranges, and suitable, sustainable habit for our mule deer is at a premium. The loss or curtailment of one of the prize jewels of habitat in southwest Wyoming, cannot be accepted.

The area in question also has significant value as riparian/watershed areas for Colorado River cutthroat trout (CRCT). The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has been petitioned 3 times to designate the CRCT as a threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. Partly because of the habitat restoration efforts in these watersheds, which would be compromised by the development activity, the USFW has so far declined to list the species. The Wyoming Game and Fish Dept. along with associated sportsmen groups has invested considerable time, effort, and monetary expense, to restoring and maintaining these watersheds. I would hate to think their efforts have been in vain. Another critical species also requires the habitat these parcels include, the sage grouse. Once again it has been the WG&F and a working group of biologists and concerned sportsmen and women, that have been able to stave off the listing of this species as endangered or threatened. The loss of any habitat crucial to the survival of this species would be detrimental to their efforts.

The area comprised in these parcels, is prized for elk and deer hunting. Not only by residents of Wyoming but by many sportsman across the country. Thus the area plays a vital role in maintaining our states outdoor heritage and economic diversity. The hunt areas that are included in these parcels are: Elk areas 30,31, and 32. Deer area 102. Antelope areas 59, and 112. All of these areas are limited quota and highly subscribed, by resident as well as non-resident hunters, because of the high quality game animals they produce. It is one of the few opportunities still available for those of modest means to experience a hunt of the quality, that can only be found at a much greater expense on private ranches or some of the storied areas of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, etc.

Oil and gas exploration, development, and recovery not only can but will have a detrimental, effect on the habitat, game, and the quality of the outdoor experience in these areas. These areas provide a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for a trophy quality bull elk. In fact each person who applies only has about a 6% chance of success at drawing one of these areas. Energy development in these areas will bring new roads, which reduce cover security for elk, increase elk vulnerability, and decrease trophy size elk. The increased human activity, from vehicle traffic to the presence of heavy machinery and workers will also result in wildlife conflicts- ranging from possible displacement to the opportunity and possibility of poaching.

Also, these proposed leases, are included in an area that has been identified by the BLM's resource management plan as a highly significant resource area worthy of protection. The proposed leasing of this area defies the agency's management designations. I, like many others want to know WHY?

The area is already heavily leased. do not lease more. it's almost seems as if the BLM's agenda is to try and turn every parcel of public land they administer into a "Jonah Field" replica. Much of the state of Wyoming has already been leased for energy development, and much of the state carries lasting and still visible scars of past developments. Loss of habitat, loss of wildlife, loss of scenic and aesthetic beauty, loss of opportunities for future generations, can not be mitigated or reclaimed in a few years time. It may take a lifetime if at all to reclaim what will be lost.

As an agency administering public lands, it is your job, or dare I say duty to protect the habitat, the scenery, the recreational opportunities, wildlife, and aesthetic values of the land which is entrusted in your care. I daresay that the agency's recent management decisions give the impression of selling off the public lands for monetary gain, whatever the consequences or cost.

If this is indeed public land, I do believe the public has spoken. There are some things more precious and important than energy development at all costs. Please sir, I implore you to temper the need for energy development in these areas, with needs of the land, the wildlife, the health of the habitat, and the needs of those of us who are sustained by having areas such as this to enjoy.

Respectfully

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