

11/12/08

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

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
2008 NOV 17 AM 10:00
RECEIVED
CHEYENNE, WYOMING

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, WY-0812-192.

Dear 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 I request the above parcels be withdrawn from sale because of:

1) Adverse environmental impacts:

Drilling in this area will have the same adverse effects on underground aquifers as it has in other areas of Wyoming, but in this case there is a definite threat to the springs in the area that nourish all kinds of wildlife, some of which can not go all the way to Flaming Gorge for water daily. As a result various species will die out.

As with any petroleum or gas drilling and pumping, there is always the risk of severe chemical pollution from an accident, which can immediately kill surrounding animals and vegetation, and has the threat of working its way slowly or quickly all the way down to Flaming Gorge. If that were to happen, the fish and other animals that live in the Gorge would be at risk, as well as all those people who live downstream and depend on Flaming Gorge water for their lives and livelihood.

The proposed lease parcels overlap crucial ranges for antelope, elk, mule deer, and mountain lions and even a few bears. Energy development in Little Mountain, Aspen Mountain, and Pine Mountain areas would bring new roads, which would reduce cover security for elk and deer, thereby increasing elk/deer vulnerability, and decreasing trophy big game. The proposed areas threaten watershed for the Colorado River Cutthroat. Since 1990, the area has benefited from more than \$2 million in riparian habitat restoration projects funded by various groups (Trout Unlimited, Bowhunters of Wyoming, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, etc.) and state and federal agencies, but all of this work and money is at risk of being destroyed.

2) Adverse effects on recreational and human quality of life issues:

The greater Little Mountain area is a priceless pristine area that has become of critical importance for the mental well being of many of our citizens of Sweetwater County as well as those individuals who come to visit from out of state areas. This is one of the few areas left in Wyoming where within 30 minutes of Green River or Rock Springs one can enjoy seeing trophy elk and deer as well as mountain lions any time of the year. For me and my family this area has provided my son with the success of harvesting his first elk as a teenager, and the only opportunity in Wyoming for my dad to harvest his own elk last year at age 89. We met another hunter last year who was 91 years old, and he was thoroughly enjoying himself as he hunted on the Sugarloaf Marsh Creek drainage, but this opportunity for the young in age and the young in mind to enjoy the elk hunting in elk hunt areas 30-32 without the unsightly scars from drilling is being threatened. The hunting licenses in this area are very difficult to obtain because of limited quota draw system, but that is the way it should be to keep the whole hunting experience a special happy memory. We need to protect and spare this region for the sake of future generations.

For that reason I think it would be timely to review and up-date the Resource Management Plan of 1997 for the greater Little Mountain/Aspen Mountain/ Pine Mountain area with it in mind to phase out all drilling and mineral exploration. For the time being, I urge you to remove the above mentioned parcels from the December 2, 2008 Competitive Oil and Gas Sale.

Respectively,

Chuck Vandervort, O.D.

Chuck Vandervort, O.D.
1145 Mountain View
Green River, Wyo. 82935
307-875-4538