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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comments on WRNF DEIS leasing plan

To the U.S. Forest Service

Dear Forest Service,

I am opposed to ANY further oil and gas leasing in the Thompson Divide area west of Carbondale. The Roaring Fork and Crystal River valleys have absolutely exceptional values for tourism and outdoor recreation...and the type of intensive development that accompanies oil and gas extraction is not compatible with tourism and recreation.

The Crystal River drainage is one of the very special places in Colorado, and its exceptional water quality needs to be protected by preserving its existing roadless areas and de facto Wilderness lands. As you may be aware, the upper valley west of Redstone was consolidated into solid Forest Service ownership by a series of land exchanges in the 1990s and early 2000s, and this area should be preserved intact from future development.

I am a strong believer in natural gas replacing coal burning in the future in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions until renewable energy sources can gain more of a foothold in our economy...BUT natural gas fields involve intense development...as can be witnessed along the I-70 corridor west of Rifle, and that type of development is not appropriate for the Roaring Fork and Crystal River valleys.

I also strongly urge you to deny SG Interests and others last minute applications to begin drilling for gas in the Thompson Divide on existing oil and gas leases that they have held and sat on for 9 of the 10 year lease durations. Most of those leases should never have been issued in the first place, and the only reason the companies are applying to drill them now is to gain a hoped for lease "suspension" so that they monitor gas prices for a few more years and see if the leases are worth development. It is rank speculation on the leaseholders part, and the Forest Service should not be expected to accommodate them.

Sincerely yours,

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