Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/1/2012 5:03:47 AM
First name: Besha
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Organization:
Title:
Comments: White River National Forest - Oil and Gas Leasing DEIS - Comment Period

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: TLazy7 Ranch <tlazy7@rof.net>
Date: Fri, Nov 30, 2012 at 10:01 PM
Subject: letter to FS about DEIS 113012 Besha
To: Besha Deane <beshalu@gmail.com>

Besha Lu Deane

11/30/12

Scott Fitzwilliams, Forest Supervisor

White River National Forest

Oil and Gas Leasing DEIS

P.O. Box 1919

Sacramento, CA 95812

WRNFoilandgascomments@fscomments.org

To Whom It May Concern:

I wish to address the Draft Environmental Impact Statement aimed at directing oil and gas drilling on the forest for the next 15 to 20 years. My property borders the White River National Forest and my business is directly linked to this land.

I support the Forest Service to take Alternative B, calling for an end to new leasing of lands for oil and gas drilling on the forest. There are appropriate and inappropriate places to drill and I do not believe the current drilling techniques are consistent with the US Forest Service Mission Statement with regards to the White River National Forest.

The WRNF is an area of great economic value to the people of Colorado. Many would say it is invaluable because of the allure of our pristine mountains, air, and water (including snow). The people of Colorado depend on tourism in its many forms, and the Forest Service has done a great job of "creating and maintaining sustainable multiple-use opportunities" within our forest thus far. Oil & gas drilling is not compatible with the existing sustainable economic opportunities, of which many primarily cater to visitors who seek out activities of eco-tourism, hunting, fishing, skiing, biking, hiking, horseback riding, snowmobiling, and sightseeing. Our mountain-scape is what brings people to Colorado. Drilling platforms and roads crisscrossing the landscape would be vastly detrimental to these activities, not to mention the potential for air and water contamination.

In the past the Forest Service has done a wonderful job of "listening and responding to the diverse needs of the people". Please help us maintain the brilliance of our forests and nourish the economies it has fostered. At present, the hydraulic fracturing technique is a relatively new process where the detrimental effects are not yet well documented. The industry already has thousands of acres of undeveloped land under lease and given the declining market prices for natural gas, there is no rush to promote further leasing right now. Alternative B would give the USFS time to wait for additional scientific evidence to emerge about the potential negative or neutral repercussions of hydraulic fracturing in sensitive habitats.

In the USFS mission statement it says a goal is "advocating a conservation ethic in promoting the health, productivity, diversity, and beauty of forest and associated lands." The WRNF is a unique ecosystem which includes the headwaters east and west of the Continental Divide. This means we are the guardians of all the ecosystems downstream and we must also think of any potential effects upon their 'forests and associated lands'. A specific concern regarding oil and gas drilling in this area, is that the geological formations within the WRNF make the ground water especially susceptible to contamination. This is because one must drill through the water table to reach potential oil and gas as opposed to other leased lands where aquifers lay below the gas layers and are therefore undisturbed. Contamination on this level is permanent and reclamation virtually impossible. As the gas and oil industry is exempt from the Clean Air and Water Act, it is extremely important at this time to be cautious about allowing further leasing.

The current "land grab" for federal lands by oil and gas companies is moving at an extraordinarily fast pace that does not allow for careful review of the long term impact. Please take into consideration the lack of evidence surrounding this new process of resource extraction and give science time to catch up by adopting Alternative B. There is no shortage of "leased land" at this time. Please also look at all the wonderful recreation-based businesses that thrive because of the careful management by the USFS. Thank you for your hard work and please fight for our livelihoods and our shared goal of enjoying the forests' richness while "promoting the health, productivity, diversity, and beauty of the forests."

Thank you for taking our comments.

Sincerely,

Besha Lu Deane

Please call with any additional questions:

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