

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/6/2017 3:28:46 PM

First name: Michael

Last name: McFarlane

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Ruby Oil and Gas

From:

Michael McFarlane

268 Cliff Place
Spring Creek, NV 89815

October 6, 2017

To:

Dear Susan Elliott,

I recently read about the USFS proposal to make certain areas of the Ruby Mountains available for oil and gas leasing. There is also a request for comments, which I make with this correspondence.

My overall comment is that I oppose the proposed leasing. My reasons follow.

As a geologist, my first comments address the rationale for making these lands available considering the low likelihood for oil and gas to be available on these lands. Particularly for the lands around Harrison Pass and northward, the predominant geologic framework is composed of igneous and high grade metamorphic rocks. Rocks of these types are known to have essentially no potential to contain economic concentrations of hydrocarbons. The heat and pressure that has been applied to these rocks would have long ago driven off any considerable hydrocarbons from these. What is the justification for considering these areas for oil and gas leasing? I see none.

Proposed lands in the southern Ruby Mountains may have some potential, being located in sedimentary sequences. But even there, areas in the valley to the west of the range have better structural and thermal histories for oil and gas potential than do the rocks within the mountain block.

My second set of comments relates to the visual impact that might be generated from any potential exploration on the indicated lands. Many areas proposed are directly facing the Spring Creek area where people live in part for the spectacular views of the glaciated peaks. Any visual impacts should be absolutely avoided in the Ruby Mountains. As a former Director for Spring Creek Association, I can assure you that many property owners in

Spring Creek will object to any disruption of their views. It would not only affect them personally, but would also have the potential to adversely affect property values.

Finally, there are many important uses of lands in the Ruby Mountains without adding oil and gas exploration. Hiking, fishing, hunting, photography, and generally enjoying the natural setting are among existing uses that should not be adversely affected by other potential activities.

I have a final question on this process: how did these lands come to be considered for this proposed leasing? Who initiated this?

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Michael McFarlane