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First name: Ellen

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Good Afternoon Mr. Nicholes, Ms. Elliott, and Others To Whom It May Concern:

Please prohibit and ban all leasing or sales of land in the Ruby Mountains to any oil or gas drilling of any kind, especially fracking.

Water is a precious resource around the world and country, but particularly, here in Nevada. We are prone to droughts and water shortages here in the Great Basin Desert. On top of it, water rights are already scarce, competitive and expensive. The water we have in Nevada and in the Great Basin desert must be protected for the sake of our citizens' public health, both the present and future generations. If we want safe drinking water we must prohibit leasing of the land for oil or gas extraction and prohibit fracking.

The allowance of land leasing and oil and gas drilling, especially fracking would pollute our water and is a largely unregulated business that puts the whole environment at risk. Note the lack of EPA regulations over fracking. In addition to the need to protect drinking water, we must also stop this in order to prevent more frequent and intense earthquakes, which could rise if leasing and drilling is allowed. Again, Nevada is an active geological area and prone to the real consequences of gas and oil drilling.

I voice these concerns as a local citizen. I also voice them as an educated professional who works in the environmental health field as a Registered Environmental Health Specialist with a BA in Environmental Studies. Please prohibit and ban all oil or gas drilling, of any kind, including fracking anywhere in the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forests or BLM public land in Nevada. It is unsafe and is detrimental to the safety of the groundwater, drinking water, and citizens as we are dependent on that water.

Finally, the Ruby Mountains are beautiful, pristine wilderness areas in the State. Moreover, it is one of the best recreational areas in the State. The Ruby Mountain Crest Trail is a claim-to-fame for the area because of the remote wilderness and the ability to go backpacking in an area where you can fish for your meals along the trail. The water and the nature, the wildlife from the Bighorn sheep and cougars to the Lahontan Cutthroat trout and the Sage grouse, to the raptors and the Pronehorn, from the lupine to the pines, and even Shoshone ancestral lands; we are putting this entire mountain range at risk when we put up derricks, drill into the land and pump chemicals into the earth.

The watershed and groundwater are at risk. Allowing this business would ruin the current recreational and business opportunities that the Rubies currently provide with their wild, remote beauty. I frequently visit this area and do not want to see oil or gas derricks when I hike.

The allowance of oil and gas drilling directly threatens the local economy as well because the cattle's water and agriculture as a whole, is at risk, a huge part of the Elko County economy is threatened with bad water. Most importantly the health of Nevadan citizens is at risk.

I implore you to consider the health and future of your neighbors. Please prohibit and ban all leasing or sales of land in the Ruby Mountain and Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest in order to protect our water, land and the public's health.

Thank you, Ellen Rose Kunz

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