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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Reject Ruby Mountains Oil and Gas Leasing

May 25, 2018

Jenna Padilla, U.S. Forest Service

Dear U.S. Forest Service,

I am writing to urge you to deny the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's request that you open up the Ruby Mountains of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest to oil and gas leasing.

The Forest Service has absolute discretion to withhold its consent to federal oil and gas leasing beneath National Forest System lands. The agency is under no obligation to allow any leasing.

Given the importance of the Ruby Mountains for fish and wildlife, for outdoor recreation, and for our American heritage of public lands, leasing in the Ruby Mountains is a terrible idea.

The American West is in dire need of clean water. It is drying up quickly due to repeated and accelerating droughts on a long-term scale, and that water that remains needs to be managed carefully and not polluted. The fracking process uses an enormous amount of water, and that water that is put back into the ground is too dangerous to ever use for drinking, and in many cases, even for agriculture. The return on investment from loss of clean water alone is so significant as to far exceed the value of any fossil fuels that are extracted.

The fact that the Rubies are the source of water for the nearby Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge raises serious concerns that any future oil and gas development will pose unacceptable risks to surface and groundwater.

There is no need to lease the Ruby Mountains. Right now, there is barely any oil and gas production in the State of Nevada and all leasing appears to be completely speculative. I urge the Forest Service not to allow our public lands to be used to fuel industry speculation.

Please, reject any and all oil and gas leasing in the Ruby Mountains of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

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