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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Reject Ruby Mountains Oil and Gas Leasing

May 23, 2018

Jenna Padilla, U.S. Forest Service

Dear U.S. Forest Service,

A July 5, 2017, article in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences identifies that Earth is in the midst of its sixth mass extinction episode: Biological annihilation via the ongoing sixth mass extinction signaled by vertebrate population losses and declines.

The article concludes: "...Earth's sixth mass extinction episode has proceeded further than most assume. ... (T)he proximate causes of population extinctions (are): habitat conversion, climate disruption, overexploitation, toxification, species invasion, disease, and (potentially) large-scale nuclear war ... (T)he ultimate drivers of those immediate causes of biotic destruction (are), namely, human overpopulation and continued population growth, and overconsumption, especially by the rich. ... (T)he sixth mass extinction is already here and the window for effective action is very short, probably two or three decades at most. All signs point to ever more powerful assaults on biodiversity in the next two decades, painting a dismal picture of the future of life, including human life."

<https://www.pnas.org/cgi/doi/10.1073/pnas.1704949114>

Habitat conversion.

Climate disruption.

Overexploitation.

Toxification.

Species invasion.

Disease.

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 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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