

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/26/2013 12:55:08 AM

First name: Michael

Last name: Kunkel

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Please accept the following comments on a developing Environmental Impact Statement for oil and gas leasing on the Pike San Isabel National Forest and Comanche-Cimarron National Grasslands.

When determining which lands to make available for oil and gas leasing, the Forest Service must prohibit leasing and/or apply strict stipulations as needed to protect lands, special status wildlife and plant species, and other important resources.

A range of Alternatives must be analyzed including an Alternative that proposes no new leases be issued.

Alternatives should be developed that exclude more land from leasing. These lands should include special interest areas, scenic areas, resource natural areas, sources of drinking water, habitat for threatened species (such as Greenback Cutthroat Trout, Mexican Spotted Owls, Preble's Meadow Jumping Mice, Lynx, Boreal Toads, Lesser Prairie Chickens, Pawnee Mountain Skippers), Colorado Roadless Areas especially upper Tier Roadless areas, developed recreation sites and facilities, alpine areas, lands in the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail corridor, etc.

The strong proposed stipulations which would help protect resources and should be retained.

Existing unproductive leases should be allowed to expire if they are nearing the end of their 10-year term.

Exceptions, waivers and modifications that may be proposed must allow public comment before approval.

No surface occupancy stipulations should be widely applied, especially in any roadless area where leasing might occur.

A list of mitigation measures must be supplied and an assessment of the effectiveness of those measures in reducing impacts must also be included. The potential spread of noxious weeds needs to be included as one example of these measures.

The EIS must include a comprehensive analysis, including cumulative impacts, of the potential impacts to all resources that might possibly be affected by oil and gas operations or development. This analysis should include air quality, noise, water quality and impacts to fish and wildlife and habitat, impacts to vegetation (especially potential impacts to rare or imperiled plants), climate change, and existing recreational uses and facilities.

A reasonably foreseeable development scenario must be developed for each alternative and the possible effects of implementation of that scenario must also be included.

Leases must require complete reclamation and restoration of sites after the operations have concluded.