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Comments: It is my understanding that the Forest Service is in the review process to determine if additional oil and gas leases on the Little Missouri National Grasslands will be granted. I want to suggest that part of the study or analysis involved in making that decision is to see what impacts are already being made to wildlife mainly deer and elk, in these sensitive areas and find ways to improve that habit.

For example, old and new well sites developed in the prime mule deer/elk habit, release uncalculated quantities of hydrogen sulfide into the atmosphere at an almost uncontrolled rate. Conduct a FLIR camera study in these areas of Tobacco Gardens and west of Grassy Butte and confirm those suspicions. The previous impact study only monitored from fixed locations. I would suggest monitoring localized well sites in various areas of the state and create an average; this would show a generalized impact on the local regions. Can ungulates live or want to live in an unseen cloud of gas? Does this cause further displacement by the noise, traffic and pollution disruptions to their regular pattern?

Another study would be to analyze the impacts of both oil and gas production from state and private leasing as well as ranching practices and the combined effect. During the drought several years ago, there was almost no available grass for the wildlife, due to overgrazing from cattle and oil traffic was still high. Roadkill of deer North of Killdeer was the highest I have ever seen. Within that 14-20 mile stretch, I counted over 15 deer killed every week for the duration of winter. The drought and over-grazing practices severely impacted areas south of Interstate I-94, the ground was void of any vegetation. The combined effect is not being measured but exists and is creating an impact much more significant than the analysis demonstrates. If we continue to add oil development to the environment, animals will have nowhere to go except to be pushed to the fringes, boundaries between people and wildlife tend to end poorly for wildlife.

Additionally, the forest service has allowed oil and gas leasing on forest service land near Redwing Road that is within the groundwater monitoring program area of the Tobacco Gardens aquifer. The program is meant to monitor or to prevent contamination of a well or well field supplying a public water system. There is also multiple private oil and gas wells drilled in the wellhead protection areas across the state. In my experience, it's not if these sites are going to leak oil or gas but when. How can we protect wildlife when we don't even protect ourselves?

Furthermore, we continue to flare off 527 million cubic ft. per day which is 20% of the overall production, why do we continue to waste this resource? Is it prudent to offer more leases when the return on investment is so low due to the price of oil and the combined impacts on the environment?

I have worked for the oil and gas and environmental industries for the past 7 years in North Dakota. I have helped remediate spills and air quality issues throughout the state, as well as seen the un-monitored ranching practices that need to be brought into focus. On top of all these issues, we are experiencing more volatile climate conditions, which also negatively impacts wildlife. What chance does the wildlife in North Dakota have unless we give that to them?

Theodore Roosevelt said, "We have become great because of the lavish use of our resources. But the time has come to inquire seriously what will happen when our forests are gone, when the coal, the iron, the oil, and the gas are exhausted, when the soils have still further impoverished and washed into the streams, polluting the rivers, denuding the fields and obstructing navigation." "I recognize the right and duty of this generation to develop and use the natural resources of our land; but I do not recognize the right to waste them, or to rob, by wasteful use, the generations that come after us."