Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/21/2019 11:00:00 AM
First name: Jacob
Last name: Stokes
Organization:
Title:
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."