

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/15/2026 5:07:00 PM

First name: Silas

Last name: Axtell

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I strongly advocate for the decision to deny the lease of this land.

While the decision would not yet officially authorize drilling, it would open the door to future development proposals, which could include well pads, access roads, and pipelines, leading to habitat fragmentation, erosion, increased water use, and noise. Rather than addressing these impacts now, moving forward with a consent to lease decision would defer them to future project-by-project decisions, increasing the likelihood that sensitive forest lands could eventually be developed.

The upper Yampa River watershed is one of Colorado's most valuable natural resources. A vital contributor to the larger Colorado River system, it supports municipal water supplies, irrigated agriculture, fisheries, wildlife habitat, recreation, and downstream communities.

Protecting these headwaters is critical as climate shifts bring warmer temperatures, reduced snowpack, altered runoff timing, prolonged drought, and - as we're seeing this summer - more severe wildfire seasons. The long-term resilience of this watershed depends on thoughtful, forward-looking stewardship.

I implore you to deny this proposition to lease.

Silas B. Axtell