Protest of the Bureau of Land Management's Notice of Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale in Wayne National Forest

Dear Karen E. Mouritsen:

My name is Alicia Lundy-Morse and I'm a student at Ohio University studying Urban Planning and Sustainability.

I have reviewed the internet-based lease-sale for parcels of land in Wayne National Forest, and hereby object to the sale put forth by the Federal government concerning over 1,600 acres of mineral rights beneath the forest. My objections refer to the 28 parcels of land attached to this letter, and I object for the reasons outlined in the remainder of this letter.

Reason #1: Fracking Results in Unprecedented Amounts of Earthquakes

Oklahoma, home to hundreds of fracking sites, is now more earthquake-prone than California. Between 1990 and 2008, Oklahoma had only three earthquakes per year that registered at 3.0 or more on the Richter scale. In 2013, Oklahoma had 109 earthquakes. That number has increased to 238 as of June 2014. One quake caused by drilling destroyed 14 homes in Oklahoma City, injured two people and buckled pavement. Additional, persistent quakes will undoubtedly cause more injuries, potential deaths, and damage to infrastructure, costing taxpayers millions. EPA seismologists acknowledge a very clear correlation between fracking and earthquakes, saying the quakes would stop as soon as wells were turned off.

Reason #2: Fracking Results in Extreme Water Contamination

Fracking wells, which inject water, sand, and chemicals deep into the ground to extract natural gas, inevitably create significant runoff into groundwater systems. 40,000 gallons of 600 different kinds of chemicals are used in each fracking well, including formaldehyde, mercury, uranium, and hydrochloric acid. To run all the fracking wells in the United States, it takes 360 BILLION gallons of those harmful chemicals. And only 30 to 50 percent of those chemicals are reclaimed, while the rest is left in the ground, not biodegradable. Pennsylvania, a major fracking state, has just admitted that fracking has contaminated local water supplies 243 times in 22 counties.

In California, where a historic drought has already started water rationing in major population centers (more on that in section 3), 3 billion gallons of fracking waste just leaked into aquifers containing precious drinking water reserves for residents. Josh Fox's film "Gasland" illustrates that homes affected by fracking have flammable water. Drinking the water can cause respiratory, sensory, and neurological issues. And the situation in California is just a prelude to what's to come if fracking is allowed to continue. In West Virginia, where 300,000 people had their drinking water contaminated by a chemical used by the coal industry this January, government officials are weighing proposals to frack under the Ohio River, which supplies drinking water to 3 million people.

Reason #3: Fracking Depletes the Value of Your Home

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Exxon is one of the largest companies that engages in fracking. And in an ironic twist, Exxon CEO Rex Tillerson became a fracking protester when well drilling was about to happen next to his home. Through his attorney, Tillerson said he wasn't concerned about the environmental impact, but rather the impact to his property values. As I've written in the previous sections, Tillerson is obviously wrong to not be worried about the environmental costs of fracking, but he's 100 percent correct about what fracking does to homes. A study by the University of Denver found that fracking can reduce a home's value by 25 percent on average. And of 550 people surveyed, most wouldn't buy a home near a fracking site. Researchers looking at 43 counties in New York and Pennsylvania also learned that a house within 0.6 miles of a fracking site that depends on wells for its drinking water rather than municipal sources saw the value of their home plummet by 16.7 percent.

Fracking will destroy the land National Forests were created to protect. By selling this land we will lose Ohio's only National Forest, destroying it for every generation to come. We must protect our environment, our water and our homes. This is why I object to the selling of parcels in Wayne National Forest.

Sincerely,
Alicia Lundy-Morse

LIST OF PARCELS FOR SALE IN WAYNE NATIONAL FOREST

11/5/2016

Total # of Parcels: 28
Total Acreage: 1,622.11 acres

ES-003-12/2016 OHES 058185 ACQ
Lee Township, Monroe County
Section 8, SENW, S2SWNE.
60 acres

ES-004-12/2015 OHES 058186 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County
Section 14, NESE, Pt. SESE
47.00 acres

ES-005-12/2016 OHES 058187 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County
Section 19, W2SE
79.15 acres

ES-006-12/2016 OHES 058188 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County
Section 20, S3/4 NESW
30.03 acres

ES-007-12/2016 OHES 058189 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County
Section 25
94.72 acres

ES-008-12/2016 OHES 058190 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County
Section 26, NESW, Pt. NWSW
78.25 acres

ES-009-12/2016 OHES 058191 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County
Section 27, SENW
40.00 acres

ES-010-12/2016 OHES 058192 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County

Section 31, NESE
38.96 acres

ES-011-12/2016 OHES 058193 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County
Sec. 31, SESE
38.96 acres

ES-012-12/2016 OHES 058194 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County
Sec. 32, Pt. W2SW
64.30 acres

ES-013-12/2016 OHES 058195 ACQ
Perry Township, Monroe County
Sec. 33, NESW
40.13 acres

ES-014-12/2016 OHES 058196 ACQ
Perry Township, Monroe County
Sec. 34, Pt. SENE
15.12 acres

ES-015-12/2016 OHES 058197 ACQ
Perry Township, Monroe County
Sec. 34, Pt. NENW
30.23acres

ES-016-12/2016 OHES 058198 ACQ
Perry Township, Monroe County
Sec. 34, Pt. NWNW
22.14 acres

ES-017-12/2016 OHES 058199 ACQ
Perry Township, Monroe County
Sec. 35, Pt. SENSWSWE
30.64 acres

ES-018-12/2016 OHES 058200 ACQ
Perry Township, Monroe County
Sec. 35, Pt. W2SWSW
0.86 acres

ES-019-12/2016 OHES 058201 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County

Sec. 19, Pt. SW, Pt. NW
73.25 acres

ES-020-12/2016 OHES 058202 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County
Sec. 15, Pt. SWNE
2.53 acres

ES-021-12/2016 OHES 058203 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County
Sec. 20, NENE
40.08 acres

ES-022-12/2016 OHES 058204 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County
Sec. 20, NENW
40.00 acres

ES-023-12/2016 OHES 058205 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County
Sec. 20, NWNE
40.00 acres

ES-024-12/2016 OHES 058206 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County
Sec. 21, S2SE, E2SW
157.44 acres

ES-025-12/2016 OHES 058207 ACQ
Perry Township, Monroe County
Sec. 34, NESESE
10.16 acres

ES-026-12/2016 OHES 058208 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County
Sec. 30, SESE
39.98 acres

ES-027-12/2016 OHES 058209 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County
Sec. 30, Pt. N2SE
64.72 acres

ES-028-12/2016 OHES 058210 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County

Sec. 36, SESW, Pt. W2SW
39.65 acres

ES-029-12/2016 OHES 058211 ACQ
Jackson Township, Monroe County
Sec. 36, NENE
40.22 acres

ES-030-12/2016 OHES 058212 ACQ
Perry Township, Monroe County
Sec. 3, Pt. N2SE
28.00 acres

ES-031-12/2016 OHES 058213 ACQ
Perry Township, Monroe County
Sec. 6, Pt. NE
56.00 acres

ES-032-12/2016 OHES 058214 ACQ
Green Township, Monroe County
Sec. 1, SWSW, Sec. 7, N2SE, SESE
158.62 acres

ES-033-12/2016 OHES 058215 ACQ
Washington Township, Monroe County
Sec. 18 Pt. W2NE, Pt. NW
58.14 acres

ES-034-12/2016 OHES 058216 ACQ
Wayne Township, Monroe County
Sec. 3, NWNW
40.24 acres

ES-035-12/2016 OHES 058217 ACQ
Liberty Township, Monroe County
Sec. 29, Pt. S2SESE
1.17 acres

ES-030-12/2016 OHES 058212 ACQ
Perry Township, Monroe County
Sec. 3, Pt. N2SE
28.00 acres