

To: The Oil Conservation Commission
Regarding Produced Water Regulations

My name is Patricia Sheely and I live in Gallup, NM. I moved to New Mexico in 1993. I grew up in Ohio. I love the Land of Enchantment, its open spaces, its rocks, its vegetation, and its people.

I am concerned about its water supply. We are seeing higher and higher temperatures and less rain. Though I grow native, drought resistant plants in my backyard, some are dying. My faith tradition compels me to speak today. We need water for life, for the life of our people, for the life of the animals, and for the life of the plants.

I have three main concerns:

- Depletion of fresh water resources.
- Protection of our fresh water resources.
- The toxicity of produced water and its effect on human, animal, and plant life.

Produced water (the fluid that comes back up to the surface in the fracking process) should be used only in the fracking process. My understanding would be that more chemicals would be added. This is a better solution than storing it in natural, underground wells. Fracking uses a lot of water which is in limited supply. The reuse of produced water for fracking would save our water and possibly prevent contamination from underground storage.

Produced water is toxic. It can even contain uranium. Here in McKinley County we understand the effect of uranium contamination. Produced water can easily contaminate the surface water and land through spills. Right now we have inadequate information regarding spills.

Knowledge is essential for making the best decisions. We need information on what is in the produced water. We need to know how many spills are occurring, how large they are, where they occur, and what happens after they occur. This information needs to be obtained in a timely manner. The present system of the industry self-reporting is not sufficient without adequate oversight. We need to determine how many people are required to carry out this work.

These issues could have been discussed and resolved in a satisfactory manner if stakeholders were involved in creating these regulations. Since they were not, I ask that the rules be strengthened to protect the public health, the environment and our freshwater resources.

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