

**Davidson, Florene, EMNRD**

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**From:** Don Schreiber [vivarioarriba@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2011 9:19 PM  
**To:** Davidson, Florene, EMNRD  
**Subject:** Fracturing the Future

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November 16, 2001

Jami Bailey, Chairperson  
New Mexico Oil Conservation Commission  
1220 South St. Francis Drive  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505

Dear Ms. Bailey:

Jane and I are very disappointed not to be present at the Committee's fracturing disclosure hearing.\* Few things are of more importance to us than to make our voice, and the voice of many ranchers like us, heard as your Commission deliberates whether to give landowners the information we need to protect our most precious resource, or not.

That precious resource is not our right of ownership of our land and grazing permits; not the livestock and wildlife that we are responsible for; not our water, above and below ground; not our own personal health and safety.

Our most precious resource is the future and what it holds for our children. Our children, our neighbor's children, your children, and their children.

In 1977, Wendell Berry said: "It is no doubt impossible to live without thought of the future; hope and vision can live nowhere else. But the only possible guarantee of the future is responsible behavior in the present. When supposed future needs are used to justify misbehavior in the present, ... then we are both perverting the present and diminishing the future."\*\*

Jane and I agree with Mr. Berry and we would add that, to have hope, to have a vision requires an imagination. In today's world, for most folks, it takes much imagination to know what it is like to be a rancher. But it does not take any imagination to know what it is like to own land, or to care for an animal, to feel that water is important, to treasure your well-being and that of your loved ones.

We ask the Commissioners now to imagine that the millions of gallons of water and chemicals used for decades, and used still, every day, were being injected into their ranches. And to imagine answering their children's question: "How could you let that happen and not demand to know what those chemicals were?"

That the oil and gas industry wishes to preserve their secrets to make a maximum profit, we should take for granted for it is common among all industries, in any age. That, faced with regulatory pressure, the oil and gas industry offers half-measures and self-policing, we should take that for granted, too. That is our common commercial history. How they behave, or misbehave, is something few of us can ever be a part of.

Except now.

It is at times like these that individuals, a chairperson, a commission member, can imagine what it is like to be a rancher; what it is like to be responsible for the welfare of those who cannot take care of themselves, like animals or children; it is at times like these that Commissioners can change how an industry behaves, or misbehaves.

Jane and I ask the members of the New Mexico Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, and it's Chairperson, to use their imaginations, to think of their own most precious resource, and to remember that the only possible guarantee of the future is responsible behavior in the present.

Sincerely,

Don and Jane Schreiber  
Devil's Spring Ranch  
Gobernador, NM  
505-320-0032

\* We will be in Aztec, November 17, for the formal signing of the Devil's Spring Ranch Resource Management Plan for the Carrizo Canyon Watershed Improvement Project (CWIP), in partnership with the New Mexico Commissioner of Public Lands, the Bureau of Land Management, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation Districts. CWIP's goal is to maintain water in the uplands, both above and below ground, for the improvement of rangeland health. CWIP is a project about the future.

\*\* Berry, Wendell. The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture. Washington, D.C.: Sierra Club, 1977.