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November 9, 2007

Energy and Natural Resources Cabinet Secretary  
1220 S. St. Frances Drive  
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Dear Ms. Prukop:

I have sent the following message to Governor Richardson and wish to advise you of my position, as well.

I am writing to let you know that I support New Mexico's Oil Conservation Division's currently proposed pit rules and that I have sent a letter of support to the Division. I am a wildlife and air quality activist living in Bloomfield, New Mexico, and have had many opportunities over several years to observe pits at gas well drilling sites in San Juan County. I am aware that the oil/gas industry often proclaims that pit contents are completely safe in spite of the fact that we know that acids are used during at least some fracing operations and in spite of documentation that livestock have died and aborted because of drinking pit contents. Because of my wildlife advocacy, I am concerned about the birds and mammals that have succumbed to the toxic pit contents. Fencing requirements have not always been adhered to.

I have recently scanned the *Analytical Results of OCD's Pit Sampling Program* (7/2/2007) at <http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/ocd/environmental.htm#environmental>. The comprehensive lists of toxic contents found at numerous well sites and for several companies reinforce my belief that it is environmentally irresponsible for the oil/gas industry to bury pit contents onsite. We also know that various trash items prohibited in pits have frequently been seen in these pits and have most likely been buried rather than removed and properly disposed of. Liners tear, and I have seen a liner with a metal stake driven into it. Furthermore, pieces of torn liner have been found at various sites following additional site excavation. If the liner is exposed to the air, rain, and snow, so are those buried pit contents. There are already thousands of these burials in northwest New Mexico with the potential for future air and water pollution, and there are thousands of new wells projected for this area. It is time to hold the oil and gas industry to a better standard for their waste disposal.

As for the industry argument that they will take their investment dollars elsewhere—where are they going in this country that hasn't already been leased? Are they going to abandon their existing wells—I don't think so. As for friendlier states—I question that the states of Wyoming or Colorado will roll out the welcome mat to these multiple dumps.

One must also look at the costs/profits from individual wells to provide perspective to the cost industry complains the proposed waste disposal will cause. I think any of this cost will quickly be recovered, and the taxpayers of New Mexico will be spared dealing with this improperly handled waste that can ultimately end up in our rivers, wells, and springs or in our air as these sites are exposed in the future.

I respectfully request that you support the new pit rules proposed by the New Mexico Oil Conservation Division.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janet Rees". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Janet Rees, Phone: 505-632-8335