
From: Elaine Gilmartin <eaglemartin89@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2017 5:33 PM
To: Sidney Hill; Don Chapman; Dave Heil; Jay Block; Kenneth Eichwald; James Holden-Rhodes
Subject: COMMENTS on Sandoval Oil and Gas Ordinance
Attachments: Sheila.pdf

Sent from [Outlook](#)

November 13, 2017

To: Sandoval County Commissioners

RE: Proposed Oil and Gas Ordinance

From: Sheila Gibbens, PA-C, MAS
Pena Blanca, New Mexico

I live in Pena Blanca, am a landowner and am directly impacted by the current proposed oil and gas ordinance. This ordinance is totally inadequate. It protects neither Sandoval County residents, communities, businesses or infrastructure. Nor does it address the potential liabilities to the County now and in the future. It only seems to protect the oil and gas industry. One would think in reading it that it was written by the industry itself.

Here in the almost 300 year old historic village of Pena Blanca - one of the unincorporated areas in the county where drilling would be allowed - land is very expensive. Bare land is between \$25,000 to \$50,000 per acre. This does not count any structural improvements. Most of people's entire net worth is in their land and homes. We here stand to lose all that many of us have worked so hard for. Isn't that the American Dream - work hard and achieve the rewards of all that hard work and sacrifice. Well, we are about to lose all of that with this ordinance for the following reasons:

1. Our water is VERY pure and of "world class" quality according to hydrologists who have examined our water and wrote the 2016 Pena Blanca water report. IT IS ALSO VERY SHALLOW - close to the surface and therefore vulnerable. My well is only 50 feet deep and it taps into this pure water that flows from the east. It is not Rio Grande river water. My water table is 5 feet. Some in town have a water table of 3 feet, Regardless, ANY oil drilling surface contamination will pollute our water, our land and the Rio Grande since it all flows downhill into the river. This is aside from the contamination of the aquifer that is well documented to have occurred in many other places in the country due to drilling and using hydrolytic fracking technology. Are you willing to contaminate the Rio Grande river and the large aquifer under the Rio Grande valley for a relatively short period of economic contributions from any producing wells? Have you done any cost/benefit analysis of oil and gas drilling. Its already been documented by others it will bring in few local jobs. The money earned will be shipped out of state so it won't help our local economy except for the brief period during the drilling.

At what cost to the county residents, land values, property taxes and our long term economic growth.? Polluted drinking and bath water will kill any further economic Growth.

2. The health effects - As a health care provider (physician assistant for 37 years for PMS, Johns Hopkins Hospital and Blue Cross/Blue Shield) I am deeply concerned about the well documented dangers of the chemicals used in fracking. At least 34 chemicals found in some of the fluids used in fracking are endocrine disruptors. Exposure to these chemicals is believed to be the reason young girls are getting their menses (periods) an average of 2 years earlier than the historical average. They are also possibly the cause or linked to the cause of the 50% decline in male sperm counts over the last 40 years. Volatile chemicals (ones that are unstable and dissipate quickly) from oil and gas production are associated with increased respiratory problems like asthma, COPD and other respiratory issues. Since we are land rich and cash poor here in Pena Blanca you can expect to see increased use of the county indigent fund. Approximately 1/4th at least of the residents here qualify for the fund.

Benzene, a highly carcinogenic chemical, is commonly found in gas and oil contamination in home and water wells. There are so many negative health effects of exposure to oil and gas development to our air, land, water that I can not address them all here. Please expect an increased utilization of the indigent fund for these medical effects.

3. Earthquakes. The geologist we have consulted in this area below Cochiti Dam has indicated that we have a very high likelihood of earthquakes due to Valles Caldera volcano and the rift valley tectonic plates and our preexisting fractured geology.

Most of the housing stock in Pena Blanca is adobe, many over 100 years old. There is even a 2 story adobe structure housing women and children owned by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. Any small quakes can trigger damage to these rigid structures (hence the large loss of life in Nepal, Chile etc with earthquakes. Are you willing to risk people's homes and lives? What would this do to your tax base? Possible liability in voting for something that you are told will occur and you ignore the information and go ahead?

4. Land values As I mentioned previously, land here is very expensive. If the land is polluted, housing damaged, river polluted or the aquifer poisoned this will affect the county's land values and tax base. Income to the county will be reduced. Wise organizations look at long term consequences, not short term gain for often out of state companies and workers.

I hope you understand how incredibly angry people in this area are about what appears to be an ill advised, precipitous ordinance that does nothing to protect our water, livelihoods, land, homes and beloved town (or the county). This ordinance is 8-9 pages, so much shorter than other counties ordinances. We want you to table this ordinance and craft a thoughtful one that protects all the stakeholders and especially our water and addresses issues like noise pollution

Etc. (sound in rural areas carries for long distances)

I suspect you became a commissioner to help your community. It is a difficult and thankless job. I thank you for your prior efforts but, please, this ordinance will be so inadequate and for us in the bullseye here in Pena Blanca it would be a catastrophe on so many levels both personal and financial.

I hope you listen to the people not just lobbyists and industry representatives. Help us have faith in our government. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Sheila Gibbens, PA-C, MAS
75 Arroyo Leyba Road
Pena Blanca, NM