

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, November 30th, 2023

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The Permian Basin Climate Justice Coalition & Allies Urge the U.S. Bureau of Land Management to Reject New Mexico Oil and Gas Leases

Carlsbad, NM— The Permian Basin Climate Justice Coalition, alongside our allies, issued a fervent plea to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to cancel today's oil & gas lease sale that will see 433.59 acres in Southeast New Mexico auctioned off.

Despite the Biden administration's climate goals to drastically reduce emissions, nearly 25% of the nation's climate emissions originate from fossil fuel production on public lands, it is telling that the United States is moving forward with this lease sale as COP28 begins. The pursuit of today's sale is in direct conflict with the environmental justice goals outlined by the current administration, jeopardizing the nation's commitment to combat climate change.

This lease sale includes two parcels within "high cave, karst potential" areas, posing a threat to local drinking water supplies and delicate cave systems crucial for maintaining the ecosystem in the region.

The environmental disturbance caused by oil and gas operations jeopardizes not only ecologically significant terrain, but also culturally significant sites such as the Carlsbad Caverns National Park which is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The BLM must demonstrate leadership by prioritizing the long-term well-being of the environment and communities over short-term economic gains. The potential consequences of these decisions extend beyond the current generation, impacting generations to come.

By canceling today's lease and reconsidering upcoming sales in New Mexico, the BLM has the opportunity to safeguard our climate, critical resources, fragile ecosystems, and the cultural heritage that defines the region.

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"How long must we sacrifice our communities, sacred land, water, and air for the sake of oil and gas? As emissions continue to soar we are not only sacrificing our own communities, but also communities across the world as climate change renders more and more places unlivable."

-Kayley Shoup, Citizens Caring for the Future

“Community members in Greater Carlsbad and visitors to Carlsbad Caverns enjoy the surface and subterranean geological marvels of the park, a World Heritage Site, and surrounding landscape. These and future lease sales put the fragile cave ecosystems and public health at risk and could jeopardize the area’s crucial water supply. Let’s protect this world-renowned wonder for all to enjoy, uncontaminated.” - **Emily Wolf, New Mexico Program Manager for the National Parks Conservation Association**



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT



What about --

- Globally Melting Glaciers,
- Canadian & Siberian Forrest Fires,
- Torrential Rains, Apocalyptic Floods in Europe, Middle East,
- Amazon Drought,
- Brazilian Heat Waves,

Do you not understand?

Global Warming

caused by burning Fossil Fuels
causes them **ALL!**

**KEEP THEM
IN THE GROUND!**

Melanie Barnes
New Mexico State Director
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
301 Dinosaur Trail
Santa Fe, NM 87508

**Re: The U.S. Bureau of Land Management must reject new oil and gas leasing in
New Mexico**

Dear State Director Barnes:

The Permian Climate Justice Coalition & allies write to express our deep concern and opposition to the November 30th oil and gas lease sale here in New Mexico. The proposed sale of 433.59 acres in Southeast New Mexico is alarming, considering that nearly [25% of our country's climate emissions](#) come from fossil fuel production on public lands.

The grave impact of such leases on climate change cannot be ignored. Today, as COP28 begins, the United States continues down a path that is immoral and sets the course for the U.S. to remain the second largest carbon emitting country in the world. Such leasing denies the goal of environmental justice proposed by the current administration.

Not only do we sacrifice our own communities and people for the sake of oil and gas, but we sacrifice communities, our sacred land, water and air. Across the globe islands such as Tuvalu, are being lost to the sea with some people relocating to Australia at this time. Our current path of oil and gas extraction denies the human value of caring for all neighbors and the Common Good.

Furthermore, two of the parcels for auction are in “high cave, karst potential” areas. To put this unique and fragile cave system that plays a crucial role in maintaining local ecosystems at risk is unacceptable. The environmental disturbance caused by oil and gas operations, including drilling and infrastructure development, poses a direct threat to this sensitive underground habitat. Not only is this terrain ecologically significant, but it is also culturally significant. To put a National Park & UNESCO World Heritage site such as Carlsbad Caverns National Park at risk is simply irresponsible. Any disruption to this delicate ecosystem could have far-reaching and irreparable consequences. Upcoming lease sales include parcels in high and critical karst resource areas, and our groups and community partners are deeply concerned about persistent nomination of parcels in these fragile and crucial areas. There is an evident need for lasting protections of these critical karst resources which are home to fragile cave ecosystems and local drinking water supplies.

In light of these concerns, we implore the Bureau of Land Management to offer leadership and prioritize the long-term well-being of our environment and communities over short-term economic gains. The consequences of these decisions will be felt not only by the current generation but by generations to come. We urge you to act responsibly and in the best interests of our planet. Please cancel and reconsider the November 30 oil and gas lease sale, and future sales in New Mexico.

Sincerely,

Citizens Caring for the Future
Baake Law LLC
Diné Care
Earthworks
NM & El Paso Interfaith Power & Light
NM Environmental Law Center
NM Wildlife Federation
ProgressNow NM
The Wilderness Society
Wildearth Guardians
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team

350 NM
Center for Civic Policy
Earthjustice
National Parks Conservation Assn.
NM Conference of Churches
NM Wilderness Alliance
Oil Change International
Sierra Club
Western Environmental Law Center
Franciscan Action Network