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Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition

Supporting Organized Voices and Empowered Communities Since 1987

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Fracking in Wayne National Forest and Fracking under the Ohio River

- The U.S. Forest Service has approved fracking for oil and gas on 40,000 acres of southern Ohio's Wayne National Forest, Marietta Unit. This portion of the forest is near the West Virginia border. Our primary concern is that fracking in the Wayne will be directly linked with fracking under the Ohio River, and more fracking in West Virginia. A company called Eclipse is planning to engage in the lease process and develop multiple (possibly hundreds) of **wells under the Ohio River**, if they get regulatory approval for their processes.
- The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) planned and carried out a December 13, 2016 oil and gas lease sale of Wayne National Forest land. Many families live on private land parcels adjacent to Wayne National Forest land.
- OVEC has joined with other organizations to protest this lease sale. We're grateful to Ohio's Fresh Water Accountability Project for taking the lead on writing a protest letter to the BLM that outlines the legal problems with this lease sale. Federal law requires that an Environmental Impact Statement be prepared; The Bureau of Land Management has concluded that fracking development of 40,000 acres of the National Forest will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Our protest letter details **numerous ways that fracking activities in the Wayne National Forest could cause major negative impacts on the human environment**. Here are a few excerpts:

“BLM did not properly study the impacts of hydraulic fracturing (fracking) on air quality.”

“BLM failed to properly assess and account for the impacts of hydraulic fracturing on public health.”

“Studies have found residents living near [within two miles] wells using the hydraulic fracturing method experience some or all of these problems: higher rates of cancer, endocrine disrupting activity, headaches, nausea and vomiting, eye and throat irritation, and lower birthweights in newborns.”

“BLM has not properly assessed the impacts to ground water and surface water resources as required under NEPA (federal law).”

“Despite recent federal studies demonstrating that surface water can be contaminated as a result of deep-well underground wastewater disposal, BLM fails to even mention the impact of these disposal methods on surface waters.”

Please note: Monroe County, OH, one of the counties which would have national forest land included in the 40,000 acres approved for fracking development, has had two significant drilling accidents on private land in the past year and a half. Regulations and laws on the books did nothing to prevent these accidents.