

Get richer at any cost?

There are many reasons why the people and the elected leaders in the state of Wyoming should make sure that the Wyoming Range is protected from gas and oil development.

Of the 44,600 acres that the Bridger-Teton National Forest has authorized the BLM to sell as gas/oil leases, 20,000 go on the auction block next month; this has to be stopped. Here are just the reasons I personally know for stopping this development:

This land is pristine, with some of the best fishing and hunting in the world. You can catch real cutthroat trout there out of water so clear that you really do have to hide behind something and be clever about dropping in a fly or lure. Hunting camps for deer and elk abound in this region. Families have been going to the same camp for several generations.

Asleep in your tent at night, you can hear the coyote, hear the sound of cats (wild ones!), hear and imagine what's moving in the willows.

Some courageous sheep men still summer their sheep there despite losses to bear and coyotes. These lambs are truly grass fed, organic meat. The last thing these ranchers need is more stress on their fragile livelihoods.

There are springs of the sweetest, cleanest water in the world up there; if the acres up for auction become exploratory wells, the deep waters that feed the springs where I have filled my water bottle every summer for the last 50 years will be tainted.

The families who camp up there to find quiet, peaceful, relaxation will be greeted with traffic, dust, noise, roads roads roads and more roads, and a loss of tradition that has been going on for generations.

Come on Wyoming, don't we have enough with the Pinedale anticline, the Jonah field, the 9000 wells planned for the Wamsutter area?

Isn't 2 billion in the coffers about enough? Do we have to wreck it all?

This letter is going to elected officials and newspapers. I hope everyone who has spent a second in the Wyoming Range will write a similar one and pray for some moderation in this desperate drive to get richer at any cost.

Jana Weber, Rock Springs

LETTER
OF THE WEEK

Pinedale Roundup 3/16/06