The Fracking Threat to Boulder County

Dr. Gabrielle Katz
Community Forum
December 12, 2019
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November 13, 2018

Michael W. Denslow ET AL

RE: Oil and Gas Lease Proposal
   Township 1 North, Range 69 West of the 6th P.M.
   Section 7: Lot 20, Block 6, Filing 6 of Heatherwood Subdivision
   Boulder County, Colorado

Oil and Gas Lease Proposal:
   • Total Bonus Consideration: $500.00
   • Royalty: 15.00%
   • Term: 4-year primary term + 2-year option to extend

Greetings,

Extraction Oil & Gas, Inc., a leading DJ Basin oil and gas producer, has retained Rocky Mountain Hydrocarbon, LLC to initiate an oil and gas leasing program in an area that the County records indicate you own a mineral interest.
5\textsuperscript{th} ranked state: crude oil production (88% in Weld County)
6\textsuperscript{th} ranked state: natural gas production (35% in Weld County)

Since 2000: gas production doubled
Since 2010: oil production quadrupled
Oil and Gas Wells

• You may picture this:

This is NOT the kind of drilling happening in Colorado!
Fracking

• Large, industrial operations
• Multi-well pads
• Horizontal drilling
• Hydraulic fracturing

Photo: Society of Petroleum Engineers
Fracking

- Large, industrial operations
- Multi-well pads
- Horizontal drilling
- Hydraulic fracturing
- Neighborhood drilling
Colorado in 2018:
15 million barrels of crude oil
1,825,932 million ft$^3$ natural gas
Fracking and Climate Change

Methane –

• Potent greenhouse gas

• Fracking ➔ leaked, vented, flared

Images: Earthworks
Fracking and Air Pollution

Hazardous Air Pollutants: Drilling, hydraulic fracturing, production

- Chemicals that form ground-level ozone (i.e., NOx, VOCs, methane)
- Cancer-causing compounds, toxins (e.g., benzene, toluene)
Health Impacts of Fracking

Compendium of Risks and Harms of Fracking:

• Cancer, leukemia
• Heart disease, fatigue, depression
• Pre-term births, high-risk pregnancies
• Asthma, nasal and sinus symptoms
• Migraine headaches
• etc.
Fracking and Wildlife

• Climate change
• Water use, contamination
• Emissions, leaks, spills
• Habitat loss
• Habitat fragmentation
• Noise, vibration, light
• Traffic, increased human presence...

Photo: Ash throated flycatcher. Credit: Andrew Cannizzaro Flickr
All Feb. 2017 – Sept. 2018 Data; CDPHE Wind Data; Wind Speed > 3 m/s

Data source: Detlev Helmig
Fracking Threat to Boulder County

Proposed Boulder County Projects

1. Crestone Peak Resources LLC Comprehensive Drilling Plan (CDP)
2. 8 North LLC (subsidiary of Extraction Oil and Gas, Inc.) drilling areas
3. Other Extraction Oil and Gas, Inc. leases
• 140 wells
• Three “locations” on Hwy 52
• Boulder County Open Space
• Conservation easements
• Pipelines
Crestone CDP

• 2018: Final CDP submitted to COGCC → Found “Suitable” by Director → Awaiting approval of full Commission
  • Boulder County: Protest, Intervention
• 2019: CDP Hearing “suspended” for re-evaluation due to SB19-181
• Boulder County lawsuit against Crestone Peak Resources:
  • 34 claims → 20 dismissed (premature)
  • 9 claims withdrawn
  • 5 claims court ruled in Crestone’s favor → County is appealing

Sources: COGCC website -- http://cogcc.state.co.us/library.html#/special_projects/crestone
Boulder County Oil and Gas website -- https://www.bouldercounty.org/property-and-land/land-use/planning/oil-gas-development/#crestone
Maximum Potential NO2 1-Hour Impacts from Drilling & Fracturing Activities – Shaded Area Exceeds the Health Std
8 North LLC Projects

Two Drilling and Spacing Units (DSUs)

- 32 wells, Weld County
- 20 wells, Town of Erie

Approved by COGCC

Boulder County lawsuits against COGCC and 8 North:

- August 2019 rulings against County → County is appealing

Source: Boulder County Oil and Gas website
Other plans in the works?

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• Temporary moratorium in place (March 28, 2020)
• Crestone Peak CDP: awaits final COGCC approval, requires application to Boulder County
• 8 North LLC projects: approved by COGCC
• Boulder County lawsuits: recent rulings in favor of operators