

RESOLUTION 06-2020

A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT OIL AND GAS LEASES NEAR THE SAND FLATS RECREATION AREA AND ON THE CITY OF MOAB'S SOLE SOURCE AQUIFER

WHEREAS, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management ("BLM") is evaluating preliminary parcels 11 and 12 near the Sand Flats Recreation Area, Slickrock Bike Trail, and in close proximity to Arches National Park for oil and gas leasing as part of its June 2020 statewide oil and gas lease sale;

WHEREAS, municipalities have expressed opposition by Resolution to the leasing of parcels that threaten their water resources and tourism industry, including Toquerville City, the Town of Springdale, and Washington County;

WHEREAS, the lease parcels lie within the watershed for Moab and Spanish Valley, and both parcels sit on top of the City of Moab's "sole source aquifer";

WHEREAS, water is a precious resource in the region and the tourism economy generated by Moab would be irreparably damaged if the City's water resources are impaired;

WHEREAS, the potential impacts of oil and gas development on water sources must be carefully considered regarding possible contamination that may impact the City of Moab's sole source aquifer and associated water systems;

WHEREAS, allowing oil and gas development on the sole source aquifer presents significant risk to the reliability and integrity of the City of Moab's water supply, and is not the best use of resources in that area;

WHEREAS, Sand Flats Recreation Area, the Slickrock Bike Trail, and Arches National Park are internationally recognized showpieces for the City of Moab and for the State of Utah;

WHEREAS, the scenic nature of the area surrounding the Sand Flats Recreation Area, Slickrock Bike Trail, and Arches National Park contributes to the beauty, economy, quality of life, and recreational values of the City of Moab;

WHEREAS, the City of Moab derives significant amounts of its revenue from visitation in and around the Sand Flats Recreation Area, the Slickrock Bike Trail, and Arches National Park; and

WHEREAS, the City of Moab encourages responsible natural resource development and economic development in the region;

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the residents of the City of Moab for the BLM to make a well-informed and cautious decision regarding whether to allow the leases in the Moab Area; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the residents of the City of Moab for the BLM to identify other locations for oil and gas leases which have considerably less impact and risk to residents, visitors, Moab's tourism economy, and water resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MOAB, UTAH, that the City of Moab expresses its disapproval of oil and gas extraction on parcels 11 and 12 near a vitally important recreation area and the City of Moab's sole source aquifer.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Moab opposes the lease of preliminary parcels 11 and 12, and calls on the BLM to exercise caution and ensure that any oil and gas leases on land in the Moab area be conducted in a way that will not negatively impact tourism, quality of life, or water resources in the area.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that City of Moab staff is authorized to file comments with the BLM in accordance with the positions outlined in this Resolution.

PASSED AND ADOPTED in open Council by a majority vote of the Governing Body of the City of Moab this 28th day of January, 2020.

SIGNED:

ATTEST:

Emily S. Niehaus, Mayor

Sommar Johnson, City Recorder