

April 17, 2026

Idaho Oil and Gas Commission

Re: Snake River Oil and Gas Application for Miller 1-15 Well

Dear Commission:

As a resident of Payette County, I am writing to oppose the well drilling application filed by Snake River Oil and Gas for their proposed Miller 1-15 well in Payette County.

No parcel of land in the spacing unit that Snake River Oil and Gas has established is appropriate for a natural gas well. The proposed well site is in an agricultural field that is currently under county jurisdiction, but that field borders the City of Fruitland. The proposed well site is adjacent on the east to a densely populated, single family residential neighborhood. Immediately to the southeast is another densely populated neighborhood, the Desert Rose Estates manufactured home community. Mesa Park, the most heavily used recreation site in the county lies a quarter mile to the southeast of the proposed well site. South and west of the well site are light industrial businesses, such as Woodgrain and Dickinson Frozen Foods, which are some of the county's largest industrial employers. Less than ½ mile to the west are a number of medical facilities, restaurants, businesses, and additional densely populated residential areas. The proposed well parcel is on NW 16th St, which is one of Fruitland's major thoroughfares, and it is less than ¼ mile from NW 16th St and Whitley Ave (US 95), which is the most heavily travelled intersection in Payette County.

These details clearly show there are a large number of people who will be directly affected because they live and work in this spacing unit. Many more people will also be impacted because they do business, dine, recreate, and simply pass through the spacing unit.

The proposed well site is not in an isolated area. It is in the midst of a rapidly growing community. Fruitland's population has almost doubled in the past 25 years, including about 20% growth in just the last 5 years. Land to the north of the well site is expected to be annexed into Fruitland and developed into new single family housing neighborhoods, similar to the River Crest neighborhood to the east of the proposed well site.

Flaring is a customary practice as new wells go into production. [In Idaho](#), producers are allowed to flare (burn off) gas from wells continuously for 14 days. After 14 days, producers have to pay royalties to mineral rights owners, but they can continue to flare off the gas. This flaring could be done less than 200 feet from someone's home.

The presence of gas and oil wells has been shown to reduce home values in areas similar to Fruitland ([Stephens and Weinstein, 2019](#)). Given recent production statistics from the Idaho Oil and Gas Commission for gas wells in Payette County, homeowners in the spacing

unit with typical 1/6 to 1/4 acre parcels would likely receive less than \$100 in royalties per year – if the well even produces enough to generate royalties. That would not compensate them for even a minor (1-5%) reduction in home values, especially given the Idaho Geological Survey’s 2025 assessment of gas reservoirs in Payette County. The Survey concluded that “Reservoir gas volumes in Payette County are relatively small and sub-economic under current market conditions” and “Reservoir quality is poor, which limits productivity” (https://ogcc.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025.05.14_IGS-presentation-overview-ID-petroleum-hydrocarbon.pdf). These data and findings suggest the new proposed well would have a limited life span and be abandoned within a few years.

The Payette River is less than a half mile downhill from the proposed well site. From the point where any pollutants from the well operations reach the Payette River, it is only one mile to Fruitland’s water treatment plant. Any contamination reaching the treatment facility would be devastating. Gas wells are not immune to failure while being drilled or during their production lifespan. It is not just the wells that pose risks. Gathering pipelines that move gas from wells to processing and transmission distribution sites are essentially unregulated and pose the greatest risk in the gas transmission system for accidents. The gathering lines for this well would run east along NW 16th St, which, again, passes by high density residential areas and close to the Payette River. Once the well is phased out of production, the risks to the community remain. Recent studies have shown that 1/3 of abandoned gas wells fail (i.e., leak). The state of Idaho has minimal standards for bonding and oversight of abandoned gas wells. So, our community would still be forced to live with risks while it gained no overall economic benefit.

There do not appear to be any significant economic benefits to this proposed gas well. In fact, any economic gains would be dwarfed by economic losses, for example, in reduced housing values, and the risks to public health and well-being, and environmental safety.

I urge the Oil and Gas Conservation Commission to deny this well drilling application. I hope the Commission will see why the location of this well within this particular spacing unit is so ill conceived and why there is substantial public opposition to this particular project. Again, I urge the state of Idaho to consider the overall negative impacts of this proposed project on the economic, environmental, and general public well-being of the community and deny this application.

Sincerely,

Stuart Reitz

Fruitland, ID