

Spring Quarter 2007

Seminar course
(GeolSci 851)

Environmental Sustainability:
in the face of global change, global population growth,
and limited natural resources

Group Project Report:
What you can do to promote
sustainability at local to national scales

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1. INTRODUCTION

Last year I read the book “Collapse” by Jarred Diamond and was inspired to use it as the cornerstone for a graduate seminar on global sustainability. Over the course of the spring 2007 quarter, the class explored the topic of collapse and sustainability of cultures through time. The graduate students came from various departments and backgrounds and brought the breadth and experience needed to foster the discussions for the seminar. Each week, we covered two chapters, supplemented the reading with additional articles from peer-reviewed journals, and discussed each idea in turn. In addition, a couple of invited speakers added to the breadth of our exploration. As the quarter progressed, two themes emerged. First, that there were key elements to societal resilience and sustainability over time: availability of sufficient fresh water, cultural adaptability, population growth control, transmission of information about climate and resource management over generations, a sense of connection with a homeland and/or with trading partners, built in buffering capacity to infrequent but inevitable dramatic climatic events (i.e, multi-year droughts), and low or no religious demand on resources. Many of these items are ones that Diamond also concluded are key to resilience. Second, we concluded that we, as a group, were capable of making changes that contribute to resilience, and that we had an obligation and a responsibility to do so. In the words of Jarred Diamond: “... we have the opportunity to learn from the mistakes of distant peoples and past peoples. That’s an opportunity that no past society enjoyed to such a degree. My hope in writing this book has been that enough people will choose to profit from that opportunity to make a difference.” That is what we intend to do.

This booklet is divided into three sections, each providing information and resources on how to actively participate in fostering resilience at the personal, regional, national, and global levels. The first section, The Power of Online Action, lists a series of websites where one can sign various online petitions/letters/statements. Most notable among these is MoveOn.org: an e-organization that has been extremely effective at influencing policy at the federal level through the power of online membership numbers. Organizations like these are effective, many of the causes that they champion are in line with issues of sustainability, and it is easy to push the button on your computer to participate. The class felt that this category of action was one that in a university setting was accessible, effective, and appealing. With little individual effort, the power of online action through sheer numbers, is effective. The second section, The Power of One, summarizes a list of small actions that individuals can do to promote sustainable living practices. While no single action makes a large difference, it is in the additive effect of many people doing many small things, that adds up to a significant effect. The last section, The Power of Writing Letters, lists a series of companies and organizations that were identified by the class as ones that needed to be persuaded to adopt sustainable practices. This is not an exhaustive list by any means, but a starting point for those interested in this level of action. The key in this section is that writing a letter on paper, and sending it to the company/organization, is more effective than calling or sending an email. The “paper trail” is one that the company or organization is more likely to feel accountable to than an email or phone call. As a class, we have decided that we will all engage in the online action, and we will all do as many of the individual actions that are reasonable for each of us. In addition, as a group, we identified one activity that we feel that Ohio State University should adopt to promote sustainable practices on campus. Our letter to the Office of Sustainability at OSU is included here. We are making this booklet freely available to all so that the information that we have gathered can be shared and adopted by others. The more people who get this information and adopt any or all aspects of this booklet, the closer we get to having sustainable living practices on our planet, and the closer we get to ensuring the long-term sustainable use of our resources.

- Dr. Andréa Grottoli

2. THE POWER OF ONLINE ACTION

Here is a list of a number of websites that you can go to, become a member, and sign their online letters. This type of action works because of the large number of participants. Your e-signature is like a vote.

MoveOn.org - <http://www.moveon.org/>

Climate Action - <http://www.climatecrisis.net>

Vote Solar - <http://www.votesolar.org/>

Stop Global Warming and join the virtual march - <http://www.stopglobalwarming.org/>

Emissions Petition: Undo Global Warming - <http://action.environmentaldefense.org>

The Ohio Environmental Council - <http://www.theoec.org>

Upper Green Valley Coalition - www.wilderness.org

The Environmental Defense of Oceans -

http://action.environmentaldefense.org/campaign/oceans_alive_pledge?source=oceans3

Environment Ohio

<https://www.environmentohio.org/action/energy>

World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

<http://passport.panda.org/index.cfm?uNC=50453337>

National Resource Defense Council (NRDC)

<http://www.nrdc.org/action/>

Environmental Defense

http://action.environmentaldefense.org/EDF_Action_Network/home.html

Greenpeace

<http://members.greenpeace.org/action/index.php>

Surfrider Foundation

<http://actionnetwork.org/surfrider/home.html>

3. THE POWER OF ONE

Here are a number of things that individuals can do to foster sustainability in their homes. The Stop Global Warming calculator shows you how much your carbon dioxide production decreases and how much money you can save by making some small changes in your daily life. It's our hope that the calculator will promote action, awareness and empowerment by showing you that one person can make a difference and help stop global warming. The carbon calculator can be found at <http://www.stopglobalwarming.org/carboncalculator.asp>

There are many simple things you can do in your daily life — what you eat, what you drive, how you build your home — that can have an effect on your immediate surrounding, and on places as far away as Antarctica. Here is a list of few things that you can do to make a difference.

Use Compact Fluorescent Bulbs - Replace 3 frequently used light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs. Save 300 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$60 per year.

Unplug Un-Used Electronics - Even when electronic devices are turned off, they use energy. Save over 1,000 lbs of carbon dioxide and \$256 per year.

Put on a Sweater - Instead of turning up the heat in your home, wear more clothes Save 1,000 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$250 per year.

Adjust Your Thermostat - Move your heater thermostat down two degrees in winter and up two degrees in the summer. Save 2000 lbs of carbon dioxide and \$98 per year.

Air Dry Your Clothes - Line-dry your clothes in the spring and summer instead of using the dryer. Save 700 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$75 per year.

Buy Organic Food - The chemicals used in modern agriculture pollute the water supply, and require energy to produce.

Bring Cloth Bags to the Market - Using your own cloth bag instead of plastic or paper bags reduces waste and requires no additional energy.

Buy Products Locally - Buy locally and reduce the amount of energy required to drive your products to your store.

Buy Minimally Packaged Goods - Less packaging could reduce your garbage by about 10%. Save 1,200 pounds of carbon dioxide and \$1,000 per year.

Use Recycled Paper - Make sure your printer paper is 100% post consumer recycled paper. Save 5 lbs. of carbon dioxide per ream of paper.

Reduce Garbage - Buy products with less packaging and recycle paper, plastic and glass. Save 1,000 lbs. of carbon dioxide per year.

Fill the Dishwasher - Run your dishwasher only with a full load. Save 100 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$40 per year.

Take Shorter Showers - Showers account for 2/3 of all water heating costs. Save 350 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$99 per year.

Install a Low-Flow Showerhead - Using less water in the shower means less energy to heat the water. Save 350 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$150.

Insulate Your Water Heater - Keep your water heater insulated could save 1,000 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$40 per year.

Check Your Water-heater - Keep your water heater thermostat no higher than 120°F. Save 550 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$30 per year.

- Switch to a Tankless Water Heater** - Your water will be heated as you use it rather than keeping a tank of hot water. Save 300 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$390 per year.
- Inflate Your Tires** - Keep the tires on your car adequately inflated. Check them monthly. Save 250 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$840 per year.
- Carpool When You Can** - Own a big vehicle? Carpooling with friends and co-workers saves fuel. Save 790 lbs. of carbon dioxide and hundreds of dollars per year.
- Buy Energy Certificates** - Help spur the renewable energy market and cut global warming pollution by buying wind certificates and green tags.
- Buy a Hybrid Car** - The average driver could save 16,000 lbs. of CO₂ and \$3,750 per year driving a hybrid
- Buy a Fuel Efficient Car** - Getting a few extra miles per gallon makes a big difference. Save thousands of lbs. of CO₂ and a lot of money per year.
- Replace Old Appliances** - Inefficient appliances waste energy. Save hundreds of lbs. of carbon dioxide and hundreds of dollars per year.
- Change Your Air Filter** - Check your car's air filter monthly. Save 800 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$130 per year.
- Change the AC Filter** - Clean or replace dirty air conditioner filters as recommended. Save 350 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$150 per year.
- Weatherize Your Home** - Caulk and weather strip your doorways and windows. Save 1,700 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$274 per year.
- Insulate Your Home** - Make sure your walls and ceilings are insulated. Save 2,000 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$245 per year.
- Switch to Double Pane Windows** - Double pane windows keep more heat inside your home so you use less energy. Save 10,000 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$436 per year.
- Use a Push Mower** - Use your muscles instead of fossil fuels and get some exercise. Save 80 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.
- Plant a Tree** - Trees suck up carbon dioxide and make clean air for us to breathe. Save 2,000 lbs. of carbon dioxide per year.

More information and ideas can be found at www.climatecrisis.com, www.livescience.com/environment/060421_earth_day_tips.html, and www.stopglobalwarming.org among others.

4. THE POWER OF LETTER WRITING

4.1 The Ohio State University (OSU) – Not Enough Green Building on Campus

Contact person: Melissa Bellini, VP for Architecture

Contact address: The Ohio State University, 150C Service, 2003 Millikin Road, Columbus, OH 43210

Contact telephone: (614) 292-0257

Issue of concern: Currently, four major construction projects are ongoing on campus of which only the new student center will meet green building standards (LEED rating). This will be only the second LEED compliant building on campus (the 4-H building being the other). This is despite OSU's stated commitment "...to incorporate LEED standards in all future buildings." (source: the Sustainable Endowments Institute college sustainability report card, <http://www.endowmentinstitute.org/sustainability/>). This pales in comparison to the University of Cincinnati which currently has nine sustainable development projects that meet LEED standards (<http://www.greenenergyohio.org/page.cfm?pageID=261>). Building green is necessary by leading institutions like OSU. As a center of education and idealism, OSU should lead by example and make ALL new construction LEED compliant.

Proposal: Write letter to VP of Architecture at OSU who oversees all building projects and contracts, demanding that OSU follow-through on their commitment to green building by making ALL new construction meet LEED standards. Here is a sample letter than can used, signed and sent

Dear Ms.Bellini:

As members of the Ohio State University community we are very concerned with the lack of commitment to sustainability on campus. Currently, four major construction projects are ongoing on campus. Of these, only the new student center will meet the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green building standards. This will be only the second LEED compliant building on campus (the 4-H building being the other). This is unacceptable. It demonstrates a significant failure on the part of the Ohio State University to take responsibility for their ecological impact and flies in the face of our supposed aspirations to be leaders in research and technology.

While the Ohio State University should be commended for its stated commitment "...to incorporate LEED standards in all future buildings" (source: the Sustainable Endowments Institute college sustainability report card), these words mean nothing if not put into practice. Moreover, our negligible use of green building pales in comparison to the University of Cincinnati which currently has nine sustainable development projects that meet LEED standards (<http://www.greenenergyohio.org/page.cfm?pageID=261>). Likewise, our rivals at the University of Illinois and the University of Florida have committed meet LEED standards in all new construction projects.

As one of the largest universities in the nation, our ecological impact is substantial. We should be embarrassed to be so far behind in terms of our construction standards. Building green is a necessary step if we truly wish to remain a leading institution for education and research. Furthermore, LEED-certified buildings are a healthy and economical choice for the Ohio State University as they tend to run on reduced operating budgets and utilize materials which are safer and healthier for occupants. We strongly urge the Ohio State University to take a strong stance in favor of ecological responsibility by fully implementing their policy on making all new construction LEED compliant. We further urge that all construction projects on campus meet the Gold standard for LEED compliance.

Sincerely,

[your name]
[your OSU affiliation]

cc. University president

4.2 Ohio Energy – Needs Renewable Energy Portfolio

Contact: Governor Strickland

Mailing address: Riffe Center, 30th Floor, 77 South High Street, Columbus, OH 43215-6108

Alternative contact: Mark Shanahan, Executive Director, Ohio Air Quality Development Authority

Alternative address: Clean Air Resource Center, 50 West Broad St., Suite 1718, Columbus, OH 43215

Main issue of concern: Ohio does not have a renewable energy portfolio standard (RPS). Nearly half of the states have an RPS that requires electricity suppliers to guarantee that a percentage of electricity is generated from renewable sources. Ohio does not have this.

Proposal: Write letters to the Governor of Ohio and the Energy Advisor of Ohio (sample letter)

Re: Ohio's Energy Portfolio

Dear [Government Representative or Official]:

Thank you for your support of the University Clean Energy Alliance of Ohio. I also commend you for developing Ohio's Energy Compact. I agree that "We must stimulate renewable energy consumption." Renewable energy is vital to Ohio's future because it diversifies our fuel supply and benefits our environment.

Recently your Energy Advisor Mark Shanahan stated that he supports an advanced energy portfolio standard (AEPS) for Ohio rather than a renewable portfolio standard (RPS). Nearly half of the states have an RPS that requires electricity suppliers to guarantee that a percentage of electricity is generated from renewable sources. An AEPS is similar to an RPS, but includes nonrenewable technology such as cogeneration, energy efficiency, and clean coal technology. While these all have merit considering the heavy reliance on coal for electricity generation in Ohio, I modestly suggest that we set a minimum for renewable energy at a modest level, perhaps 5% by 2010. That level should reach 20% by 2020. Other advanced energy technology should be in addition to renewable energy. In other words, even if Ohio adopts an AEPS, the amount of renewable energy should set within the AEPS such that the entire standard cannot be satisfied by clean coal projects.

Funding to promote the renewable energy industry in Ohio can come from the Third Frontier, tax credits for wind (successful at the federal level), grants and loans from the Ohio Department of Development for wind and solar projects, and tax rebates for home solar energy installations.

Yours truly,

[your name]

[your address]

4.3 Ohio's new two-year State Operating Budget

Contact:

Our State Senator for Columbus Ray Miller

Senate Building, Room #233, Second Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215

And your own senator if outside the 15th District at: <http://www.senate.state.oh.us/senators/>

My Ohio Representative (find yours at -www.house.state.oh.us/jsps/Representatives.jsp):

Joyce Beatty (District 27), 77 S. High Street, 14th floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215-6111

Main Issue of Concern: The State of Ohio is voting on a new two-year operating budget that may not include funding for clean energy initiative.

Proposal: Write a letter to representative and senator to request that the new budget allocate significant funds to clean energy priorities. Based on a sample letter from the Ohio Environmental Council (OEC), here is a sample letter than can be used, signed and sent. **This issue is coming up soon. Letters should be submitted by June 20, 2007.**

Dear [Government Representative]:

I want to make Ohio an even better place in which to live, work, and raise a family.

When you vote on Ohio's new two-year State Operating Budget, please support the priorities of the Ohio Environmental Council for Clean Energy. We can save money and energy by investing in energy efficiency and conservation. There are various options for renewable energy sources right here in Ohio that could help reduce not only our dependence on fossil fuels, but also help reduce harmful greenhouse gases. Supporting initiatives to develop energy-efficient public transportation throughout the state is another way to reduce energy use in the state of Ohio. Public transit is convenient, safe, and efficient, and helps reduce our reliance on foreign sources of energy. It is also a key factor in promoting smart growth and urban revitalization

To learn about the OEC's state budget priorities for our natural resources, please see http://www.theoec.org/pdfs/testimony_green_papers/budget%20testimony%20odnr.pdf

To learn about the OEC's state budget priorities for transportation, please see http://www.theoec.org/pdfs/testimony_green_papers/budget%20testimony%20ordc.pdf.

Thank you for listening. I look forward to your reply.

[your name]

[your address]

4.4 United States Federal Government - Protecting the Oceans

Contacts:

George W. Bush
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20500

Senator: Sherrod Brown (D)
455 Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC 20510
Tel: 202-224-2315

Representatives: Deborah Pryce (R)
500 S. Front St. Suite 1130, Columbus, OH
43215 ; tel: (614) 469-5614
OR
320 Cannon HOB, Washington, D.C 20515
tel: (202) 225-2015

Senator: George V Voinovich (R)
524 Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC 20510
Tel: 202-224-3353

Main Issue of Concern: Depletion of world ocean resources and fisheries

List of references to back concerns

<http://www.oceansalive.org/home.cfm> - The Environmental Defense Oceans (EDO) program employs a team of scientists, attorneys, policy experts and economists that focuses on protecting ecosystems and fisheries. The Oceans Alive campaign builds on decades of experience and efforts to help fight marine ecosystem decline and promote sustainable fisheries and management practices in the world's oceans.

Proposal: Write a letter to government officials inviting them to put a high priority on protecting the oceans. Here is a representative letter that can be modified, printed, signed and sent to your local national legislator:

Dear [Government Representative]:

Once thought to be an inexhaustible resource, our oceans are in fact vulnerable. From melting icy seas to warming tropical waters, more than two thirds of fisheries are facing collapse, runoff and pollution from offshore drilling is polluting coastal waters, and coral reefs are dying.

The 2003 findings of the bipartisan U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the independent Pew Commission have sparked new interest in this looming oceans crisis, creating a window of opportunity for action.

The cost of continued neglect of our oceans and the rules that govern them is not only environmental. More than 50% of Americans live in coastal communities, which rely on healthy oceans to sustain their seafood and tourism industries. Failing to change course could threaten hundreds of communities and hundreds of thousands of jobs, and make a multi-billion dollar dent in our national economy.

At the turn of the 20th century, Teddy Roosevelt illustrated America's commitment to protecting our land by building our system of national parks, forests and monuments; he is still regarded as the father of our country's conservation effort. Today, we need a Teddy Roosevelt for our oceans.

No American government has yet taken a consistent stand to champion the oceans, despite their immense economic and environmental value. Now is your chance to leave an ocean legacy comparable to that of Teddy Roosevelt on land.

As a concerned constituent, I urge you to support measures that:

- Use protected areas and other tools to protect fragile ocean and coastal habitats
- Use market-based incentives and science-based management to transform failing fisheries into sustainable ones;
- Curb runoff that pollutes the oceans and harms wildlife;
- Maintain the longstanding bipartisan moratorium on offshore oil and gas drilling;
- Establish adequate safeguards on ocean aquaculture sites to protect marine ecosystems
- Enforce conservation laws to protect ocean and coastal wildlife and essential ecosystems;
- Double federal funding for ocean science, exploration and education over the next 5 years
- Improve coordination of ocean protections programs by creating a Cabinet-level interagency National Oceans Council to conserve, protect and restore marine life

Thank you.

[your name here]

[your address]

4.5 Massey Energy - Sludge Impoundment Threatens Elementary School

Company name: Massey Energy Company
Contact name: Don L. Blankenship,
Chairman
Mailing address: P.O. Box 26765,
Richmond, Virginia 23261
Telephone: 804-788-1800
Website: www.masseyenergyco.com/

Alternate contact name: Governor Joe
Manchin
Alternate mailing address: 1900 Kanawha
Boulevard, E., Charleston, WV 25305
Alternate telephone: 1-888-438-2731
Email: Governor@WVGov.org
Alternate website: www.wv.gov

Main Issue of Concern: Moving the Marsh Fork Elementary School

Massey Energy is the fourth largest coal producer in the US, and yields about 20 millions tons of coal annually. The main issue of concern is the impoundment for mining slurry at the Sundail, West Virginia site. If this slurry pond collapses, impacts on people and environments will be disastrous. For example, in February 1972, 125 people were killed, 1,121 people were injured, and more than 4000 people lost their houses because a coal slurry impoundment ruptured in Logan County, West Virginia. More recently, in October 2000, 306 million tons of mining sludge discharged into a local waterway when a coal tailing impoundment ruptured (this sludge pond belongs to Massey Energy), causing one of the worst environmental disasters in Kentucky. The Marsh Fork Elementary School in Sundail, West Virginia is only 400 yards below the man-made pond which stores mining sludge from the mountaintop removal mining site of Massey Energy. If this unstable slurry impoundment ruptured, the school would be the first place affected with sludge waste surrounding the school within only a few minutes. Therefore, a group of citizens has proposed to move the Marsh Fork Elementary School to a new location. However, it seems that Massey Energy and the West Virginia government do not think it is necessary, and are not willing to pay for the relocation. Incidentally, it is reported that Massey Energy threatened the school.

List of references to back concerns

http://www.appvoices.org/index.php?/mtr/mtr_example_sundialwv/
<http://www.wise-uranium.org/mdafin.html>
<http://www.wvculture.org/hiStory/buffcreek/bctitle.html>
<http://www.multinationalmonitor.org/mm2006/112006/mokhiber.html>

Proposal: Write a letter to Massey Energy Company. Here is a representative letter that can be modified, printed, signed and sent to the company and government representative:

Dear [company or government representative]:

As one of the largest mining companies in the US, your company has long been contributed to the local and national economy. However, the highly toxic mining slurry impounded at your Sundail, West Virginia site poses a significant and unnecessary risk to the students and staff of the March Fork Elementary School, the local community, and the ecosystem located immediately below the impoundment dam. Although your slurry dams may have been initially well-designed, recent dam ruptures in Kentucky and West Virginia that caused fatalities, damage to homes, and massing contamination problems, indicate that such ruptures are

disastrous and inevitable. I believe, but potential collapse of the dam is a great threat to students and parents of the Marsh Fork Elementary School, the community which is located only a few hundreds of yard below your mining sites in Sundial, West Virginia, and the surrounding ecosystem. The most pressing need is to relocate the elementary school. I propose that Massey Energy Corporate donate the appropriate funds to relocate the Marsh Fork Elementary School and remove the children of that school from immediate danger.

Sincerely,
[your name]
[your address]

4.6 Bureau of Land Management – Drilling for Oil Threatens Park

Contact person: Kellie Roadifer, Bureau of Land Management
Mailing address: BLM Pinedale Field Office, PO Box 768, Pinedale WY 82941,
Email: PRMP_WYMail@blm.gov

Alternate contact person: Governor Dave Freudenthal
Alternate mailing address: State Capitol Building, Cheyenne, WY 82002
Alternate email: governor@state.wy.us

Main issue of concern:* Drilling for Oil Threatens Park on the Pinedale RMP. **Letters must be submitted by June 18, 2007.*

Compiled from the websites listed below: Welcome to the upper Green River Valley (southern Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, western Wyoming), with its mountain vistas, sagebrush mesas, and verdant ribbons of forest. Home to the longest wildlife migration corridor in the lower 48 (1.2 million acre landscape), the Upper Green River Valley is quickly being consumed by gas drilling, resulting in hazy skies, heavy traffic, and greatly reduced populations of wildlife.

Even so, the Bush Administration plans to triple the number of wells there, to more than 10,000 gas wells. But there is an alternative plan, one that promotes balance and sensible growth. Help us tell the Bureau of Land Management to choose a better plan before the June 18th public comment deadline.

Of the four management plan alternatives under consideration, only one - Alternative 3 - strives to protect the Upper Green's natural habitats and ecosystems. At the same time, it allows for sustainable development and economic growth - 1) set a reasonable pace for drilling; 2) cluster drilling infrastructure so it minimizes impact on the land and wildlife; 3) strengthen seasonal drilling restrictions; 4) withdraw additional critical areas from development.

List of references to back concerns

www.wilderness.org - can sign online petition
www.uppergreen.org - for information and letter writing specifically, try
www.uppergreen.org/library/docs/RMP/positionpaper.pdf
www.skytruth.org (has link to a great video on youtube - a little long, but worth it!)
www.sierraclub.org/wildlands/wildlandsatrisk/green.asp
www.wyomingoutdoorcouncil.org/programs/ugrv/index.php

Proposal: Write letter to the Bureau of Land Mangement and the Governor. Here is a representative letter that can be modified, printed, signed and sent to Kellie Roadifer and Governor Dave Freudenthal:

BLM Pinedale Field Office
Kellie Roadifer, project manager
PO Box 768, Pinedale WY 82941

(Insert Date)

RE: Upper Green River Valley

Dear [Ms. Roadifer or Governor Dave Freudenthal]:

As someone who's deeply concerned about the future of America's wild places and unspoiled lands, I support Alternative 3 as the BLM considers a management plan for the Upper Green River Valley.

Three of the four alternatives under consideration would allow rapid expansion of natural gas drilling in the region. I'm worried that this would cause irreversible damage to the area's quality of life, air quality and ability to support abundant wildlife - the very things that make the Upper Green a great place to live and visit.

The air over the Upper Green has already been visibly affected by industrial pollution from existing gas rigs. Researchers have noticed significant declines in the mule deer herds and sage grouse populations that winter in the Upper Green. Tripling the number of gas wells over the next 10-15 years would simply make the problems worse.

Please pursue Alternative 3, the plan that would protect the Upper Green's most sensitive lands. It's a win-win situation: Alternative 3 permits sensible, sustainable development, while simultaneously preserving critical wildlife habitats, unspoiled views, and the unique way of life so many local communities enjoy.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
[your name]
[your address]

4.7 Get involved in promoting bicycle transportation in Columbus

Contact:

Transportation Division

Patricia A. Austin, P.E., Transportation Administrator

109 N Front St, 3rd Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215, (614) 645-8376

<http://pubserv.ci.columbus.oh.us/transportation/AboutUs/WhatDoWeDo.htm>

Main issue of concern:

Bicycle riding is a non-polluting, energy-efficient, quiet, and fitness-promoting vehicle. Bicycle commuting is becoming more and more popular as gas prices increase and people become more concerned about the environment and their health. Many people would like see more bicycling routes in Columbus which would make it easier and safer for them to commute to places using their bicycle. However, there is a fear of bicycling on streets of being struck by a motor vehicle. These fears prevent individual from bicycling and they stimulate a preference among the public to bicycle in areas where motor vehicles are not allowed, such as sidewalks, recreational paths, and hiking trails.

In Columbus, as the City works to improve streetscapes, it strives to makes its streets more bike-friendly. One recent example is on Morse Road, where both bike paths and bike lanes were added during reconstruction. In 2007, the City plans to update its Bicycle Plan to prioritize future efforts regarding bike traffic improvements. In 2006, Columbus Recreation and Parks Department constructed an additional 2.4 miles of recreational bike/pedestrian trails, bringing the total City miles to 47. The Department anticipates adding 5.5 miles in 2007. Also in 2007, the Department will construct dedicated bike paths on sections of the Olentangy Trail and Alum Creek Trail.

List of references to back concerns

The Ohio Bicycle Federation website which discusses how to make a bicycle friendly community <http://www.ohiobike.org/obf-cfc.html>

Mid Ohio Region Planning Commission (MORPC) which discusses ride-solutions <http://ridesolutions.morpc.org/>

Who to contact at MORPC: bcage@morpc.org 614.233.4157