

Thank you for your comment, Larry Steinbach.

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Although I or the firm I work for (A Canadian design firm headquartered in Toronto) are not in the Oil business we do get involved with the design of facilities and infrastructure related to the economic impacts of the oil development. Currently our Edmonton, Alberta office, along with one of my associates here in our Salt Lake City Office, is providing design services for new subdivisions in Edmonton and Fort McMurray, Alberta. The economic impact of the oil rich Alberta oil sands is far reaching.

However, the US economy has caused much of the design professions to see heavy layoffs. I was recently told that fully 1/2 of licensed architects in Oregon were unemployed. I personally have had to work extensively in our Edmonton office and now in our Vancouver office because of diminished work in our Salt Lake City Office. It all started with the downturn in 2008.

I am very concerned about world political issues, our dependence on oil (not to change anytime soon despite alternate energy options simply due to population growth worldwide as well as domestically), and the current economy sluggish to recover.

I have managed to keep my job (I am nearly 63 and cannot retire under these conditions) by being willing to work extensively in our Canada offices away from my wife and family. I do not believe this BLM strategy is conducive to improving the current economic struggle. There are more than adequate environmental protections in current law and plenty of opportunity for proponents and opponents to be heard. We must become less dependent on Middle Eastern oil and more self sufficient to make a more stable domestic economy. That will help my profession as a licensed architect and the construction industry as well. We cannot let politics dictate good thinking. I am not in favor of this lease as a reduction on BLM land. Opinions aside, technology will eventually make these resources and the vast oil reserve economically feasible. We must encourage this with all the protections needed to ensure minimizing environmental impacts, but restricting lease area is not the way. Thank you for this opportunity. I hope my firm and others in the design arena will not have to suffer further due the bureaucratic mismanagement of our public natural resources. Thank you.

Larry Steinbach, AIA
Architect