



## Redrafting Stipulations for the Rocky Mountain Front

In June of 2008, MWF protested the sale of oil and gas leases in the Blackleaf Wildlife Management Area and the area surrounding the WMA. Our protest was done primarily because MWF believes that while some areas are suitable for oil, gas development, Wildlife Management Areas, and State Parks set aside with public funding for their wildlife values, and other State Lands with high wildlife potential such as those along the Front - are not!

Our protest, and your phone calls, emails and letters, led to a six month moratorium on leasing along the Front while MWF, DNRC and FWP redrafted the Sensitive Areas stipulation that was 21 years old. Many changes have occurred along the Front in that time, including the Congressional withdrawal of Federal minerals from leasing and private lands conservation efforts from groups such as the Nature Conservancy and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The new stipulations will require increased environmental oversight, and will require an Environmental Impact Statement for each well drilled, as opposed to the less stringent Environmental Assessment. The notification requirements for landowners adjacent to lease properties were also increased, as well as the notification requirement for surrounding rural communities and metropolitan centers.

To date, MWF believes that these new Rocky Mountain Front Stipulations are the most progressive stipulations in the state. We commend the Governor's office, Superintendent of Public Instruction Linda McCulloch's office, and the DNRC for engaging in discussions with MWF on how to make sure the Front maintains breathtaking vistas, abundant wildlife, and its outstanding hunting opportunities during these uncertain times. While MWF still believes that oil and gas development should not occur on state lands along the Rocky Mountain Front, we recognize the fact that the State cannot simply pull those lands off the table when nominated for lease by the oil and gas industry. To that end, we believe that by increasing the amount of environmental oversight, and the amount of consultation with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, we can find a balance while ensuring a wildlife rich landscape that benefits all Americans.