

## Drilling for oil and Gas Near the Au Sable River

Growing up close to the one of the five Great Lakes, I thought of doing an article on protecting Michigan's waters. Whether it is from pollution or the actual selling of the water commercially for a profit, the matter at hand is we need to preserve what we have right in front of us. By looking at articles looking at the Au Sable River and companies wanting to drill and extract oil and surface gas from the river, you could see where this would bring up some major controversy. There is profit to make with drilling in the area but at the same time it would destroy the environment. Some ways it would destroy it would be tearing up the land and environment to make way for equipment and not to mention the mess left over from the workers if they were to litter. The article explains how there was nine parcels of land up for sale just east of Grayling area to be sold for drilling and extraction. Michigan Environmental Council joined forces with local anglers, Grayling Township, local realtors, business owners, and other environmental groups to write a letter to Keith Creagh, who is the MDNR Director. The decision came out that drilling and extraction was not to be done at these parcels.

Now there comes all these questions like, "Who cares? How does this affect me? Why don't we just let them drill?" and I could go on and on. The point that we need to establish is that it will be bad for Michigan's environment. Looking at another article, there was controversy about letting companies drill near the Delaware River. Protestors suggest that the statistics show that about 15 million people get there water from this river and if it gets polluted, then where would this supply for water come from?<sup>1</sup> Knowing this and seeing that pollution can come with drilling and extracting these natural resources, we need to think critically before fully committing to any action that can potentially harm Michigan's Environment. The drilling on the Au Sable River would affect many aspects of Au Sable River that makes it what it is. The fishing, the beautiful untouched landscape, and the list goes on. Simply put if we allow this drilling to happen at this river, what is stopping us from letting it happen to bigger rivers surround by larger cities.

According to the Department of Environmental Quality, there is multiple areas that have or had active drilling units. Three of these cities: Emmett, Midland, and Claire are relatively interesting due to their location to me currently or near my home town.<sup>2</sup> These areas would allow me to further analyze and evaluate how these drillings, close to water sources and/or just the location of these drilling sites, affect the overall environment. It would also allow me to look at the local newspapers to see if there is any controversy coming with the drillings or any protests to stop these drillings. Both could help any argument in my future research paper.

### Bibliography

- Phillips, Susan. "Gas Drilling Along the Delaware River Remains Uncertain." Pennsylvania RSS. <http://stateimpact.npr.org/pennsylvania/2drilling-along-the-delaware-river-remains-in-limbo/>
- "DEQ- Drilling Unit Maps by County." DEQ – Drilling Unit Maps by County. [http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3311\\_4111\\_4231-210711--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3311_4111_4231-210711--,00.html)

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<sup>1</sup> "Gas Drilling Along the Delaware River Remains Uncertain", last modified November 21, 2011, <http://stateimpact.npr.org/pennsylvania/2011/11/21/gas-drilling-along-the-delaware-river-remains-in-limbo/>.

<sup>2</sup> "Drilling Units by County", last modified 2014, [http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3311\\_4111\\_4231-210711--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3311_4111_4231-210711--,00.html)