

Date: October 30, 2017

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To: Mr. Rene Stucky, UIC Director
Production Supervisor at Kansas Corporation Commission
266 Main Street, Suite 220
Wichita, Kansas 67202-1513

From: Tom and Cassandra Gaither Hutchinson
Gaither Family Ranch LLC
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Salina, Kansas 67401
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Gaither Family Ranch LLC
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Salina, Kansas 67401
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2017-11-06 11:41:05

Kansas Corporation Commission
/s/ Lynn M. Retz

Dear Mr. Stucky,

18-CONS-3204-CUIC

We are Cassandra Gaither Hutchinson and Christine Gaither Garten. We both now reside in Salina but were born and raised in Trego County. We are the owners of the Gaither Family Ranch, LLC, in rural Trego County, the site of the salt water disposal well application. We are the third generation of the Gaither family to live on and manage the Gaither Ranch.

We strongly protest and request a hearing in the matter of the Application for a Salt Water Disposal Well in the Cedar Hill Formation at the Gaither Lease Well 2-21, 660 FNL, 990 FEL, located in Section 21, Township 14, Range 24-West, in Trego County.

The permit number is D32569. The API number is 15-195-23016-00-00.

It has always been of the utmost importance to our family to preserve the land on and below the ground, protect the environment, and safeguard the property for our future lineage. We are concerned about the installation and usage of a salt water disposal well on our land. Research has shown that problems can often occur at the site, as well as impairments to surrounding property despite the best of intentions and precautions taken by the operator's field personnel.

Acreage was sacrificed at the construction site of drilling. A large area of farm ground was surrendered for the drilling of the well, the salt water pit, and roads. The pad consumes a very large expanse of our tenant's crop.

A second concern includes the risk of possible spillage on the ground's surface and the cleanup of those spills. This wastage is costly, time consuming, and can render the space useless.

Leakage from shallow casings and pipeline breaks and leaks are a third concern. Once again, this space could be contaminated and ruined for future usage.

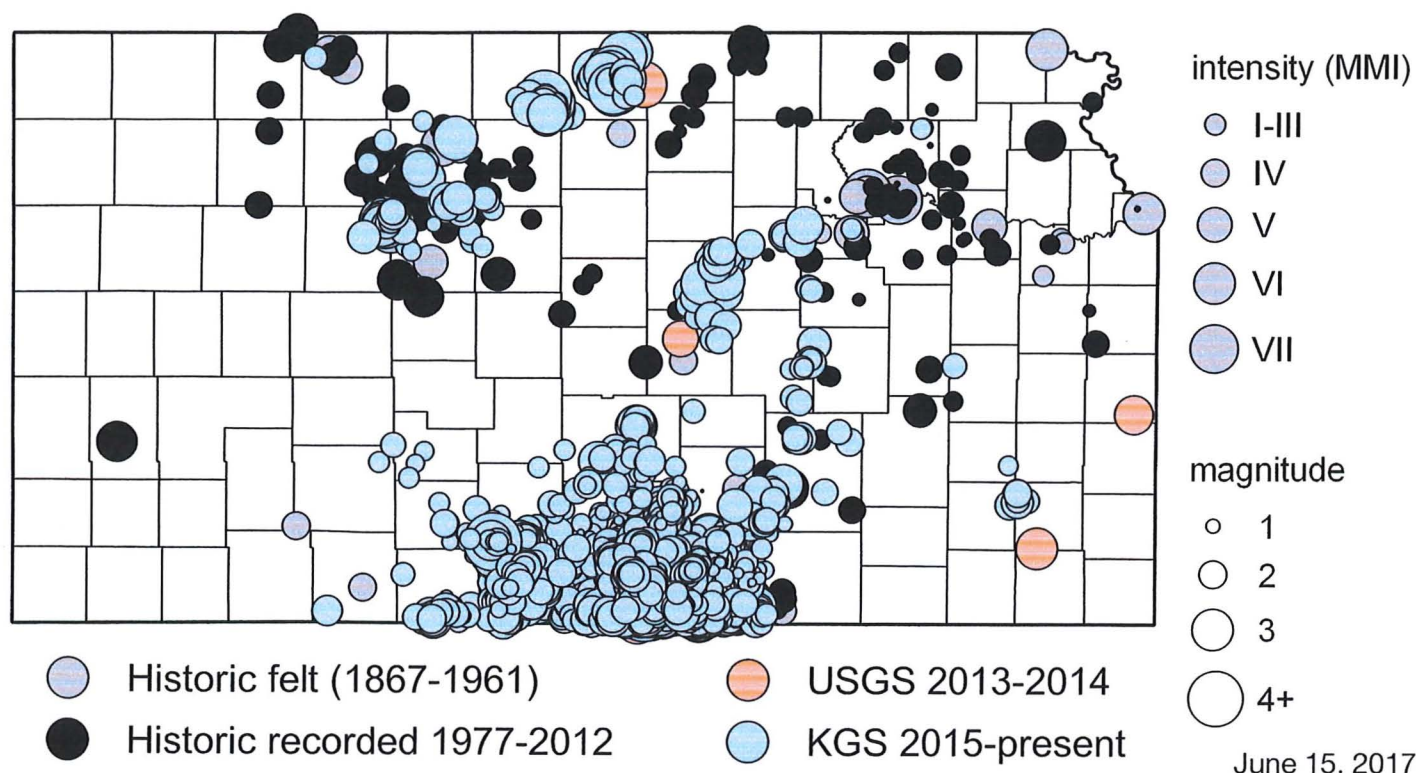
Gun barrel, pipe leaks, and overflows and leakage from storage tanks on the surface cause even more uncertainties. Treatment with chemical options, such as acid washing in the anti-scaling process, is worrisome.

Increased truck traffic on country roads to and from the disposal site is another significant point. This can cause the breakdown of road materials producing more maintenance and costs to the county and to the ranch. The issue of dust from the gravel roads, and its effects on crops and grass, is also a concern.

Potential ground water pollution is a major concern. Several families live in close proximity to the disposal site. Conceivable concerns are heightened with the possible poisoning of rural resident's well water. Well water is also used for livestock consumption and irrigation wells can be compromised for future crops. Downer Creek, very close to the disposal site, flows into the Smoky Hill River, which in turn flows into Cedar Bluff Reservoir. Cattle utilize both Downer Creek and the Smoky Hill River.

Preventing corrosion is vital, so another possible source of surface contamination is the use of lubricants and anti-rust agents necessary for the operation of pumps, tanks, and valves for the injection facility. The aesthetics of having to view rusting spare and broken equipment is an unwelcome display. This is not a criticism specifically directed to our operator, but one only has to casually drive through oil-field country and see many irksome examples of sloppy and trashy well sites.

The eighth major area of apprehension is the possibility of existing fault lines. The presence of the disposal brine could cause a fault line, known or unknown, to slip and produce seismic activity. This is a disturbing earthquake concern. Less than 70 miles northeast of the disposal site, a 4.0 M documented earthquake was recorded near Palco in Rooks County. According to the Armbruster et al. (1989)¹, as quoted in Buchanan et al. (2015)², "Several injection wells used for the disposal of wastewater—were located nearby, and one well in particular may have been close to a deeply buried fault zone. Based on a disposal well's injection history, local geology, and low level of prior earthquake activity in the area, scientists speculated that the seismicity could have been induced." Please see the map below of Kansas's seismic activity (from <http://www.kgs.ku.edu/Geophysics/Earthquakes/index.html>). Seismic activity, possibly aided by disposal water, is common in northwestern Kansas near our ranch, and has expanded from earlier maps presented in Buchanan et al. (2015).



Last, but not least, because of the remoteness of the disposal facility, no one is near the site to monitor the possible disposal of saltwater from wells other than the one in that same quarter. Nobody is available to check for activities at the site. Possible equipment malfunctions and leaks could continue for days until they are discovered.

We are aware that the wells producing oil on our property may not continue to be profitable for our operator if this saltwater disposal well is not permitted. We accept the possibility these producing wells, as a result of a permit denial, may therefore be plugged and abandoned, but the additional risk to the ranch with the establishment of a disposal well is simply not acceptable to us. We do not want to possibly jeopardize our land, crops, the near-subsurface, and aesthetics of our ranch for now and for the future.

Please note our list of concerns and consider erring on the side of caution and protect the land and water in the southwestern part of Trego County. Our sons and their children will be the fourth and fifth generations to continue the Gaither ranching tradition. Since the 1930's our family has practiced being good stewards of the land. We would like to ensure the safety of that land for our future generations.

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Respectfully,

Cassandra Gaither Hutchinson
Cassandra Gaither Hutchinson

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Christine Gaither Garten
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¹Armbruster, J. G., Steeples, D.W., and Seeber, L., 1989, The 1989 earthquake sequence near Palco, Kansas: A possible example of induced seismicity (abstract): Seismological Research Letters, v. 60, no. 4, p. 141.

²Buchanan, R.C., Newell, K.D., Evans, C.S., Miller, R.D. and Peterie, S.L., 2014 (revised, 2015), Induced Seismicity: The Potential for Triggered Earthquakes: Kansas Geological Survey, Public Information Circular 36. 6p.