

# Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 23, 2014

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## **League Testifies Against Re-Zoning for Bioremediation of Toxic Waste in Stokes County**

At the Stokes County Planning Board meeting in Danbury on Thursday night, The Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League (BREDL) submitted testimonies opposing the re-zoning of 77 acres for industrial bioremediation, the depositing of petroleum-contaminated soil onto farm land.

One of the League's greatest concerns is the applicant's non-compliance with state and federal regulations, including the Clean Air Act. The application states that the site will comply with all applicable federal regulations, yet requests that DENR omit the testing of ambient air for the control of aerial contaminants such as volatile organic compounds, or VOC's, as mandated by the federal Clean Air Act.

"This application needs to be reviewed carefully at the County level to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations for the protection of the environment and public health," said League Co-President Sam Tesh, a resident of nearby State Road.

The Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League has also identified the possibility of non-petroleum substances being mixed with the soil treated at the site, impacting the effectiveness of the bioremediation process, and the potential for hazardous liquid waste

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from hydraulic fracturing to be sprayed directly on the site. According to BREDL, any community that allows petroleum contaminated soil to be brought in would clearly be vulnerable to hydrofracking wastes. “Rules are not in place to protect the residents of Stokes County from the land disposal of fracking waste, should the fracking industry begin to operate in North Carolina,” said Kate Dunnagan, BREDL staff member from Guilford County. “This is one of several reasons to oppose the application of this site for M2-CZ Heavy Manufacturing Zoning.” The League also submitted a written statement prepared by Executive Director, Lou Zeller, with a detailed analysis of the shortcomings and errors in the application re-zoning.

The Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League is a regional grassroots environmental non-profit organization that was founded in Ashe County, North Carolina in 1984. Today Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League has chapters and projects in many communities across the Southeast, extending from Virginia to Georgia, including a membership base in both Stokes and Surry Counties.