



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
**U.S. Department
of the Interior**

www.doi.gov

News Release

Date: March 15, 2011

Contact: Kendra Barkoff (DOI) (202) 208-6416

Kaveh Sadeghzadeh (BLM) (202) 912-7423

Salazar, Abbey Discuss \$112 Billion Economic Contribution of BLM Public Lands; Focus on Increasing Safe and Responsible Energy Production

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK – In a visit today to Oklahoma City, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar outlined the economic importance of U.S. energy production and called the public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) “one of the nation’s greatest assets – both economically and environmentally.”

Secretary Salazar noted that America’s public lands and their resources contributed more than \$112 billion to the U.S. economy and supported more than a half-million American jobs in 2010, the bulk of which came from the management of energy and non-energy mineral resources and recreation.

“President Obama has made it clear that we must continue to move toward a secure energy future that will have long-lasting economic benefits,” Salazar said. “This includes continuing to encourage safe and responsible oil and natural gas production in the short-term while making America more energy independent in the long-term.”

The Bureau of Land Management has a field office in Oklahoma that manages 7.4 million acres of public land and minerals in the states of Oklahoma, Kansas and Texas. That field office administers extraction, use and sale of oil, gas and coal and ensures that operations are conducted safely and in an environmentally responsible manner. The Oklahoma Field office also ensures that oil and gas operations on Indian lands are conducted according to lease terms and conditions, approved plans, and existing laws and regulations.

“The BLM, which manages 245 million acres of public lands and 700 million acres of mineral estate, is an engine of economic activity,” said BLM Director Bob Abbey, who joined the Secretary by phone. “It raises more revenue each year for American taxpayers than it spends and helps stimulate investment and innovation by businesses.”

Salazar said the mineral-related contributions to the economy from BLM-managed resources are expected to increase in 2011, with 33 oil and gas lease sales scheduled and more than 7,200 applications-for-permit-to-drill on public lands and Indian lands expected to be processed – up from approximately 5,000 in 2010.

“In addition, we are already seeing significant benefits from the President’s initiative to increase renewable energy development that will help secure America’s long-term prosperity and help reduce our dependence on foreign oil,” Salazar said.

In 2010, the production of geothermal and wind energy on BLM-managed lands contributed more than \$361 million to the nation’s economy. Secretary Salazar also noted that with several important solar projects poised for development, the economic and social benefits from the Administration’s historic investment in clean energy will increase considerably and provide much-needed diversity in the America’s long-term energy portfolio.

Director Abbey also highlighted the economic benefits of the diverse recreational opportunities afforded by BLM public lands. In 2010, more than 58 million recreation-related visits were made to BLM-managed lands and water. These visits provided a nationwide economic benefit of \$7.4 billion dollars.

“Not only do these public lands generate revenue and jobs through development of important mineral resources such as oil and gas, timber, and grazing, they are increasingly yielding significant economic benefits from recreation, natural and cultural resources, and conservation of important wildlife and plant habitats,” Abbey said.

The BLM has produced a fact sheet titled "The BLM: A Sound Investment for America," which provides a state-by-state breakdown of economic impacts of activities on BLM-managed land. The national numbers will differ from any total of individual state impacts, because the national model incorporates impacts that cross state borders. This is especially significant in the oil and gas industry, where the complex, interstate supply chain provides a much greater impact than the compilation of state numbers might imply. The fact sheet is available at: <http://blm.gov/4q5c>

The BLM manages more land – over 245 million acres -- than any other federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The Bureau, with a budget of about \$1 billion, also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on public lands.

###