



BLM NEWS RELEASE

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BLM Delivers on Permits, Leasing Opportunities for Oil and Gas in 2014 *Drilling, Production Activity on the Rise on Public Lands* *Bureau Continues Focus on Inspection and Enforcement Needs of Expanding Portfolio*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), whose onshore oil and gas program includes approximately 100,000 wells spread across public lands, today released data summarizing oil and gas permitting, leasing, drilling, and production activity for fiscal year 2014. Over the past year, the BLM provided drilling permits and leasing opportunities in excess of industry demand. During that same time, industry drilled more wells and produced from more acres than in the previous year. The BLM continues to focus on meeting inspection and enforcement responsibilities on this expanding portfolio of oil and gas activities on public land.

In the past year, the BLM approved 3,769 drilling permits, on par with the previous year and half-again as many authorizations as industry drilled on public lands in 2014. The BLM on average completed its portion of the permitting process in a little over 90 days, also consistent with the previous year. In total, nearly 6,000 drilling permits have already been approved by the BLM and are ready for immediate use by oil and gas companies. These permits represents over two years' worth of drilling at the current rate.

Meanwhile, the BLM continued to offer new opportunities for leasing in excess of industry demand. In fiscal year 2014, the BLM offered nearly 5.7 million acres at 26 oil and gas lease sales across the west, with one in five of those acres receiving bids. Oil and gas companies continued to hold valid leases on over 34 million acres of public lands this year, an area the size of the state of Florida. Roughly a third of this land is currently being used to produce oil and natural gas.

In the past year, industry leased more new acres, drilled more wells, and produced from more acres than the previous year. During fiscal year 2014, industry leased, through competitive bidding and other means, nearly 1.2 million acres, a slight increase from the previous year. Oil and gas operators last year drilled 2,544 wells on public lands, also up from the previous year. Industry is now actively producing from 12.7 million acres of public land, the third highest total since 1990.

“The BLM is proud of the role we play in supporting responsible energy development on public lands,” said BLM Director Neil Kornze. “At the same time, we are mindful of the cradle-to-grave management responsibility that comes with each new well. We are committed to supporting robust development and must also ensure safe operations and a fair return to the taxpayer.”

The critical job of overseeing and inspecting the approximately 100,000 wells on public land is a BLM responsibility for the life of the well, often lasting for decades. Currently, the agency covers the cost of this critical work with annual appropriations that do not necessarily match the workload needs of the agency. To ensure a continued robust oil and gas program, the President asked Congress in his last four budgets to grant the BLM the authority to charge modest fees that would allow the BLM to be more responsive to industry needs and to properly fulfill its inspection and enforcement responsibilities. A similar authority has been granted to the nation's offshore oil and gas regulator, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement.

“The portfolio of oil and gas wells overseen by the BLM has expanded at the same time that drilling has become more complex,” Kornze said. “We have a foundational responsibility to make sure that oil and gas operations on public lands are done safely and responsibly.”

The BLM's onshore program accounts for 11 percent of the natural gas and 5 percent of the oil produced in the United States. The Department of the Interior disbursed more than \$13.4 billion in revenue generated by energy production on federal and American Indian lands and offshore areas in fiscal year 2014. These revenues are shared among federal, state and tribal governments and represent one of the largest nontax sources of U.S. government funds.

A full summary of oil and gas statistics for fiscal year 2014 is now available [here](#).

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's mission is to manage and conserve the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations under our mandate of multiple-use and sustained yield. In fiscal year 2014, the BLM generated \$5.2 billion in receipts from public lands.

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