

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
ROSWELL FIELD OFFICE**

**Project: July 2014 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale**

**EA Log Number: DOI-BLM-NM-P010-2014-15-EA**

**Location: Chaves and Guadalupe County, New Mexico.**

**Decision Record**

The decision is to accept the Preferred Action (Alternative C) and lease ten (10) parcels of federal minerals totaling 5,880.36 acres offered in the July 2014 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale with the addition of stipulations and lease notices to the parcels. The Preferred Action is in compliance with the 1997 Roswell Resource Management Plan (RMP) and the 2008 Special Status Species RMP Amendment (RMPA).

The following parcels will be leased:

	Preferred Alternative	
Parcel	Stipulations	Acres
NM-201407-005 (Parcels 3, 4 and 5 were combined into Parcel 5)	Lease with the following Stipulations	
T. 0080N, R. 0240E NMPM Section 024, SWNE, Section 022, SWSE, Section 023, NWSE, Guadalupe County	SENM-S-48-CSU Paleontology SENM-S-18 Streams, Rivers and Floodplains - Section 022, SWSE, Section 023, NWSE; SENM-S-20 Springs, Seeps and Tanks - Section 023, NWSE; SENM-S-25 Visual Resource Management SENM-S-39 Plan of Development NM-11 LN Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice	120.00
NM-201407-016	Lease with the following Stipulations	
T. 0140S, R. 0270E NMPM Section 035, N2, Chaves County	SENM-LN-1 Lease Notice - Potential Cave or Karst Occurrence Area - All SENM-S-21 Controlled Surface Use Caves And Karst – All SENM-S-25 Visual Resource Management NM-11 LN Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice SENM-S-39 Plan of Development	320.00
NM-201407-017	Lease with the following Stipulations	
T. 0140S, R. 0280E, NMPM Section 021, N2, NESW, SE; Chaves County	SENM-LN-1 Lease Notice - Potential Cave or Karst Occurrence Area – All SENM-S-19 Playas and Alkali Lakes – Section 021, SWNE, NWSE; SENM-S-21 Controlled Surface Use Caves And Karst – All SENM-S-25 Visual Resource Management NM-11 LN Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice SENM-S-39 Plan of Development	520.00

NM-201407-018	Lease with the following Stipulations	
T. 0150S, R. 0280E NMPM Section 003, SW; Section 004, Lots 1-4; Section 004, SENE, SWNW, SW, W2SE, SESE; Section 009, N2NE, NW. Chaves County	SENM-LN-1 Lease Notice - Potential Cave or Karst Occurrence Area – All SENM-S-19 Playas and Alkali Lakes – Section 03, E2SW; Section 04, NESW; Section 09, NWNE, NENW; SENM-S-21 Controlled Surface Use Caves And Karst – All SENM-S-25 Visual Resource Management NM-11 LN Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice SENM-S-39 Plan of Development	920.36
NM-201407-019	Lease with the following stipulations	
T. 0150S R. 0280E NMPM Section 010, SENE, NWNE, NW Chaves County	SENM-LN-1 Lease Notice - Potential Cave or Karst Occurrence Area - All SENM-S-21 Controlled Surface Use Caves And Karst – All SENM-S-25 Visual Resource Management NM-11 LN Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice SENM-S-39 Plan of Development	240.00
NM-201407-020	Lease with the following Stipulations	
T. 0150S, R 0280E NMPM Section 010 S2S2; Section 015, All. Chaves County	SENM-LN-1 Lease Notice - Potential Cave or Karst Occurrence Area - All SENM-S-21 Controlled Surface Use Caves And Karst – All SENM-S-25 Visual Resource Management NM-11 LN Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice SENM-S-39 Plan of Development	800.00
NM-201407-021	Lease with the following Stipulations	
T. 0150S, R 0280E NMPM Section 026, NW; Section 027, N2NE, W2, SE. Chaves County	SENM-LN-1 Lease Notice - Potential Cave or Karst Occurrence Area – All SENM-S-19 Playas and Alkali Lakes – Section 27, NWNE, NENW, N2SE; SENM-S-21 Controlled Surface Use Caves And Karst - All SENM-S-25 Visual Resource Management NM-11 LN Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice SENM-S-39 Plan of Development	720.00
NM-201407-022	Lease with the following Stipulations	
T. 0140S, R 0290E NMPM Section 022, NE, NENW, S2NW, S2; Chaves County	SENM-LN-1 Lease Notice - Potential Cave or Karst Occurrence Area – AISENM-S-19 Playas and Alkali Lakes – Section 22, SENE; SENM-S-21 Controlled Surface Use Caves And Karst – All SENM-S-25 Visual Resource Management NM-11 LN Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice SENM-S-39- Plan of Development (POD) SENM-S-22- Prairie Chickens	600.00
NM-201407-056	Lease with the following Stipulations	
T. 0140S, R 0290E NMPM Section 027, All, Chaves County	SENM-LN-1 Lease Notice - Potential Cave or Karst Occurrence Area - All SENM-S-21 Controlled Surface Use Caves And Karst – All SENM-S-25 Visual Resource Management NM-11 LN Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice SENM-S-39 -Plan of Development (POD) SENM-S-22- Prairie Chickens	640.00
NM-201407-055	Lease with the following Stipulations	
T. 0140S, R. 0280E, NMPM Section 22, All; Section 027, NE, N2NW, SENW, N2SE Chaves County	SENM-LN-1 Lease Notice - Potential Cave or Karst Occurrence Area – All SENM-S-19 Playas and Alkali Lakes – Section 22, NENE; SENM-S-21 Controlled Surface Use Caves And Karst – All SENM-S-25 Visual Resource Management NM-11 LN Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice SENM-S-39 Plan of Development	1,000.00

**Alternatives Considered:**

The Environmental Assessment analyzed in detail with three alternatives: the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action, and the Preferred Action. The No Action Alternative was not selected because it does not meet the purpose and need. The Proposed Action considered leasing twelve (12) nominated parcels that are in conformance with the 1997 RMP and the 2008 Special Status Species RMPA with applicable stipulations. In the Preferred Action the preliminary parcels NM-201407-032 and NM-201407-033 were deferred based on the parcels containing suitable lesser prairie-chicken habitat and lek locations. Preliminary parcels NM-201407-034, NM-201407-052, NM-201407-053, and NM-201407-054 were not considered or further analyzed because they were not in conformance with the 2008 Special Status Species RMPA.

**Rationale:**

The ten (10) parcels in their entirety as described in the EA were reviewed by an interdisciplinary group of internal resource specialists at the Roswell Field Office. The purpose of the review was to determine if the parcels are in an area open to oil and gas leasing; if leasing the parcels will be in conformance with the existing land use plans; if new information has been developed which might affect leasing suitability; to ensure appropriate lease stipulations are attached to the lease parcels; and to verify appropriate consultations have been conducted.

The Preferred Action was selected because it adequately addressed resource concerns that were mitigated through stipulations identified in the land use plans including protections for lesser prairie-chicken and hydrology. Approval of the Preferred Action will allow the BLM to lease the ten (10) parcels with the stipulations identified in the RMP. The attached leasing stipulations will minimize environmental impacts. Potential analysis of surface disturbing activities was considered in the EA; however, this does not preclude the RFO from requiring site-specific surface moves or adjustments if development of a lease occurs as a result of this action to minimize impacts to resources. Additionally, reclamation would be required for any development on the leases following the standards in the Surface Operating Standards and Guidelines for Oil and Gas Exploration and Development - Gold Book (BLM, 2007).

The opinion of BLM biologists, using BLM inventory and monitoring data, is that no federally listed threatened, endangered, or proposed species would be adversely affected by sale of the lease parcels. Effects of oil and gas leasing and development on threatened or endangered species were analyzed in Section 7 consultation (Cons. # 2-22-96-F-102, Cons. #22420-2006-I-0144, and Cons. #22420-2007-TA-0033). Additional review and analysis would occur when site specific proposals for development are received.

New information regarding greenhouse gas emissions and climate change has been developed since the RMP. This information has been incorporated into the analysis of the alternatives. Analysis determined leasing the subject tracts could lead to eventual development which would result in small incremental increases in GHG emissions. These emissions will be minimized by best management practices and conditions of approval developed for specific development proposals. It is unknown at this time the significance of these emissions on climate and it has been determined that additional analysis would not lead to further clarification of these impacts.

## **Public Involvement:**

The parcels and applicable stipulations were posted online for a two-week public scoping period starting on December 30, 2013. No comments were received. In addition, this EA was made available for public review and comment for 30 days beginning February 10, 2014; however, the comment period was extended for an additional eight days and concluded on March 19, 2014. Comments were received from WildEarth Guardians and incorporated into the EA as appropriate.

## **Administrative Review and Appeal:**

This Decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR 4.400 and Form 1842-1, Information on Taking Appeals to the Interior Board of Land Appeals.

If an appeal is taken, a Notice of Appeal must be filed in this office at the aforementioned address within 30 days from receipt of this Decision. A copy of the Notice of Appeal and of any statement of reasons, written arguments, or briefs **must** also be served on the Office of the Solicitor at the address shown on Form 1842-1. It is also requested that a copy of any statement of reasons, written arguments, or briefs be sent to this office. The appellant has the burden of showing that the Decision appealed from is in error.

If you wish to file a Petition for a Stay of this Decision, pursuant to 43 CFR 4.21, the Petition must accompany your Notice of Appeal. A Petition for a Stay is required to show sufficient justification based on the standards listed below. Copies of the Notice of Appeal and Petition for a Stay **must** also be submitted to each party named in the Decision and to the Interior Board of Land Appeals and to the appropriate Office of the Solicitor (see 43 CFR 4.413) at the same time the original documents are filed with this office. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.

### Standards for Obtaining a Stay

Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulation, a petition for a stay of a Decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied;
- (2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits;
- (3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted; and
- (4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

Prepared by:

/s/\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_08/25/2014\_\_\_\_\_  
Harley Davis, Natural Resources Specialist

Reviewed By:

/s/\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_08/26/2014\_\_\_\_\_  
Angel Mayes, Assistant Field Manager - Lands and Minerals

/s/\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_08/26/2014\_\_\_\_\_  
Chuck Schmidt, Roswell Field Office Manager

Approved By:

/s/\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_09/09/2014\_\_\_\_\_  
Jesse J. Juen, State Director

**Department of the Interior,  
Bureau of Land Management, Roswell Field Office**

July 2014 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale

EA Log Number: DOI-BLM-NM-P010-2014-15-EA

Location: Various Locations in Chaves, Guadalupe, and Roosevelt Counties, New Mexico

**Finding of No Significant Impact**

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached environmental assessment (EA), I have determined the Preferred Alternative (Alternative C) is not expected to have significant impacts on the environment. The impacts of leasing fluid mineral estate in the areas described with this EA have been previously analyzed in the 1997 Roswell Resource Management Plan, as amended, and the 2008 Special Status Species Resource Management Plan Amendment; and the lease stipulations and notices that accompany the tracts proposed for leasing would mitigate the impacts of future development on these tracts. Therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not warranted.

Prepared by:

\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_08/25/2014\_\_\_\_  
Harley Davis, Natural Resource Specialist

Reviewed by:

\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_08/26/2014\_\_\_\_  
Angel Mayes, Assistant Field Manager, Lands and Minerals

\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_08/26/2014\_\_\_\_  
Charles Schmidt, Roswell Field Office Manager

Approved by:

\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_09/09/2014\_\_\_\_  
Jesse Juen, State Director