



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
Eastern States State Office
5275 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, VA 22041



DECISION RECORD
for Expressions of Interest within Wayne National Forest, Ohio
DOI-BLM-Eastern States-M000-2026-0003-DNA
September 14, 2026

I. DECISION

The Bureau and Land Management (BLM) Eastern States Office (ESO) conducts competitive sales to lease available federal oil and gas parcels underlying public and private lands. An interested party such as a private individual or company may file an Expression of Interest (EOI) to nominate parcels for competitive bid and leasing by the BLM. The BLM ESO has received EOIs nominating 40 parcels totaling approximately 2,795 acres of Federal mineral estate underlying the Wayne National Forest (WNF) for potential future oil and gas development. All nominated parcels are located in Monroe and Washington Counties in Ohio.

The BLM's decision is to make 40 parcels totaling approximately 2,795 acres of Federal mineral estate underlying the WNF available for competitive leasing in the Eastern States September 2026 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale. A Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA) was conducted and determined that the Environmental Assessment (EA), Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA), and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for Oil and Gas Leasing within the Wayne National Forest, Marietta Unit of the Athens Ranger District (DOI-BLM-Eastern States-0030-2016-0002-EA and DOI-BLM-Eastern States-M000-2023-0005-EA respectively) sufficiently disclosed the anticipated environmental effects of this Proposed Action. If a qualified party successfully bids on the parcel, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will issue a competitive lease including the terms, conditions, and stipulations needed to ensure compliance with the requirements set within 43 CFR Part 3120 and the applicable land use plan ([Final Revised Land and Resource Management Plan, Wayne National Forest](#)).

A. Mitigation

Proposed mitigation measures and best management practices (BMPs) are recommended by the BLM in Chapter 4 of the EA and Chapter 3 of the SEA on which this DNA relies, by issue/resource. Mitigation measures and BMPs are proposed by the BLM to help ensure energy development is conducted in an environmentally responsible manner and consistent with the BLM's Multiple-Use and Sustained Yield Mission. Additionally, stipulations presented by the Forest Service conditional to their consent also address multiple mitigation strategies which can be found in Appendix F of the SEA. Mitigation measures and BMPs are proposed for this project to address greenhouse gases; air resources, plant and animal populations, water resources, geology and minerals, soils, wastes, transportation, recreation, noise, and visual resources.

II. COMPLIANCE AND CONFORMANCE

The proposed action of leasing federal minerals and consideration of alternatives are in conformance with the Wayne National Forest 2006 Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) (USFS 2006a). Chapter 2 of the Forest Plan, Forest-Wide Direction, Section 10, Minerals, Goal 10.1 (Provide mineral commodities) states:

Provide a supply of mineral commodities for current and future generations, while protecting the long-term health and biological diversity of ecosystems. Facilitate the orderly exploration, development, and production of mineral and energy resources on land open to these activities. (p. 46)

Objective 10.1a of the Forest Plan states:

Coordinate with the Bureau of Land Management to offer leases of Federally owned minerals. (p. 46)

Oil and gas leases are subject to all applicable existing or subsequent Federal, state, and county laws and regulations. The key laws, regulations, guidance, and orders that are directly related to the project include but are not limited to the following:

- Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended (MLA)
- Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA)
- Clean Water Act of 1972, as amended
- Endangered Species Act (ESA), Section 7
- Executive Order 14154 – *Unleashing American Energy* (January 20, 2025)
- Executive Order 14156, *Declaring a National Energy Emergency* (January 20, 2025)
- Secretarial Order 3418, *Unleashing American Energy* (February 3, 2025)

III. NEPA AND OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS

The Proposed Action is covered by the following National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis documents:

- Environmental Assessment (EA) for Oil and Gas Leasing, Wayne National Forest, Marietta Unit of the Athens Ranger District, Monroe, Noble, and Washington Counties, Ohio (DOI-BLM-Eastern States-0030-2016-0002-EA)
- Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) for Oil and Gas Leasing, Wayne National Forest, Marietta Unit of the Athens Ranger District, Monroe, Noble, and Washington Counties, Ohio (DOI-BLM-Eastern States-M000-2023-0005-EA)
- Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for Oil and Gas Leasing, Wayne National Forest, Marietta Unit of the Athens Ranger District, Monroe, Noble, and Washington Counties, Ohio (DOI-BLM-Eastern States-M000-2023-0005-EA)

The new Proposed Action for the September 2026 Lease Sale EOIs is a feature of the Proposed Action in Section 2.2 of the SEA because these 40 parcels of Federal mineral estate in the WNF would be offered for sale based on competitive bidding. Additional detailed effects of the Proposed

Action were analyzed in the SEA to address deficiencies that were found within the original EA. This documentation found that the Proposed Action in the relied upon EA, SEA, and FONSI “describes that no significant impact is anticipated and thus an environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required.” The EA and SEA analyzed a reasonable range of alternatives and the effects of those alternatives that are substantively similar to the Proposed Action.

IV. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The proposed project was posted for a pre-NEPA, 30-day external scoping period from December 15, 2025 to January 15, 2026 to the BLM ePlanning site for this project at <https://eplanning.blm.gov/Project-Home/?id=798D6BF4-A7F2-F011-8407-001DD80BCF93>.

The DNA was posted to BLM’s ePlanning page for a 30-day public review and comment period from May 18 to June 18, 2026. During this period, the BLM received over 1,500 comment submissions. All the comments were reviewed and considered; however, the topics were either outside the scope of this action or are already thoroughly analyzed in the SEA. The summary of these comments and responses to these comments can be found in Appendix 6 of the attached DNA worksheet. The final DNA and Sale Notice were also available for a 30-day protest period from July 17 to August 17, 2026. During this time, 3,787 protests were submitted. Of these 3,787 submissions, 3,657 were deemed compliant with the protest submission requirements outlined in the September 2026 Lease Sale Notice and Protest Instructions. All compliant protests were reviewed and determined to be denied. The rationale for these denials can be found on the project page on ePlanning.

V. RATIONALE FOR DECISION

I have reviewed the EA, SEA, and FONSI upon which this DNA relies. I have selected the Proposed Action because it best fits the purpose and need for the action as presented in Chapter 1 of the relied upon EA and Section 1.2 of the relied upon SEA. The relied upon FONSI describes that no significant impact is anticipated and thus an environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required. My rationale for making this determination is based on the following:

- Sufficiency of the environmental analysis in the previously prepared NEPA documents
- Relevant resource issues and their associated impacts
- The tradeoffs between the selected alternative and other alternatives
- Consistency with the applicable national policies and approved land use plan
- In line with applicable statutory requirements

The decision to authorize the parcels as available for lease meets the purpose of providing opportunities for the public to explore and develop federal oil and gas minerals as identified in various laws concerning mineral development (e.g., MLA as amended, FLPMA). The Proposed Action achieves this without significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

The decision whether to offer the parcels for lease is an administrative action and therefore will not have any direct effects. There will be uncertainty as to the exact nature of the potential resulting effects that leasing will have on the affected environment. However, there are several reasonably foreseeable effects that the relied upon EA and SEA analyzed in determining the potential for significant effects that could come from leasing the parcels.

In making this decision, the BLM reviewed the reasonably foreseeable effects of issues pertaining to fifteen (15) different resource areas including land use, air resources, plant and animal populations, geology and minerals, soils, wastes, public health and safety, transportation, recreation, noise, cultural resources, Native American concerns, visual resources, and socioeconomics. Detailed analyses for each of these issues can be found in Chapter 4 of the relied upon EA and Chapter 3 of the relied upon SEA with each issue having a description of the affected environment and their respective environmental impacts.

The No Action Alternative was considered, but ultimately not selected because it does not meet the purpose and need of the action. While the effects on the environment are less with the No Action Alternative, the effects of the Proposed Action are not significant, and the Proposed Action is consistent with the purpose and need of the action.

VI. RIGHT OF APPEAL:

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA), Office of Hearings and Appeals, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR Part 4. The notice of appeal must be filed no later than 30 days after the date of receiving notice of this decision. Any notice of appeal must be filed with the IBLA and must include a copy of the decision being appealed, a statement of standing, and a statement of timeliness.

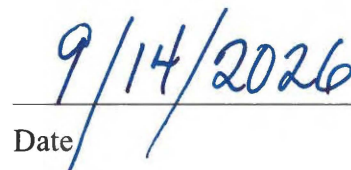
If you wish to file a petition for a stay of the effectiveness of this decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Board, the petition for a stay must show sufficient justification based on the following criteria at 43 CFR 4.405(b).

The appellant must serve a copy of the notice of appeal and any accompanying documents on the office of the officer who made the decision, each person or entity named in the decision, and the appropriate Office of the Solicitor at the time of filing with IBLA (see 43 CFR 4.403(b); 4.407(b)). Parties must serve the Office of the Solicitor at the address shown on Form 1842-1. Service on a party known to be represented by an attorney or other designated representative must be made on the representative. If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice of appeal, it must be filed within 30 days after the record on appeal is filed with the IBLA. Failure to file a statement of reasons within the time required will subject the challenged decision to summary affirmance (see 43 CFR 4.412(a)).

VII. APPROVAL



Mitchell Leverette
State Director, BLM Eastern States


Date

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA) Worksheet for September 2026 Lease Sale Expressions of Interest, Wayne National Forest, Monroe and Washington Counties in Ohio
2. Final Environmental Assessment (EA) for Oil and Gas Leasing, Wayne National Forest, Marietta Unit of the Athens Ranger District, Monroe, Noble, and Washington Counties, Ohio (DOI-BLM-Eastern States-0030-2016-0002-EA)
3. Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) for Oil and Gas Leasing, Wayne National Forest, Marietta Unit of the Athens Ranger District, Monroe, Noble, and Washington Counties, Ohio (DOI-BLM-Eastern States-M000-2023-0005-EA)
4. Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for Oil and Gas Leasing, Wayne National Forest, Marietta Unit of the Athens Ranger District, Monroe, Noble, and Washington Counties, Ohio (DOI-BLM-Eastern States-M000-2023-0005-EA)
5. Form 1842-1, Information on Taking Appeals to the Interior Board of Land Appeals