

Oil & Gas Management

Hollister Field Office Oil and Gas Leasing and Development EIS

Sara Acridge, BLM Project Manager
2800 Cottage Way, Rm. W-1623
Sacramento, CA 95825
Office hours are 7:30 am to 4:30 pm
Phone: (916) 978-4400
FAX: (916) 978-4388

The BLM is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement to analyze the effects on the environment of the leasing and development of oil and gas resources on BLM administered surface and mineral estate in the Hollister Field Office. The Environmental Impact Statement may result in the amendment of the Hollister Field Office Resource Management Plan.

OIL & GAS RESOURCES IN THE PLANNING AREA

The 1920 Mineral Leasing Act governs the leasing of all federally-owned oil and gas resources. The Mineral Leasing Act provides that all public lands are open to oil and gas leasing unless a specific order has been issued to close the area to leasing.

There is currently oil and gas production within the Planning Area. Most of the production comes from oil fields near Coalinga and the Jacalitos Valley in the San Joaquin Management Area. Additionally, the San Ardo and associated oil fields are located within the Salinas Management Area; however, little of this area is on BLM-managed land. Likewise, the Vallecitos oil fields are in the San Benito Management Area, but, again, little of the production is on BLM-managed land.

During a Resource Management Plan amendment or revision process, lands can be identified as “open,” “open with stipulations,” or “closed to leasing” to protect certain environmental resources. Stipulations are attached to lease parcels at the time of leasing to restrict development for the protection of an identified environmental resource. A variety of stipulations are identified in a Resource Management Plan and are thus able to be applied to a lease. Examples of stipulations include No Surface Occupancy, Timing Limitations, and Conditional Surface Use.

OIL & GAS LEASES AND WELLS IN THE PLANNING AREA

As of late 2013, there are:

- 68 oil and gas leases on Federal mineral estate within the Hollister Field Office, covering a total of nearly 18,000 acres of BLM-managed surface and over 26,000 acres of non-BLM federal lands and “split-estate” private lands.
- 146 total wells on BLM oil and gas leases, including 80 producing oil and gas wells and service wells, and 66 idle wells. This is the total number of wells on Federal mineral estate, including wells on both Federal surface and split estate lands. This is compared with an additional 4,293 wells that are on non-Federal mineral estate. As such, BLM is involved in approximately 3.4 percent of all current oil and gas activity within the Hollister Field Office boundary.



EIS Webpage:

www.blm.gov/ca/eis-og

Comments can also be
mailed to:

Sara Acridge
EIS Project Manager
BLM California
2800 Cottage Way, Rm. W-1623,
Sacramento, CA 95825

Email address for public
comments:

BLM_CA_OGEIS@blm.gov

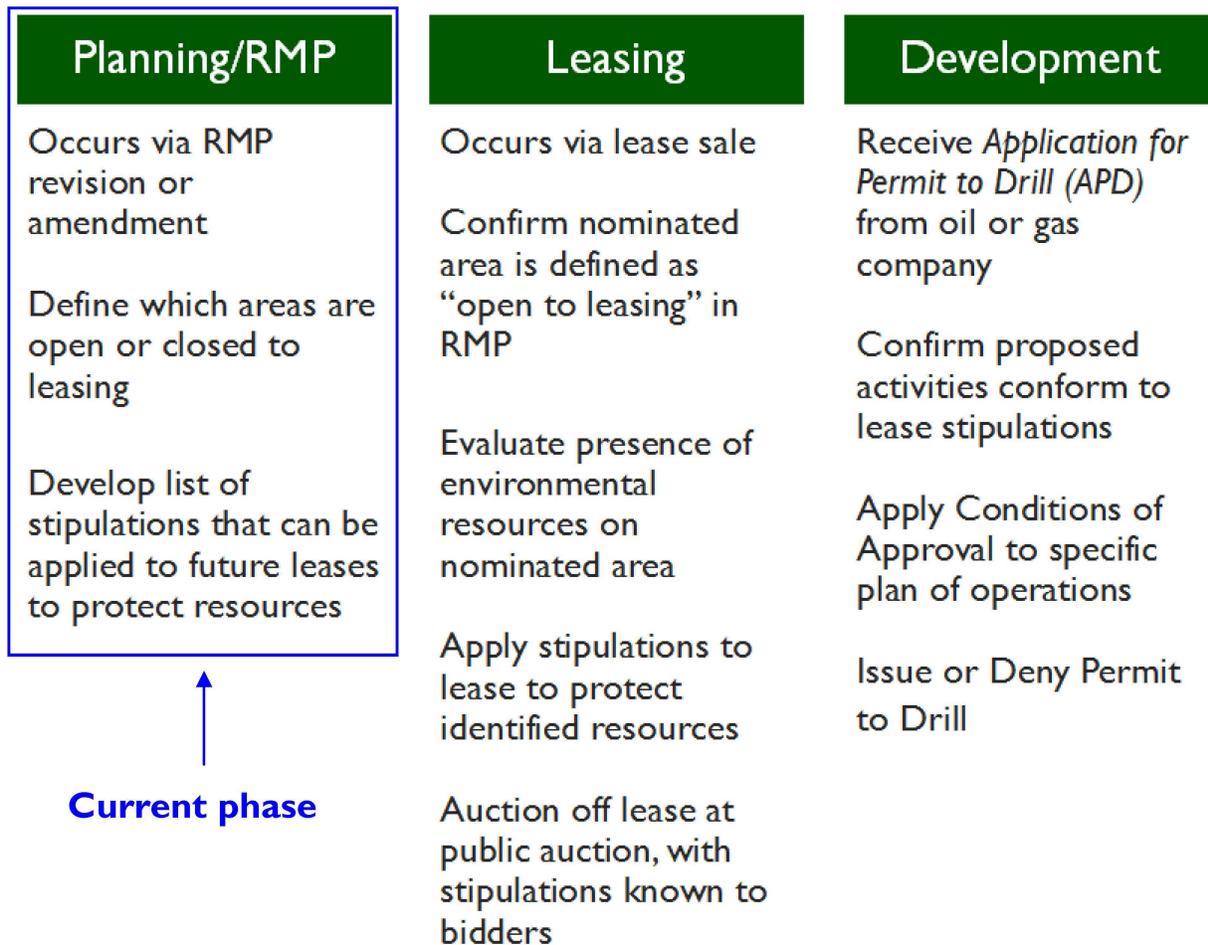
WHAT IS SPLIT ESTATE?

In split estate situations, the surface and subsurface rights (such as the right to develop minerals) for a piece of land are owned by different parties.

Mineral rights are considered dominant, meaning that they take precedence over other property rights, including those associated with surface ownership. However, the mineral owner must show due regard for the interests of the surface estate owner, and occupy only those portions of the surface that are reasonably necessary to develop the mineral estate.

The BLM's split estate policy only applies to situations where the surface rights are in private ownership and the rights to development of the mineral resources are publicly held and managed by the federal government.

PHASES OF BLM AUTHORIZATION PRIOR TO OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT



As outlined above, there are three main phases of authorization that must take place before any oil or gas development can occur. Separate NEPA and public involvement is required at each phase.

The first phase is the "**planning**" phase, which occurs through an RMP amendment or revision. Through this process, lands are identified as being open or closed to leasing. Also at this phase, a list of stipulations is defined, which can then be applied at the leasing phase.

Leases are issued at a **lease** auction. Prior to going to auction, a nominated parcel is evaluated for environmental resources. If the BLM determines the parcel to be suitable for leasing, the BLM applies protective stipulations on the parcel, as needed.

At the **development** phase, the BLM can attach additional Conditions of Approval, or deny an Application for Permit to Drill altogether.