

July 24, 2009

NOTICE

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST CONTAINING SPLIT ESTATE LANDS (PRIVATE SURFACE/FEDERAL MINERALS)

The BLM manages 700 million acres of subsurface mineral estate nationwide, including approximately 58 million acres where the surface is privately owned. The Washington Office of the BLM recently initiated a policy of requiring notification to private surface owners when federal minerals underlying their surface are included in a Notice of Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale. The purpose of this policy is to provide the surface owner with an opportunity to provide the BLM with any comments regarding their surface.

All future Expressions of Interest (EOI) for lands to be offered in a competitive oil and gas lease sale must include the name and address of the current private surface owner(s) for any split estate lands (private surface/federal minerals) included with the EOI. The name and address of the surface owner(s) must be referenced to the appropriate legal description.

When the Notice of Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale is posted, a letter is sent to the surface owner using the information provided with the EOI. The surface owner is notified of the scheduled sale and appropriate surface resource protection lease stipulations as well as information about the BLM's regulations and procedures concerning federal oil and gas leasing and development on split estate lands.

For more information, please contact Terra Gusler, Legal Instrument Examiner, at 406-896-5062, Sam Herbert, Legal Instrument Examiner, at 406-896-5047, or Pattee O'Connor, Legal Instrument Examiner, at 406-896-5098.