

**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
South Dakota Field Office  
310 Roundup Street  
Belle Fourche, SD 57717-1698**

**Decision Record and Leasing Recommendation  
Environmental Assessment MT-C040-2011-0010-EA**

**Decision:**

It is my decision to implement Alternative C (the Preferred Alternative) as identified in the South Dakota Field Office (SDFO) Oil and Gas Leasing Environmental Assessment (EA), MT-C040-2011-0010-EA, in which 20 of 32 parcels containing approximately 12,059 acres of federal minerals would be offered for lease at the July 12, 2011 competitive sale. Competitive leases will be issued for parcels sold at the sale, and noncompetitive leases may be issued for applications filed during the 2-year period following the sale. The remaining 12 parcels (12 whole, 3 partial) considered in the EA containing approximately 11,162 federal mineral acres in whole or part would be deferred due to resource concerns and/or the need to conduct tribal consultation, and are pending further review.

**Authorities:**

The authority for this decision is contained in 43 CFR 3100.

**Compliance and Monitoring:**

Should the parcels be developed, monitoring may be required and would be addressed and analyzed under future NEPA documentation.

**Terms, Conditions, and Stipulations:**

For all parcels, standard terms and conditions, as well as the lease notices and stipulations identified by parcel in Appendix A of the EA, would apply and be attached to the lease parcel(s).

**Plan Conformance and Consistency:**

The alternatives have been reviewed and found to be in conformance with the land use decisions described in the: South Dakota RMP, dated April 1986 and its associated Environmental Impact Statement and the Miles City District Oil and Gas EIS Amendment, dated February 1994.

**Alternatives Considered:**

Alternative A – No Action. The No Action Alternative would exclude all 32 parcels within the SDFO from the lease sale. Surface management would remain the same and ongoing oil and gas development would continue on surrounding federal, private, and state leases.

Alternative B – Proposed Action. The proposed action would offer all 32 parcels of federal minerals, covering 23,221 acres for competitive and/or noncompetitive lease issuance, in

conformance with the land use planning decisions. The lease parcel number, size, and detailed locations and associated stipulations are listed in Appendix A of the EA. Standard terms and conditions, as well as stipulations identified in Appendix A of the EA would apply.

Alternative C – BLM Preferred Alternative. The preferred alternative would be to offer 20 of 32 parcels containing approximately 12,059 acres of federal minerals for competitive and/or noncompetitive lease issuance. The lease parcels to be offered are located within the SDFO and are dispersed across the following counties: Harding and Fall River. Standard terms and conditions, as well as stipulations identified in Appendix A of the EA would apply.

The preferred alternative would defer a total of 12 parcels (12 whole, 3 partial) containing approximately 11,162 federal mineral acres in whole or part would be deferred due to resource concerns and/or the need to conduct tribal consultation, and are pending further review; therefore, these lease parcels would be deferred at this time pending further review and analysis.

**Public Comments:**

This EA was made available for a 30-day public comment period which ended on March 3, 2011. No comments were received regarding the EA during the 30 day comment period.

**Rationale for the Decision:**

The decision to approve Alternative C, the preferred alternative, is based on the following: 1) consistency with resource management and land use plans; 2) national policy; 3) agency statutory requirements; 4) relevant resource issues; and 5) application of measures to avoid or minimize environmental impacts.

1. The decision is in conformance with the South Dakota RMP ( April 1986) and the associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
2. It is the policy of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as derived from various laws, including the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended [30 U.S.C. 181 *et seq.*] and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, to make mineral resources available for disposal and to encourage development of mineral resources to meet national, regional, and local needs.
3. The decision is consistent with all federal, state, and county authorizing actions required for implementation of the Preferred Alternative.
4. Standard terms and conditions as well as special stipulations would apply. Lease stipulations (as required by Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations 3101.1-3) were added to each parcel as identified by the SDFO to address site specific resource concerns or new information not identified in the planning process.

Recommended by:

Handwritten signature of Marian M. Atkins in black ink.

Marian M. Atkins, Field Manager  
Date July 7, 2011

Concurrence by:

Handwritten signature of M. Elaine Raper in black ink.

M. Elaine Raper, District Manager  
Date July 8, 2011

Approved by:

Handwritten signature of Theresa M. Hanley in black ink.

Theresa M. Hanley, Deputy State Director, Division of Resources  
Date July 15, 2011